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# The Labor of Scholarship: Rhetorical Advocacy and Community Engagement

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## Abstract

This article argues for an expanded understanding of academic labor as it aligns with Ernest Boyer's concepts of the scholarship of engagement and the scholarship of application. It draws on theories of rhetorical advocacy in order to help academics participate more in their communities. It concludes by applying these concepts to a community advocacy project, demonstrating the importance of connecting scholarship and public work, and encouraging academics to become community scholars.

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*“Still, our universities and colleges remain, in my opinion, one of the greatest hopes for intellectual and civic progress in this country. I’m convinced that for this hope to be fulfilled, the academy must become a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic, and moral problems, and must reaffirm its historic commitment to what I call the scholarship of engagement.”*

—Ernest Boyer, “The Scholarship of Engagement”

*“At CU-Boulder, even learning to write a proper sentence has been suborned to progressive activism.”*

—Randall and Thorne, *Making Citizens*

Unfortunately, leadership within the current political climate sees higher education as more of a problem than solution to many of today's civic challenges. Even following highly effective work

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from organizations like Campus Compact, the National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, and the American Association of State College Universities, ongoing threats to democratic approaches to education abound. Alarming, lobbying organizations are frequently attempting to control the narrative by publicly criticizing faculty labor and programs that engage in activism and service-learning, tainting public understandings of what counts as faculty research, what qualifies as academic freedom, and whether some faculty should continue to enjoy the protections offered through tenure.

In the present-day affront to academic freedom and curricular ownership that hearkens to the days of McCarthyism and calls for “professor watch lists,” an especially disturbing attack on faculty recently surfaced from the “National Association of Scholars” – a conservative “think” tank that has been attempting to control faculty labor and production for decades. Published in January of 2017, this report includes case studies from several public institutions in my home state of Colorado and seeks to put an end to what they deem the “New Civics,” curriculum that threatens traditional understandings of education by engaging students and faculty with problems in their communities (Randall and Thorne 9). In the authors’ opinions, faculty who succumb to the overreach of this popular approach to community advocacy will be ‘transformed’ into obedient minions of the movement: “The New Civics will complement its takeover of the [traditional] disciplines by transforming faculty into ‘civic scholars’” (157). Being a “civic scholar,” according to this myopic worldview, violates traditional understandings of scholarship and eschews guidelines for labor practices.

Of course, attacks by the NAS are not new: their 2002 report suggests requiring “competency tests in order [for students] to graduate” (Block, Franciosi, and Geiger 19); their 2006 report suggests a dangerous preoccupation with the concept of “diversity” that could have “vast” consequences “not only for what has been America, but for the entire world” (“Words to Live By” 7); and their 2011 report suggests mandating specific courses taught in academic departments by specific professors (Ricketts, Wood, Balch, and Thorne 22). What is so striking about their most recent invective is the direct affront to faculty and their pedagogical choices. For example, one critique labels faculty and staff as members of “radical cels” (wordplay on the Community Engagement Leaders –CELS–program that foreshadows images of radicalized extremists threatening our country) and provides individual photographs adjacent to critiques of how these individuals control students through curriculum and labor expectations (Randall and Thorne 211). Whereas such attacks forward a conservative agenda of pedagogical control, equally importantly, they also seek to curtail what faculty and staff do with their time within and/or beyond the classroom.

Fortunately, faculty—and especially writing specialists—have begun to speak out. Gloria McMillan’s thoughtful response to the report

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published in this journal's blog astutely acknowledges that the authors of such work "hurt and not help civic discourse," and she calls for more explanation on how academics can positively contribute to society (McMillan). Michael Rifenburg, posting on the Writing Program Administration Listserv, reminds us not to forget the historical connections of academic work and public good, "marrying community engagement and writing goes back to Aristotle and is exactly how the *Declaration of Independence* was penned," and encourages academics to contribute to local newspapers and counter propaganda that seeks to move us backward (Rifenburg). Answering these calls for increased public discourse, I offer the following framework for both expanding opportunities for civic work and reminding stakeholders of the value of academic labor in local communities. In doing so, I encourage students, faculty, and staff to become community scholars – to use personal and disciplinary expertise to collaborate within communities in order to address community problems and to rewrite a narrative that fails to understand the true purpose of college and university instruction. Community scholars can counter misconceptions that higher education is mere preparation for mainstream occupational success and instead revive the long-standing tradition of higher education as redress to the forces that keep sectors of the population down.

