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The Arc of the Academic Career Bends Toward Publicly Engaged Scholarship

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A heterogeneous, fluid, tolerant academic culture ... a culture that celebrates the “prodigality” of knowledge – is a positive good.”

– Tenure Team Initiative, *Scholarship in Public*

WHILE I AM not much for television game shows, I do find myself intrigued by the quiz format, where the hosts asks adults basic trivia questions challenging them to recall information they learned in elementary school. The U.S. version, *Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?* which first aired in 2007, has gained increasing popularity.¹ For me the game show is more than an entertaining way to observe adults sweating over the potential embarrassment of not intellectually measuring up to the young children against whom they compete. In a subtle yet profound way, it also represents an opportunity to celebrate various dimensions of knowledge. While adult competitors have the valuable asset of experience with the application of knowledge, the students, having more recently engaged the material, may have freshness of perspective about its details, meaning, and potential uses. In any case, this arrangement allows us to catalyze knowledge in ways previously inaccessible. The mainstream of our knowledge economy would benefit from a more expansive posture. Indeed, the American education system writ large can be aptly characterized as a rigid, adult-centered sorting system and bureaucratic enterprise that effectively serves to reify dominant ways of thinking and approaches to knowledge creation (Campbell 1983; Grodsky 2007; Howard 2010; Kerckhoff 1976; Lee 2008; Milner 2010; Muscatine 2009; Nie, Junn, and Stehlik-Barry 1996; Payne 2008; Wolfe and Haveman 2001). This model is grossly ineffective for the majority of students who navigate public schooling in the United States. This is especially true for communities that are under-represented in higher education and other places of privilege. And this reality is no less problematic in primary and secondary than in post-secondary contexts.

In a society where knowledge gatekeeping abounds (Bramble 2008; Garcia 2009; Swartz 2009), there is for me something powerful about valuing knowledge in expansive ways, about celebrating the generative nature of knowledge making and pushing back against normative frames and discourses that overlook or undertreat the reality that knowledge is socially generated. This is to say that while the creation of knowledge and agreement in society hinges on the work of highly trained experts grounded in discipline and committed to the refinement of method, there is no less value in perspectives and knowledge embedded in quotidian, nonacademic practice. I am interested in how diverse sources of knowledge inside the academy and within the larger society can be appropriately valued, and the degree to which our knowledge economy can be sensitive to the range of ways of knowing, including experience-based knowledge. Constricting the rich diversity of knowledge supports the excessive veneration of privileged perspectives and limits our imaginative potential to meet pressing social issues and concerns. Why, for example, when we know so much about poverty, does poverty continue to worsen? Donald Stokes' *Pasteur's Quadrant* (1997) reminds us that there are alternatives to basic and applied knowledge/research and that most research is "use inspired" — that is, aimed at solving social issues. Economist Noreena Hertz, in her November 1, 2010, presentation in the online TEDTalks series, describes research demonstrating that the independent thinking mechanisms of the human brain tend to shut down when consulting "expert" advice. This should in no way be misconstrued as an attack against expert knowledge, but rather a caveat to the pervasive pressure to treat some sources of knowledge as above critique. Indeed, there is evidence that graduate students are taking the lead in changing norms of valuing and making knowledge in the academy of the twenty-first century.

Social psychologist Edmund Gordon urges members of the academic community to move beyond what he has identified as a prevalent excessive focus on knowledge production at the expense of pursuing understanding. Gordon calls for a level of sophistication among academicians that supports robust channels for accessing diverse knowledges, even going so far as to emphasize this approach as a *sine qua non* for so-called objective research. As Carol Camp Yeakey articulates Gordon's critique, "differing ways of knowing must not be regulated as a political or theoretical threat to the dominant paradigms, for conceptual pluralism must be assumed to be an essential feature for the advancement of all knowledge and especially of bodies of knowledge which claim to be objectively based" (Yeakey 2000, 296). How, for example, can we gain a sufficiently nuanced understanding of educational achievement in underserved elementary-school contexts if

we rely exclusively on fundamental theoretical principles of cognitive learning and fail to triangulate that perspective with issues of social structure and community resources?

So what do a television game show and notions of diverse approaches to knowledge production have to do with the graduate school experience and publicly engaged scholarship (PES)? Using the model of the game show and asking, “Are you smarter than a graduate student?” I hope to explore the earliest segments of the academic career arc as domains of knowledge production. In addition, I will argue that there are equally valid and important modes of knowledge production manifest in nonacademic contexts, and that these are essential to maximizing the knowledge-making enterprise. I take this approach neither to disparage graduate students nor to impugn non-graduate students but rather to investigate the evidence that suggests PES is taking root as an important paradigm of scholarly inquiry. I do not want to suggest that conventional scholarly inquiry is being, will be, or should be replaced. As I told *The Chronicle of Higher Education* in a 2008 interview, excellent scholarship will always be just that, excellent (June 2008). However, true to the evolving and dynamic nature of knowledge creation, PES enriches and complicates the state of play in academe. In many ways, graduate students are demonstrating leadership in this regard which will be demonstrated as we turn later in the chapter to preliminary findings from a national study of the aspirations and decisions of graduate students and early-career scholars. I believe it is important to take the pulse of academe at this moment, as an important step in addressing the needs of that evolving group of knowledge producers who see themselves as publicly engaged scholars.