### **The Labor of Scholarship**

Such a revival will not come easy, and as we know, change can be slow, especially in higher education. Generally speaking, colleges and universities have held firm to a strict understanding of faculty labor as a relatively independent and formal production that is typically reported through scholarly media, often disconnected from the general public. Consequently, this system has shaped employment practices and defined faculty labor expectations: faculty positions, or "lines," are often categorized through the number of courses taught, mentoring and advising responsibilities, and through varying levels of scholarly productivity. Whereas expectations differ across institutions, faculty, and especially tenure-track faculty, are almost always expected to engage in some type of formal knowledge production and dissemination. Naturally, such expectations significantly affect how academics spend their time. They also influence the type of knowledge being produced and with whom faculty interact when not in the classroom. When discussing the value of higher education, it is this hierarchical system of defining how academics use their time, as Ernest Boyer points out, that is the "single concern around which all others pivot" (*Scholarship Reconsidered* xi). Unfortunately, the products of the labor – oftentimes formal scholarly presentation and publication – overshadow the processes and efforts put in to produce those products, a system that disadvantages those interested in working in non-traditional spaces, and especially within nonacademic communities.

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Whereas this method of defining scholarship is comfortably embedded in American colleges and universities, the early 1990's offered a significant challenge to what being "scholarly" means. The model outlined in Ernest Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* questions the mechanisms currently being used for acknowledging faculty time and directing their work practices. Published as a special report to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in 1990, Boyer's oft-cited argument broadens a myopic view of academic productivity by efficiently mapping out categories for defining different types of scholarship. The categories seek to create a "more creative view of the work of the professoriate" and can assist scholars who seek to challenge dominant and mainstream ideologies (xii). Boyer provides four types of scholarship:

1. **The scholarship of discovery**—work that "contributes not only to the stock of human knowledge but also to the intellectual climate of a college or university" (17).
2. **The scholarship of integration**—work that makes "connections across the disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating nonspecialists, too" (18).
3. **The scholarship of application**—work that "moves toward engagement" (21) where "theory and practice vitally interact, and one renews the other" (22) in order to bridge the "gap between values in the academy and the needs of the larger world" (22).
4. **The scholarship of teaching**—work that "stimulate[s] active, not passive, learning and encourage[s] students to be critical, creative thinkers, with the capacity to go on learning after their college days are over" (24).

For Boyer, the first two categories simply "reflect the investigative and synthesizing traditions of academic life" (21). The third, however, honors academic explorations connected to communities and solving social problems, importantly interconnecting scholarship and what has traditionally been defined as "service." The fourth, of course, helps faculty focus their efforts on student learning and empowers them to develop teaching strategies that foster improved learning and critical consciousness. Combined, these categories do more than just broaden conservative understandings of scholarship; they value a variety of labor practices in the academy that can reshape higher education.

### **Boyer's Model in Practice**

Fortunately, Boyer's fourth category, the scholarship of teaching, has been quite influential, especially in the fields of teaching and service learning. Kern, et al. attribute Boyer's call to action as highly influential

to the current success in the field of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning and argue for its further application. Saltmarsh and Hartley's highly practical *To Serve a Larger Purpose: Engagement for Democracy and the Transformation of Higher Education* forwards a vision of a civically vibrant educational system that demonstrates the positive effect of academic scholarship on democracy. Moreover, Thomas and Levine's "Deliberative Democracy and Higher Education: Higher Education's Democratic Mission" and Hartley and Saltmarsh's conclusion "Creating the Democratically Engaged University—Possibilities for Constructive Action" reiterate the significant mission of higher education and the scholarship of service learning.

The scholarship of application, Boyer's third category, is equally important, as it also argues for a broader consideration of how we value academic labor and accomplishment. By being "tied directly to one's special field of knowledge" (22), what has been traditionally defined as service – nearly everything involving work with the community – becomes more fruitful and accepted within colleges and universities. Unfortunately, this idea's influence and application has been slow-moving. Following the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Boyer's 1990 *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*, and the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Boyer's 1996 "The Scholarship of Engagement," numerous academics have reflected on the challenges of adopting Boyer's model and the potential consequences of inaction. Boyer's collaborator Eugene Rice, for example, laments the slow pace of broadening definitions of academic scholarship and suggests a connection to the steady growth of economic inequality today: "A robust scholarship of engagement would have led the way in identifying and promoting vigorous public discourse on this critical issue [of economic inequality] underlying so many of the social problems that Boyer did mention" (30), calling for the contemporary "democratization of scholarship itself" (32). Furthermore, acknowledging that "too many colleges pay only lip service" to the model, Scott Jaschik argues for "systematic implementation" across all levels of academic institutions: faculty, departments, faculty governance organizations, and all tiers of administration.

As has been seen in service-learning, Boyer's model – and especially his iteration of the scholarship of application – can enable faculty to dedicate more time to work towards improving the public good. It acknowledges public work as scholarship and creates more opportunities for academics to help solve community problems. It can also provide a framework for entire academic departments, or even institutions, to focus more on community work by acknowledging and supporting faculty who engage in civic discourse. An important challenge to academics today is utilizing and improving upon Boyer's model to explain what we actually do when we are working to help various audiences better understand our civic projects. This has become especially important in the current political climate that poses perhaps

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the largest threat to academic freedom and labor “since the McCarthy period” (Fichtenbaum, Bunsis, and Reichman). In order to participate in the ongoing narrative against academic freedom and faculty labor, we need to capture the collaborations, efforts, and activities that encompass our work. We need to utilize different categorical systems of labor like “application” and “engagement,” and, we need to describe what happens when our theories and practices combine to produce concrete activities that are grounded in our disciplinary expertise. Hopefully, such frameworks will help external audiences driven by ideological agendas bent on reigning in freedoms better understand our work.

### **A Rhetorical Approach to Scholarship**

One disciplinary field that provides a model for expanding Boyer’s scholarship of application and engagement is rhetoric and composition. Because rhetoric is rooted in public communication, scholars have access to a wealth of disciplinary knowledge that can help design projects that contain “the rigor—and the accountability—traditionally associated with research activities” (Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered*, 22). Moreover, the field of rhetoric and composition provides an appropriate model for illustrating challenges associated with labor and public engagement as faculty and staff are on the front lines of the neo-liberal push to streamline higher education into job preparation: first-year composition courses are increasingly taught by part-time faculty with low pay and few benefits, outcomes for composition courses are often manipulated by external parties seeking ease of student transfer, class size and enrollments limits are constantly under debate, writing program administrators often struggle to run programs under limited budgets and narrow understandings of writing, etc. Considering how writing and argumentation are integral to improving public communication and critical thinking, it is especially important for rhetoric and composition faculty to dedicate their work to the community instead of forwarding simplistic approaches to higher education as a gateway to employment.

Grounded in Aristotle’s *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*, contemporary understandings of the discipline have evolved from the ‘ability to identify the available means of persuasion in any given situation’ to include a wide range of symbolic strategies for democratizing education (Aristotle). Enacting rhetoric and composition’s public mission, however, has not come without its challenges in the contemporary environment of educational oversight and control. Department chairs and writing program administrators (WPAs), for example, often dedicate their labor toward myriad challenges and tasks that benefit many different groups. Because of the public nature of writing, these programs often collaborate with a variety of on-campus entities (assessment specialists, reaccreditation organizations, critical-thinking initiatives, disciplines seeking to improve student writing, writing centers, etc.), as well as off-campus groups (national and local

writing organizations, common reading groups, community problem-solving dialogues, community literacy programs, etc.). Consequently, writing specialists are accustomed to balancing public initiatives within the confines of traditional scholarship expectations and have much to contribute to the conversation on valuing community labor as scholarship.

Reflecting on the challenges experienced by writing program administrators, Deborah Dew is well aware of perceptions that WPAs' work is primarily clerical and shouldn't count towards scholarly expectations. As former WPA of the University of Colorado—Colorado Springs and co-editor of *Untenured Faculty as Writing Program Administrators: Institutional Practices and Politics*, Dew is all too familiar with challenges to academic labor. To combat misperceptions about WPA's work, Dew utilizes Boyer's model of the scholarship of application to demonstrate the importance of framing advocacy as academic work. In "WPA as Rhetor: Scholarly Production and the Difference a Discipline Makes," Dew outlines common challenges confronting WPA's who must both struggle to advocate for writing in the neo-liberal academic environment and at the same time satisfy expectations of scholarly productivity. For Dew, the current system is stacked against rhetoric and composition faculty, as those unaware of the nuances and challenges of their work "may construct our advocacy as service, asserting that the discursive frame of the refereed article captures all intellectual work," when in reality there is so much more (41). She offers the frame of "rhetorical advocacy" to capture the intense "applied rhetorical work" of writing programs and writing specialists (41). According to Dew, the term *advocacy* is fitting for the work of WPAs as it represents "the construction of arguments that are intellectually framed, strategically delivered, and theoretically and materially effective," skills that directly connect to theories and practices of rhetoric and composition (46).