I seek to make three main points about PES in graduate education: 1) there is a growing core of individuals who conduct research and involve themselves in engaged community work both in the academy and in the larger society; 2) there is room within a continuum of scholarship for their work; 3) understanding their mindsets, needs, roles, and aspirations is an essential aspect of supporting the development of knowledge creators and nurturing the emerging citizenry of academe.

Knowledge Creation and a Continuum of Scholarship

In 2008 *Imagining America* (IA) published a report entitled *Scholarship in Public: Knowledge Creation and Tenure Policy in the Engaged University*, which I co-authored with Julie Ellison.² In the report we sought to develop a nuanced exploration and discussion of the increasing attention that publicly engaged scholarly work receives within higher education. This attention is evident in part through the growing

number of institutions that have followed in the path of Portland State University, revising faculty promotion and tenure criteria to include PES principles and practices.³ The report, inspired by publicly engaged scholars but geared toward providing useful information and analysis to policy makers in higher education, places special emphasis on the need to develop fuller understandings about the situation of graduate students. It draws on several years of research and consultation developed through IA's Tenure Team Initiative on Public Scholarship, co-chaired by Syracuse University President and Chancellor Nancy Cantor and Steven D. Levine, president of the California Institute of the Arts. The report locates publicly engaged academic work within a *continuum of scholarship* in four domains:

- a continuum of scholarship gives public engagement full and equal standing;
- a continuum of scholarly and creative artifacts includes those produced about, for, and with specific publics and communities;
- a continuum of professional choices for faculty enables them to map pathways to public creative and scholarly work; and
- a continuum of actions aimed at creating a more flexible framework for valuing and evaluating academic public engagement. (iv)

The notion of a *continuum of scholarship* resonates within the engaged scholarship community even as it requires more precise definition, explanation, and examples. We conceptualize this as a way to frame a space wherein knowledge producers can locate themselves and pursue the creation of knowledge in its sundry forms with dignity and respect:

The term continuum ... does useful meaning-making work: it is *inclusive* of many sorts and conditions of knowledge. It resists embedded hierarchies by assigning *equal value* to inquiries of different kinds.... [W]ork on the continuum, however various, will be *judged by common principles*, standards to which all academic scholarly and creative work is held. (Ellison and Eatman 2008, ix-x)

This framing inspires a sense of agency that fuels some of the most substantial, well-developed, and impactful scholarly creative work and practice taking place today. It also facilitates a sophisticated discourse about knowledge creators, one that establishes “publicly engaged scholar” as more than just an academic identity demonstrating its

eclectic potential.

Preliminary findings from IA research in progress, presented later in this chapter, suggest that it may be prudent to interrogate the prevailing ideology encoded in the notion of “the scholar” so as to provide for a more robust and inclusive definition, one fit to describe the range of thought leaders needed to address the complex, pressing issues of the day. This work indicates how it may be possible to value the intellectual orientations of emerging scholars who pursue knowledge creation in ways that have not been understood as “scholarly” in the traditional sense. It is important to note that in many cases this work emanates from project-based models and praxis or action research rather than basic research and traditional tech-transfer models.

Key Elements and Principles of Inquiry

This of course raises the question, “what is publicly engaged scholarship?” The definition that we offer is *Scholarship in Public* is as follows:

Publicly engaged academic work is scholarly or creative activity integral to a faculty member’s academic area. It encompasses different forms of making knowledge about, for, and with diverse publics and communities. Through a coherent, purposeful sequence of activities, it contributes to the public good and yields artifacts of public and intellectual value. (6)

Researchers have observed that the dearth of precise terminology in the field provokes confusion and disjuncture, especially between the work of administrators and faculty (Doberneck, Glass, and Schwietzer 2010; Kezar, Chambers, and Burkhardt 2005). The literature employs a variety of expressions to categorize publicly engaged scholars, with varying success. Terms like civic engagement have been challenged recently, based on the rationale that they are too amorphous to really be useful (Berger 2009). While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to take on these challenges, it is important to underscore the need for specificity. In this regard, I use the term *publicly engaged scholars* almost exclusively. I further propose that there are ten key elements of publicly engaged scholarship (PES). These specific and in some cases overlapping dimensions are described in Table 1.1.

These ten do not exhaustively delineate PES elements, however they do help provide a concrete sense of non-negotiable aspects of this work. Among the ten, five require special emphasis in this context: clear and adaptable definitions, democratic practice, public good impact, diverse scholarly products, and multiple career paths.