Rhetorical advocacy, therefore, is a form of inquiry that produces work which often exists in the places beyond traditional intellectual work. rhetoric and composition and service learning have shared a rich history as detailed in journals such as: *Reflections*, *Community Literacy Journal*, *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* and manuscripts such as *Writing Partnerships: Service-Learning in Composition* and *Writing the Community: Concepts and Models for Service-Learning in Composition*. These community-based, academic dispatches detail the benefits of literacy programs, poetry and writing initiatives, and art and public beautification projects to their communities. The many stories they highlight directly challenge claims by organizations like NAS that civic education threatens democracy through radical co-optation of student labor and time.

Grounded in principles of situational awareness, collaboration, knowledge production, and persuasion, its complex structure moves it

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beyond simplistic understandings of service. Dew explains, “Rhetorical advocacy is an area of inquiry that is epistemologically integral to our field’s methods of generating, integrating, and applying knowledge” (41). Often collaborative, this process helps participants “define problems, analyze situations, mediate local constraints, and deliberate with stakeholders through language” (42-43). Because of its connection to both theory and practice, rhetorical advocacy provides a grounded framework for scholars interested in articulating their work as the scholarship of application, especially work that demonstrates disciplinary expertise, generates new knowledge, and contributes to the intellectual work of the discipline (Dew 42-43). Generating new knowledge and encouraging new sites of practice, applied rhetorical work enables the iterative cycles of renewal that are integral to Boyer’s scholarship of application and provides practitioners a framework for explaining their work. It provides them the tools to detail their efforts through existing academic frames, validating their labor and actions to different audiences.

### **The Labors of Advocating for Peoples’ Rights**

Just as Dew observes from her administrative experiences, advocacy is most effective when it contains successful arguments directed toward systems that revolve around the activities in which they function. Fully aware of the situations and contexts, advocates usually join an ongoing conversation in order to contribute new information to a group that seeks to create change, be it in thought or action. Effective rhetoricians analyze the systems in which conversations take place and identify ways in which they can successfully contribute new ideas within these systems or offer alternative systems in which to communicate.

Complementing Boyer’s expansion on the scholarship of application and engagement, faculty, staff, and students can utilize rhetorical practices in classrooms and on-campus activities, developing strategies for documenting work in our communities. A recent project in a small community in the southwestern United States illustrates how a group of faculty, staff, and students drew upon theory and practice to engage with their community as they advocated for Indigenous rights in an area with a history of multidisciplinary service-learning initiatives, community reading programs, and community-based learning and research projects. In October 2016, numerous pathways and histories connected in southwest Colorado, culminating in the official naming and recognition of the first annual “Indigenous Peoples’ Day,” an event where different groups converged to celebrate a complex network of rhetorical acts that guided participants to a new sense of community through art, dance, food, poetry, and music. The following sections detail three facets of the event that demonstrate how engagement and advocacy are deeply rooted within larger communicative systems influenced by service-learning and rhetoric and composition. Overlooked by

conservative calls for education and omitted from traditional understandings of intellectual work, these ecologies provide frameworks for community scholars to participate in and further contribute to their communities.

### **Contributing to the Institution's Mission**

Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado has taken on a central role in creating more pathways for increasing how Native Americans are honored and celebrated in the Four Corners region of the American Southwest. As a faculty member of this non-tribal institution, I have both personal and professional interests in helping the institution fulfill its mission to advance the education of Native Americans. Through classroom experiences, pedagogy workshops, and conversations with Native American faculty, staff, students, and community members, I have dedicated my efforts to improving educational opportunities for native peoples. Whereas I am not a part of the Native American population, my decade of service to the institution and community has positioned me to contribute to the development of events and pedagogies that can create a more just world for Native Americans.

Planning for Indigenous Peoples' Day was an exciting and collaborative process. Initial stages of the project relied on faculty and student research, as they investigated existing structures for peoples' rights and Indigenous rights, critically analyzing existing systems of oppression. The declaration of an Indigenous Peoples' Day also grew out of the institution's existing "Real History of the Americas" programming, which counters and reframes the Columbus Day holiday in order to bring awareness to existing cultural hierarchies. Ongoing for nearly ten years, the 'Real History' celebration is sponsored by our on-campus center for Hispano and multicultural students, *El Centro de Muchos Colores*; however, numerous students, staff, and faculty serve on the planning board and provide a variety of disciplinary perspectives. Planning meetings I have attended utilized consensus-based decision making and encouraged participants to solicit a wide variety of input and participation from as many people as possible: faculty contributed information on national movements in decolonization, staff contributed expertise in activism and mobilization, and students contributed strategies from ongoing social justice projects.

Work also took place in the classroom. To provide students sufficient contextual information, I worked with other event planners to design curriculum that helped students make connections between coursework on human rights education and community activities like Indigenous People's Day. I invited activity planners to present to classes that I teach and encouraged students to join the planning group in order to provide their insights. Students in peace and conflict studies classes that I teach presented their research on indigenous conflict resolution

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practices, improving our understandings of appropriate strategies for social movements and transformation.

In concert with the planning committee, local politicians worked with students and community members to formally recognize the celebration where ultimately the City of Durango City Council approved a resolution formalizing the day in our city's public record:

Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Durango, Colorado, that the second Monday in October shall be known as 'Indigenous Peoples Day' in the City of Durango to celebrate the contributions, the enduring culture and traditions of all Native Americans and Indigenous Peoples. (City of Durango)

At the same time, Colorado State Representative Joe Salazar introduced a motion at the state level to formalize a state-wide observance, which was ultimately defeated in committee. Undiscouraged, Salazar joined our celebration on campus, offering praise and support for students and encouraging participants to not give up on future efforts to have the day recognized by broader groups (Fort Lewis College). These conversations and collaborations all utilized the intellectual work of many different people to successfully address a social problem in our community, forwarding our institution's community mission. Because Native American People participated in these processes in leadership roles, in order to bring awareness to and empower different groups, the event forwarded the College's commitment to Native American Education. Moreover, most—if not all—members of the Fort Lewis College community are fully aware of the College's "sacred trust" to Indigenous Peoples and are educated in and cognizant of avoiding cultural appropriation.

### **Sharing Expertise**

A key component to ideologies that oppress different viewpoints is valuing the expertise of only a few. For change to come about in academic systems, it becomes especially important to value the ideas and creations from many different people. For us, success with the project came about as we showcased the expertise of numerous individuals through activities that shared different facets of Indigenous culture through arts, dance, food, and music. From a multicultural potluck lunch to a local multicultural dance group *Ballet Folklorico de Durango*, a Canadian Indigenous electronic music group *A Tribe Called Red*, and traditional Apache Crown Dancers, the celebration offered ways for participants to experience different facets of Indigenous cultures. Each of these events contained its own context and showcased different groups' shared social histories. Consistent with UNESCO's claim that "neither equitable progress nor social cohesion is truly possible if culture is left to one side," these activities ensured culture stayed central to the

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conversation (United Nations). For these varied events, students were especially important in providing expertise in artistic and cultural aspects of Indigenous people.

Other forces at work developing this culture of sharing were on-campus acts of solidarity for the protestors at the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota. Building momentum on Indigenous People's Day, this movement continued to develop through numerous rallies and protests, leading to a Thanksgiving-holiday convoy that was noticed as "one of the largest independently organized caravans from a university" (Romeo). It is important to note that student organizations were primarily responsible for the convoy, and that many of the participants were Native Americans who were well aware of the challenges to sovereignty on native land. (During the previous academic year, a similar group of students participated in a Thanksgiving-holiday convoy to provide support and deliver community-donated resources to residents of Black Mesa, AZ who were challenging property disputes with a nearby coal mine.) On the early morning of the caravan's departure, a large group of community members arrived on campus to support the activists, help load community-donated resources, and bid them safe travels, further demonstrating a sense of shared community (Romeo). Here, faculty and students utilized their experiences in activism and organization to advocate for a common good. Many of the students involved in the rallies and protests drew on scholarship and experiences from coursework in sociology, Native American and Indigenous Studies, and peace and conflict studies.