TABLE 1.1. Ten Key Elements of Publicly Engaged Scholarship (PES)

Key element	Brief description
Clear and adaptable definition	Providing sufficient specificity such that the core components are translatable across a range of disciplinary and methodological settings and transferable among institutional types or contexts
Well-articulated criteria	Demonstrating universal principles of sound research design, methodological rigor, and analytical depth, which are translatable to rewards systems
Peer review	Comprised of an identifiable group of recognized, experienced, and expert evaluators who may be located both inside and outside the academy
Democratic practice	Establishing the power, posture, and relationship dynamics as related to the establishment of research questions and work plan; reciprocity among campus and community-based partners is deeply embedded in PES work
Public good impact	Manifesting in clear and tangible artifact(s) or plan(s) with ameliorative potential
Location on continuum of scholarship	Ratifying the work as a serious knowledge-making endeavor by placing it along the continuum of scholarship.
Diverse scholarly products	Producing artifacts of scholarly work that take a variety of forms and that manifest at different points throughout the project
Multiple career paths	Facilitating career paths that hinge on research-based scholarly endeavor but may or may not include tenure-track faculty appointments

Interdisciplinary focus	Drawing on more than one academic discipline and acknowledging the essential contributions of each
Rewards	Expressing the value of the work through policy that provides both material and structural incentives

When thinking about the importance of *definitions*, I often recall being approached by a university provost after having given a keynote on PES at a conference of academic leaders a few years ago. He asked some challenging questions about my research and the continuum of scholarship. It was clear to me that he had serious doubts about how he might be able to stimulate a focused and sustained conversation on campus about public scholarship. However, he found the definition that I presented both compelling and useful as a starting place. Defining publicly engaged scholarship in a way that is solid but adaptable to various contexts is a key element of PES. It is useful not only for chief academic officers and dossier-preparing assistant professors, but for graduate students as they develop their engaged work and navigate some of the challenges associated with pursuing nontraditional knowledge creation work in traditional educational settings.

Democratic practice is perhaps one of the most distinguishing elements of PES because it runs counter to the learning models and approaches that are most commonly used throughout our educational system. As John Saltmarsh and his colleagues put it, “the dominant epistemology of the academy runs counter to the civic engagement agenda” (Saltmarsh, Hartley, and Clayton 2009). Especially at the graduate level, people are taught the primacy of the expert perspective and the idea that expertise somehow ensures objectivity when we study phenomena in the social realm. In the humanities, critical brilliance and nuanced contextualized critique garner the accolades. However, publicly engaged scholars take a different view. Public sociologist and Tenure Team member Craig Calhoun asserts in the report, “We have produced a system in which, instead of empowering students to do the things they think are important better, we teach them that something else valued by the discipline is what they should go after” (Ellison and Eatman 2008, 20). As we will see shortly from gleanings of preliminary findings from the PES study, publicly engaged scholars tend to be highly motivated in their work by issues of social justice and democratic practice. They are comfortable developing research inquiries and designing studies in nontraditional collaborative arrangements. It can be said that PES literally depends on democratic practice enabled by

reciprocal exchanges between academic and community-based partners, each valued and respected for the experience and perspectives that they bring.

Stemming from its grounding in democratic practice, PES leads to work that manifests in some tangible *public good impact*. Public good in this sense means impact not reserved for groups or individuals based on social ascription or on ability to pay a fee or to leverage some esoteric network of privilege. Researchers have observed how true democratic practice in higher education can lead to positive public good impact (Boyte and Hollander 1999; Boyte 2004; Brown and Witte 1994; Butler 2000). In some cases arguably the most powerful impact is on the faculty and academic administrators who change their perspectives about what is possible in the world through engaged knowledge creation; this has the potential to percolate through their students and collaborators, elusive definitions of “public good” notwithstanding.

It is not difficult to imagine that *diverse products* would emerge from scholarly work generated by empowered knowledge producers who with agency and respect locate themselves along a continuum of scholarship depending on democratic practice. Regarding these products, *Scholarship in Public* calls for “expanding what counts”:

Community-based projects generate intellectual and creative artifacts that take many forms, including peer-reviewed individual or co-authored publications, but by no means limited to these. The continuum of artifacts through which knowledge is disseminated and by which the public good is served matches, in inclusiveness and variety, the continuum of scholarship. (Ellison and Eatman 2008, 11)

Other examples of diverse scholarly products include pieces written for nonacademic publications; presentations at a wide range of academic and nonacademic conferences, meetings, and participatory workshops; oral histories; performances, exhibitions, installations, murals, and festivals; new K-16 curricula; site designs or plans for “cultural corridors” and other place-making work; and policy reports.

There is also a great need for the development of *multiple viable career pathways* from which individuals can choose. Research from the Tenure Team Initiative led to the following observation about graduate students and their available career pathways:

Graduate students are restless. Some are finding dissertation topics and peer mentoring networks that allow them to work out how to integrate engagement into their fields or disciplines.