### **A New Understanding of Healing**

Especially important during the current climate of negativity that exists in our political world is the concept of healing. In order to accomplish a shared vision of social healing, we recognized both the complex systems involved in healing and created spaces for them to interact. As event planners, we understood social healing as "the capacity of communities and their respective individuals to survive, locate, voice and resiliently innovate spaces of interaction that nurture meaningful conversation and purposeful action in the midst and aftermath of escalated and structural violence" (Lederach and Lederach 208). At the event's celebration, the Welcome and Opening Prayer created a unifying and reflective experience within a common space and common vision of healing. Whereas several events created meaningful conversations, especially Dr. Iris PrettyPaint's keynote talk on "Finding Hope from the Inside Out: Cultural Resilience and Historical Trauma" that described the importance of interconnectedness and caring to resilience, the final event was especially poignant. The dedication of Chip Thomas' mural entitled "Two Stars Rising in the North at Dusk" created a lasting image for our event. The mural portrays a young girl (Two Stars) and her dog swinging

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forward on playground equipment and represents a story of resilience and healing.



(Thomas (used with permission))

The mural is interconnected to a family who recently suffered the loss of a family member, and at its dedication remaining family members shared their experiences with healing and provided a powerful message of opportunity. In addition, activist Demian DinéYazhí read his poem “Two Stars Rising in the North at Dusk” based on the mural, creating a collective spirit of healing that gives permanent voice to community resilience and rebirth:

Two Stars Rising in the North swings at dusk  
One star creates her form in the glittering world  
It is inherited strength from resilient ancestors  
The other follows her and blesses her journey  
It is the wild, steadfast spirit of fallen warriors

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Together they breeze through cosmic wind  
Intertwined in horse hair and kinetic genesis  
Together they guide her movement:  
In beauty you are reborn again  
In beauty he is reborn again  
In beauty she is reborn again  
In beauty we are reborn again. (*used with permission*)

Introduced by a local ceremonial drumming group and the College's President, the poetry reading and mural dedication furthered the conversation of healing developed by many different people and discourses throughout the day. These many different genre—poetry, art, music, formal presentation, dancing, etc.—capture the voices and work of a community that traditionally go unnoticed in institutions that view education as simply occupational preparation.

### **Conclusion**

Combined, these experiences represent an entire ecology of collaborations, communications, texts, genre, people, cultures, histories, and institutions. The many meetings and conversations and rhetorical exchanges create what Lederach and Lederach describe as “meaningful conversation [that] rises from interactive spaces that foster belonging and purposeful action” (213). Arising from public intellectual work, these conversations occur in classrooms and in workrooms, in artistic expressions and in scholarly investigations, in collaborations and in solitary explorations – in the systems of labor that require the dedication of many different people. Such work can be very meaningful for students and people who take part in their education, because it communicates community knowledge and includes the stories of groups who are excluded from scholarly conversations; however, ongoing threats to academic freedom and service-learning can divert students, staff, and faculty away from projects like Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Whereas Boyer's proposal positions institutions of higher education to redefine and expand what counts as scholarship and engagement, the intellectual work involved in creating such events oftentimes goes overlooked, as it still doesn't easily fit into Boyer's categories. Therefore, we need to continue to articulate the role higher education plays beyond the walls of the institution by disrupting traditional understandings of being a scholar. Bound by simplistic definitions of scholarship and service, limited frameworks for advocacy, and conservative calls for challenging civic education, the work of community scholars occupies a public space outside of traditional scholarly work. The faculty, staff, and students who work incredibly hard to make community events successful have few opportunities to frame their work within the larger intellectual missions of their institutions. Even though events like Indigenous Peoples' Day are valued by the

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institutions and communities in which they occur, they are rarely afforded the same status as traditional scholarship – an inconsistency with the core mission of public education to increase access for an increasingly wider populace and increase the critical capacity for understanding that such access should never be denied.

Providing a rhetorical perspective on advocacy, and mapping the networks and ecologies of participants and their exchanges, can help elevate the significance of community research and collaboration. This can be done by illuminating how projects utilize disciplinary expertise and knowledge, generate new knowledge, and contribute to the intellectual work of the institution (Dew 42-43). Acknowledging the public work of academics – be they part-time or full-time, tenure-track or adjunct, faculty or students – and encouraging them to apply rhetorical frames to community projects, is an important step in the process. It is equally important for participants to situate their work in the rich contexts and collaborations in which we labor.

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