These groups emerge, for example, in the Public Engagement and Professional Development program at the University of Texas, the Black Humanities Collective at the University of Michigan, and the annual Public Humanities Institutes for graduate students at the University of Washington and the University of Iowa. Some students have found their way to degree programs designed to train publicly engaged artists and scholars, such as the Ph.D. program on Theatre for Youth at Arizona State. Others are taking charge of re-thinking the possibilities of graduate education itself through Imagining America's PAGE (Publicly Active Graduate Education) program.

Their mentors may urge them to stop. The PAGE Fellow who remembered being advised to disengage from community commitments told an Imagining America audience, "I felt like someone was asking me to cut off my legs." She rejected this advice and took the risk. Especially for graduate students who have become accustomed to community service learning as undergraduates, perhaps writing a senior thesis that arose out of a community or public project, the transition to the civically disassociated world of a graduate program can be stressful. "There is tension in the system" between student-centered engagement, which is encouraged, and faculty-centered engagement, which is not.... (Ellison and Eatman 2008, 16-17)

Responding to the need for pathway models, the TTI report includes a hypothetical example of pathways for public engagement at five academic career stages (Ellison and Eatman 2008, 21). I reproduce it as Table 1.2 in this chapter in hopes that it may be useful in considering possible pathways within academic structures. It was not developed as a prescriptive device, but rather as a planning tool to empower publicly engaged scholars to envision engagement within a traditional faculty track. However, it is very important to note that there exist myriad pathways outside of academe that are viable and for which there is significant demand. These pathways should be developed by listening to the individuals who actually engage in nonacademic public work. This is one of the reasons that recommendations from *Scholarship in Public* led to the development of a national study of the aspirations and decisions of publicly engaged scholars. I turn to this data after considering the present context of engaged scholarship in higher education.

Historical Context and Development

We are in an era characterized by the burgeoning of a movement in the academy for civically engaged work. In *Dewey's Dream* (2007), their

TABLE 1.2. Pathways for Public Engagement at Five Career Stages: A Hypothetical Example

ACTIONS	Grad. Student	Asst. Prof. 1-3	Asst. Prof. 4-6	Assoc. Prof.	Full Prof.
I. DECIDING TO BE A PUBLIC SCHOLAR					
Establish “public good” focus area for teaching, scholarship, creative work	x	x	x		
II. BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE FOR PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP					
Identify civic, public, community issues in your field and know who is working on them	x	x	x		
Map campus (people, programs, pathways)	x	x	x		
Map community (people, programs, issues)	x	x	x		
III. DEVELOP SKILLS: PRIORITIZE AND START TO ACQUIRE THEM					
Teaching, networking, presentation, writing and speaking accessibly	x	x	x		
Ethnography and oral history	x	x	x		
Documentation, evaluation, digital resources	x	x	x		
IV. MENTORING PUBLIC SCHOLARS					
Get mentoring	x	x	x		
Peer mentoring	x	x	x	x	x
Give mentoring				x	x
V. DOING PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP					
Participate in Preparing Future Faculty programs (PFF)	x				
Teach community-based class		x	x	x	x
Join campus-community project team			x	x	x
Public presentation of knowledge		x	x	x	x
Supervise community-based undergraduate research			x	x	x
Get involved with national programs for engaged grad students and faculty	x	x	x		
Explore collaborative publication	x	x	x	x	x
VI. EXERCISING LEADERSHIP					
Coordinate project	x	x	x	x	x
Collaborate on course or curriculum development		x	x	x	x
Co-direct campus-community project	x	x	x	x	x
Write grant proposal		x	x	x	x
Speak for public scholarship and creative practice on key committees				x	x
Seek leadership role in national association				x	x
Launch publication project (journal, book series, position papers)				x	x
Serve as program or center director					x
Serve as chair or dean					x

Source: Julie Ellison and Timothy K. Eatman, *Scholarship in Public: Knowledge Creation and Tenure Policy in the Engaged University* (Syracuse, NY : Imagining America, 2008), 21. Courtesy of the author.

astute analysis of PES in the current era of American higher education and John Dewey's seminal impact, Benson, Harkavy, and Puckett (2007) argue that we are riding the early part of a third revolutionary wave within the academy. Benson and his colleagues reflect upon the first revolution, in the late nineteenth century, when American universities, beginning with Johns Hopkins, adopted the German model that privileged specialized research using approaches grounded in the natural sciences as the most valued form of scholarly activity. With the research university already essentially established, the mid-twentieth century ushered in a second revolution characterized by the cold war, the advent of entrepreneurial university, and the strong focus on science development and technology transfer ushered in a second revolution. The authors then describe a third revolution:

The fall of the Berlin wall and the end of the cold war provided the necessary conditions for the 'revolutionary' emergence of the democratic, cosmopolitan, civic university—the radically new type of 'great university,' which William Rainey Harper had prophesized would advance democratic schooling and achieve practical realization of the democratic promise of America for all Americans. (78)

In the early 1990s Ernest Boyer offered an analysis of scholarship that distinguishes between—while attempting to equalize the value of—different intellectual functions and the social relations associated with them. Boyer and colleagues at the Carnegie Foundation set forth in *Scholarship Reconsidered* four types of scholarship that demonstrate knowledge creation in its most robust form:

1. The scholarship of discovery refers to the pursuit of inquiry and investigation in search of new knowledge.
2. The scholarship of integration consists of making connections across disciplines and advancing knowledge through synthesis.
3. The scholarship of application asks how knowledge can be applied to the social issues of the times in a dynamic process that generates and tests new theory and knowledge.
4. The scholarship of teaching includes not only transmitting knowledge, but also transforming and extending it.

In a 1996 essay, published posthumously and reprinted in this volume, Boyer urged the need for an epistemological shift framed by a fifth category, what he called the scholarship of engagement, "connecting the rich resources of the university to our most pressing social,

civic, and ethical problems” (see p. 153 below).

Boyer viewed discovery and inquiry as governed by the normative model of scholarship and wrestled with ways to open it up. In particular, he was concerned with making the “assumptive world” of the research university more flexible and democratic, without sacrificing intellectual rigor (Rice 2006). Boyer’s exasperation with the refusal of the system to grant scholarly legitimacy to crucial domains of knowledge making is both powerful and warranted.

With regard to the civic engagement movement of the last ten years, the present era in higher education can be characterized by a transition away from older, pedagogically centered models that stressed service learning, course-based work, and student placements to a model that is more integrative, that stresses the value of academic public work folding together research, scholarship, teaching, and community and public engagement in the broadest sense. This evolution has involved models of collaboration—citizenship rather than service—which stressed the desirability of deeper, richer, more sustained, and more transformative work in which community partners and academic partners effect change in both educational practices and public life. These in turn raise obvious and pressing questions about faculty rewards. Clearly associated but not as sharply focused are the issues surrounding graduate education that these shifts reveal.

This more ambitious approach introduced implicit and explicit challenges to many of the assumptions about academic life and disciplinary professionalism, including what counts as good scholarly productivity, which models of graduate education are strongest, how faculty scholarship should be assessed, what career pathways are viable for graduate students, and what kinds of professional trajectories are available for faculty. All of the most important issues that normatively shape the training of graduate students and faculty work tended to be disrupted by this new trend. The double fact of the growth of academic civic engagement on the one hand and increasingly explicit challenges to traditional models of academic life on the other puts these issues on the table.

The Wingspread Declaration on the Civic Responsibilities of Research Universities, issued in 1999, offers a powerful framework for PES, situating the call for public scholarship by faculty in the context of “a historic debate ... over the future of America’s great public and research universities” (Boyte and Hollander 1999, 7). The Declaration stresses the significance of public scholarship as one of the most important ways in which faculty can forge “opportunities to work with community and civic partners in co-creating things of public value”; in particular, this touchstone document emphasizes the need for “diverse

cross-disciplinary ... projects" (Boyte and Hollander 1999, 11). Effective campuses need faculty members in all fields who are public scholars, but such faculty members often are discouraged and put at risk by existing tenure and promotion policies. Even after many years of concerted efforts for change, public scholarship often goes unacknowledged within existing systems of evaluation. This is most problematic in graduate education because it has the effect of devaluing the posture and work that so many students see themselves as uniquely positioned to develop, and can promote a debilitating sense of dis-agency. This is particularly true in humanities, arts, and design fields that combine publicly engaged intellectual work with interpretive or expressive practices. We need to expand the reward system for tenure-track faculty and other publicly engaged scholars so that it does not constrain the flow of discovery.

I call to question the omission within the normative discourse on publicly engaged scholarship of the available and compelling examples that non-mainstream institutions like historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and leaders within that community represent. Indeed, as Stephanie Evans points out, scholarship that emerges from PES fails to provide an adequate "focus on how African Americans have done so much to 'clean up' the dirty laundry of the United States and correct antidemocratic policies by contributing critical thought and constructive practices that demand and create social justice" (Evans et al. 2009, xii). Given the sordid history of segregation and the ways that higher education has been structured to manage the resulting disparities, this is not surprising (Calhoun 2006; Cantor 2009; *First Morrill Act 1862; Second Morrill Act 1890*; Trent and Eatman 2002). However it is now time to understand the implications of these structural decisions and effectuate change that leverage the entire system of higher education toward societal relevance and efficacy. Exploring the nexus of diversity, civic engagement, and student success is an area of opportunity in this regard.

Pitfalls, Challenges, and Agency

This history helps to contextualize our current mode. One major looming question is, can universities distinguish between public scholarship as civic engagement and public scholarship as activism without banishing either from academic legitimacy? I would say that there is much ground yet to cover in order to answer that question. Prior research makes apparent the challenges that publicly engaged scholars face in relation to traditional conceptions of knowledge making and how requirements that students often encounter during the course of a typical graduate program may impact their scholarly work.

For instance, many of the scholars who participated in the study of the aspirations and decisions of publicly engaged scholars to which we turn at the close of this chapter understand their work as essentially interconnected with a community-based enterprise and/or issue; they may themselves regard such work, a priori, as not scholarly by traditional standards, even though they are very much engaged in the development and critique of salient theoretical constructs and methodological approaches. This conception of their own endeavors appears self-defeating and even irrational in light of the origins of many recently legitimated disciplines.

Social movements can be bridges to knowledge. We see this in the history of African American Studies, Women's Studies, Disability Studies, and Gay and Lesbian Studies—academic fields that emerged through social movements and brought into the academy a characteristic mix of research, critique, policy-making, theorizing, public debate, the formation of new public spheres, and local organization building. (Ellison and Eatman 2008, 20). However, gaining greater clarity about the mindset of the publicly engaged scholar can help to mitigate this challenge.

The University of Michigan's excellent resource, *How to Mentor Graduate Students: A Guide for Faculty at a Diverse University*, was developed through an exemplary process of collaboration with graduate students and faculty members. It provides good advice and thoroughly convincing best practices. However, it presents graduate students almost exclusively as the recipients of wisdom, without attributing to them the capacity to exercise agency in electing research or creative projects informed by civic commitments and acquiring the skills needed to advance those projects. The language of mentoring often assumes lack, dependency, or neediness. Can we move toward a strength-based, or asset-based, model of mentoring?

Imagining America's PAGE program has shown us how networking and self-organizing by graduate students leads to growing agency. To date, over 300 graduate students in the humanities, arts, and design have applied for 60 PAGE conference fellowships. PAGE Fellows have established annual summits at the IA national meetings. These events are driven by a set of readings, collaboratively defined pertinent issues, and the deliberate shaping of a culture of peer mentoring, workshoping, and sustained collaborative writing collectives. The success of PAGE has implications beyond the cultural disciplines. It contains lessons for Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) programs nationwide. PFF programs, as valuable as they are, do not concretely address graduate students' futures as civic professionals or as future faculty in colleges and universities with a strong public mission. Integrating new modules

on dimensions of engagement into PFF programs could clarify professional pathways for graduate students and early career faculty (Ellison and Eatman 2008, 20).

Profiles of Publicly Engaged Scholars in Graduate Education

How can we best understand the characteristics of publicly engaged scholars and the implications that their work holds for knowledge production in the academy? What challenges do publicly engaged scholars face in the knowledge economy and in the current climate within academe? Building on the TTI report, a national study developed by *Imagining America* to address these questions offers preliminary data that may be instructive (Eatman, Weber, Bush, Nastasi, and Higgins 2011). This study seeks to profile self-identified publicly engaged scholars to learn about their educational and career aspirations, including reflections on their identity development, professional evolution, and motivations. Additionally, we explore the degree to which mentoring and postsecondary experiences influence their interest in PES. A second section asks questions about the practice of PES as regards methodology and knowledge creation in the context of graduate school. A final section on aspirations probes what they see as viable career pathways.

The study employed focus groups to establish a mixed-methods survey instrument, which included some conventional measures from related studies. It was piloted nationally and used to develop interview protocols. The research in progress has analyzed 434 responses to a 54-item web-based survey and 54 structured telephone interviews with participants who self-identify as publicly engaged scholars. The survey respondent pool is overwhelmingly female (65%). The majority (65%) of survey participants identified themselves as White (non-Hispanic), 10% as Black or African American, and 5% as Asian or Pacific Islander. Taken together, the Latino group (Puerto Rican, Mexican American, and other Hispanic or Latino respondents) represents 6% of the sample. The full range of disciplines were represented among survey respondents, with the largest share (29%) in the humanities, followed closely by the social sciences (27%) and education (19%), with a much-smaller-than-expected 8% in the arts. Almost half of the respondents (48%) attended four-year public research institutions for their undergraduate education. Regarding the 54 qualitative structured phone interview participants, 58% were female. Seventy-five percent of telephone interviewees described themselves as White (non-Hispanic). The remainder identified as follows: 9% Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander; 6% other Hispanic or Latino; 6% "other"; and 4% Black or African American.

Summary of Survey Responses

The data reveal graduate students' and early-career publicly engaged scholars' perspectives on what motivates their scholarship, what kind of supports are necessary, and how publicly engaged scholars develop. A few key data points are worth considering here. For example, these data challenge the prevailing view that publicly engaged scholars are less concerned with the rigors of methodologically grounded, discipline-specific work. When asked what they hope to accomplish through engaged scholarship, the highest percentage (77%) indicate the desire to "expand knowledge, methods and/or scholarship in the discipline." The desire among respondents to achieve the same "in the public" registered a mere three percentage points lower (74%). This indicates the importance of breaking down the entrenched but seemingly false dichotomy of scholar and activist.

Another very compelling data point relates to the professional journey of publicly engaged scholars and what factors draw them to PES. Respondents were asked, "What experiences shaped your interest in publicly engaged scholarship in a significant way?" Graduate work (76.22%) was selected most frequently, followed by personal or professional mentors (63.11%), community service (60.89%), collegiate experiences (53.56%), and cultural involvements (53.33%). Work or internship experiences (45.78%) were cited more frequently than family members and friends (39.11%). This suggests that at least for this group of respondents, some combination of experiences associated with graduate school helped to facilitate interest in PES. Another important dimension that deserves attention here is collaboration. When asked, "Who do you consider the top three collaborators or partners in your publicly engaged scholarly work?" respondents listed community members (26.7%) first and faculty (24.55%) second, followed by non-profit organizations (17.19%) and fellow graduate students (14.29%).

These data provide a window into the mindset and professional identity of publicly engaged scholars. For example, consider that when respondents were asked how they define themselves within a PES context—given the opportunity to select all that apply from a range of items including "learner," "scholar," "researcher," and "teacher"—"learner" registered highest, with almost 75% choosing this identity as one that they embrace. At first glance this may not be surprising, given the preparatory nature of graduate education. Yet given the foregrounding of reciprocity within the larger PES context, these data require greater scrutiny. Coupled with evidence from the interview data (discussed below), "learner" here may very well speak to a posture or sense of respect that urges publicly engaged scholars to become situated within dynamic relationships in a way that is sensitive to the

continuum of knowledge creation, especially as it extends beyond campus.

“Scholar” followed closely behind “learner” with 73.33%, slightly ahead of “researcher” (73.11%) and “teacher” (72.22%), the only other options to register within the 70% range. The next tier includes “interdisciplinary” or one who crosses disciplinary boundaries, with a response frequency of 64%, which is also quite strong. Some might argue that this demonstrates a diminishing regard for disciplinarity; however, when considered alongside the earlier data point revealing respondents’ great interest in expanding “knowledge, methods, and/or scholarship *in the discipline*,” such a view does not seem tenable. Also quite worthy of note is the fact that almost a third (29.11%) of participants identify as artists, though only 8% claim the arts as their disciplinary domain. A finding like this stimulates greater interest in how participants define art and suggests that art constitutes a category of special relevance in the PES context.

Summary of Interview Responses

On average, interviews lasted between 20 and 30 minutes and followed a piloted protocol that asked participants to expound on their responses to the web-based survey. The interview protocol was comprised of questions about why participants value publicly engaged scholarship, supports that they have received or desired in relation to their PES work, and specific career aspirations. Six themes are emerging from the interview data:

- *Mentorship*. Interview participants detailed the importance of mentors who either introduced them to publicly engaged scholarship or supported them on a path of engaged scholarly work. Several participants referenced a single person who had a permanent effect on their scholarship and career trajectory.
- *Bridging worlds*. Interview respondents described the desire to bridge different aspects, values, and parts of their lives as a motivation for undertaking engaged scholarship.
- *Sphere of commitment*. This theme captures the importance of both engaging in the local community and the historical context and relationships between an institution and its local community, which may positively or negatively affect publicly engaged work.
- *Institutional recognition*. Publicly engaged scholars on the tenure track noted their institutional support. Many commented that for their university to fully commit to public

scholarship, schools and departments should recognize PES within the tenure process.

- *Creativity and flexibility.* Interviewees enjoyed practicing public scholarship and noted that it allowed for creativity and flexibility, both positive qualities.
- *Motivation.* While various extrinsic and intrinsic motivations inspired public scholars, recurring motivations included the benefits of using public scholarship as a form of pedagogy; personal and familial history; and a natural, innate, assumed desire to connect scholarship and service.

Analysis

While it is important to emphasize that these are preliminary findings, they are instructive and worthy of note. The research team has coordinated its analysis to draw from both the quantitative and qualitative data in developing a typology of publicly engaged scholars that comprises seven nascent profiles:

- *Cradle to Community.* This profile type describes scholars who become involved with their local communities because of personal values (e.g., religious, familial). Their involvement with the community may be what leads them to pursue graduate work.
- *Artist as Engaged Scholar.* This profile describes a local artist who uses the community as a “canvas.” The artist as engaged scholar is grounded in both the academy and the arts.
- *Teacher to Engaged Scholar.* This profile is typified by the K–12 teacher who enters the academy for graduate work and teaching, but remains committed to the role of active researcher within secondary schools. College professors represented here may be looking for ways to improve teaching and learning and make connections with their students through publicly engaged work.
- *Program Coordinator to Engaged Administrator/Scholar.* This profile depicts an administrator in higher education who holds a leadership role in a center, an institute, or a consortium for campus-community partnership while also holding a faculty position.
- *Engaged Interdisciplinary.* This profile depicts a scholar whose identification with one specific discipline is shallow, but who leverages every opportunity to draw upon different domains of inquiry for the enhancement of community-

based work.

- *Activist to Scholar*. This profile captures the community activist who connects with the university and uses it as a platform to further pursue activism.
- *Engaged Pragmatist*. This public scholar “sees the writing on the wall” and recognizes that publicly engaged scholarship is becoming prevalent within the academy. For a scholar of this variety, motivation is grounded more in the perceived direction of higher education than in an abiding commitment to civic engagement.

Implications

Findings from this exploratory research are critical for developing new pedagogies, academic structures, and progressive answers to the myriad challenges that postsecondary education faces. We exist in a sociopolitical climate that demands solutions with a strong evidentiary base. Thought leaders must be able to frame and analyze challenges in rigorous, interdisciplinary, integrated, and robust ways. One core implication of the preliminary findings is that the next generation of scholars will exhibit multiple identities that suggest diverse ways of public engagement. Several correlates to this implication are worth highlighting.

- Identity formation does not necessarily predict the way that identity will be expressed through faculty roles of teaching, research, and service.
- Identity formation does not predict where scholars will find their institutional home, although it appears that they are carefully seeking supportive environments.
- Mentorship, even that of a sole mentor who is sensitive to PES work, can make an important difference in graduate school completion and career success.

Given the history of the civic engagement movement and especially the lack of attention placed upon graduate education in this evolving context, it is prudent to develop inquiries and systematic research programs that illuminate the aspirations and decisions of this new citizenry of academe.

Conclusion

The epigraph that opens this chapter urges academe to celebrate the “prodigality” of knowledge. While the term normally denotes wastefulness and excess, it is appropriate in this context because it

appeals to our sense of expansiveness as a positive value in knowledge creation. Not unlike the question, “Are you smarter than a graduate student?” it provokes us to pay renewed attention to the normative discourses, practices, and rhythms of our knowledge economy. Through this kind of deep introspection—a process seldom seen at a systemic level within American higher education, as Calhoun (2006) admonishes—we can conceptualize and operationalize a continuum of scholarship along which scholars and practitioners both inside and outside of the academy can locate themselves with dignity and respect (Ellison and Eatman 2008). This should be a space where all forms of knowledge creation are both accorded value and subject to the conventional processes that interrogate the integrity of scholarly inquiry.

I join with other scholars in arguing that a new citizenry is emerging within the academy (Alperovitz, Dubb, and Howard 2008; Austin 2002; Beckman, Brandenberger, and Shappell 2009; Hale 2008; Herman 2000; O'Meara 2002; O'Meara and Rice 2005; Saltmarsh, Hartley, and Clayton 2009; Wendler et al. 2010). Key elements of publicly engaged scholarship, including but not limited to clear and adaptable definitions, democratic practice, public good impact, diverse scholarly products, and multiple career paths, seem to speak to the needs of many within this emerging generation of scholars. As addressed earlier in the chapter, it is important to note that “scholar” in this context indicates a participant in a “heterogeneous, fluid, tolerant academic culture” and more than just an academic identity.

Challenged by a fraught historical background, eclectic in some ways as it evolves yet still very much laden by social mores entrenching a culture of inequity and status hierarchy, American higher education as a system nonetheless moves forward in an arguably positive direction. The seminal work of the celebrated champions of engaged scholarship, John Dewey in the nineteenth century and Ernest Boyer in the twentieth, registers within higher education and the larger society a mechanism for realizing opportunities for pushing the boundaries of knowledge making. At the same time there are many thought leaders from communities within higher education, such as HBCUs, who have been rendered silent in the discourse of publicly engaged scholarship despite ameliorative and deeply engaged work; W. E. B. Du Bois and Septima Clark are two such examples (Evans et al. 2009). This reality bears out the need for a twenty-first-century Morrill-style consciousness that brings together and builds upon the 1862 and 1890 models in powerful ways that serve the present era.

Graduate students seek to pursue advanced degrees that prepare them intellectually as well as practically for the challenge of twenty-first-century leadership across the disciplines and in the world. Tools like the career pathways planning document for tenure-track faculty

presented earlier may be useful to outline professional trajectories for engaged scholars. Profiles and models are being developed that demonstrate the aspirations and decisions of publicly engaged faculty (Doberneck Glass, and Schwietzer 2010; Peters, Alter, and Schwartzbach 2010). Similarly, models that serve the needs of graduate students, early-career academic professionals (contingent, tenure-track, and administrative) and engaged scholars connected to but working mostly outside of the academy are needed (Eatman et al. 2011). Such work will be useful for developing better graduate programs and attending to the arc of the publicly engaged career in ways that expand the continuum of scholarship.

Notes

1. At the other end of the generational spectrum, the show *Are You Fitter Than a Senior?* employs a similar dynamic with a focus on cardiovascular and aerobic health.

2. Notably, Professor Ellison is founding director emerita of the Imagining America consortium and progenitor of its Publicly Active Graduate Education (PAGE) program.

3. Others who have done so include Syracuse University, Providence College, the University of Minnesota, Missouri State University, the University of Memphis, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and Northern Kentucky University. Still others, like the University of Southern California, Tufts University, and Drew University, are considering such revisions.

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