Community Engagement in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences: Academic Dispositions, Institutional Dilemmas

Sara Dorow and Nicole Smith Acuña

ABSTRACT Engaged scholarship is increasingly concerned with how community engagement might be institutionalized in the contemporary university. At the same time, it must be attentive to diverse academic approaches to knowledge and to the forms of engagement associated with them. Attention to this plurality is especially important in the humanities, arts, and social sciences (HASS). Based on a multi-method study conducted in the Faculty of Arts at a large western Canadian research university, this paper maps the demographic positions (gender, rank, and discipline) and scholarly dispositions (stances adopted toward the production of knowledge and the role of the academic) of HASS faculty and contract instructors onto the range of ways they perceive and practice engagement. Against this backdrop, we present a qualitative case study of two pairs of faculty that fleshes out the complexities and possibilities of divergent dispositions and the forms and experiences of engagement with which they are associated. We assert that understanding differentiated starting points to knowledge production among HASS academics is an important pathway to the fuller recognition and flexible institutionalization of engagement in research universities.

KEYWORDS   humanities, arts, and social sciences; institutional rewards; engagement; dispositions; faculty

"Community engagement is essential not only for the benefit of the University but for the benefit of society in general." (faculty member)

"This is to be a research university and internationally recognized research is the priority, so any community engagement should fit into or be a product of that mandate." (faculty member)

"[The push for engagement] is just another way for the university to corporatize further." (faculty member)

- Smith Acuña (2012)

Engaged scholarship in Canadian higher education sits at a crossroads. On the one hand, it must forge ahead with the work of engagement: creating and nurturing knowledge that builds

on the combined strengths of university and community partners and that "contributes to making a concrete and constructive difference in the world" (Loka 2002, cited in Flicker et al. 2008b, p. 242). On the other hand, it must face head on some of the institutional realities of community engagement. These include first, a culture of reward in research universities that is slow to integrate full recognition of a range of engaged practices, and second, the co-existence of diverse and sometimes contradictory set of perspectives on knowledge production within individual departments and faculties of the university—perspectives that invite varying emphases on conducting research and teaching "by," "for," or "with" community members (Loka 2002, cited in Flicker et al. 2008b: p. 242). As O'Meara et al. (2011) have argued, the complex motivations of faculty as well as the exigencies of their particular disciplines and institutions mean that "it is critical to examine the factors that influence faculty members' own civic commitments, practices of engagement, and outcomes" (p. 85).

The humanities, arts, and social sciences (HASS) constitute one key domain of higher education where highly differentiated dispositions toward engagement co-exist. It is also a domain that struggles as much if not more than most academic sub-areas of contemporary research universities with how both to practice and to communicate its relevance amidst the radical restructuring of higher education (Benneworth and Jongbloed, 2010). As suggested by the opening quotes, faculty and instructors in HASS perceive institutional calls for community engagement as a panacea and/or a threat. Differences in their perspectives depend on how they understand their roles as scholars within the context of the contemporary research university: what is the mandate of the institution and of the individual scholar? what kind of value does the institution and the individual scholar place on knowledge? These perspectives are crucial because the success of community-engaged research and teaching for both university and community stakeholders depends on the energy, ability, and willingness of academic players to act as "boundary spanners" (Weerts and Sandmann, 2010).

Drawing on a multi-method study of perspectives and practices of community-engaged research, teaching, and service among faculty and instructors in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Alberta (Smith Acuña, 2012), our paper develops a typology of dispositions—philosophical and practical stances toward the production of knowledge and the role of the academic—and explores its implications for approaches to community engagement. The study was prompted by experiences in the Community Service-Learning Program at the University of Alberta, which is housed in the Faculty of Arts. While the Faculty and the institution as a whole have increasingly embraced CSL and other forms of engagement, legitimate concern and resistance from some faculty and instructors (including engaged scholars) piqued our desire to better understand views on engagement and on its institutionalization. Survey responses from over one hundred tenure-track faculty and contract instructors revealed dispositions that ranged from "two-way" to "one-way" (Weerts and Sandmann, 2010): from understanding knowledge as jointly produced between academy and community, to positioning the university and the individual academic as the prime locus of knowledge production and dissemination. This spectrum of dispositions depended in part on differences in discipline, rank, length of time at the University, and, to some degree, gender. Furthermore, and most importantly

for our purposes here, subsequent in-depth analysis of open-ended survey responses and qualitative interviews with a select range of faculty showed great complexity in their individual practices and philosophies of engagement, and illuminated the institutional structures and cultures that did or did not allow that complexity to be recognized.

Based on these findings, we argue that the quest to integrate and value community-engaged research and teaching in HASS disciplines in the Canadian research university, must take into account the differentiated starting points of academic dispositions and support flexible models of engaged scholarship. As one respondent in our study put it, "Any inclusion of community engagement in an academic plan should recognize that it isn't a one-size-fits-all kind of issue, and allow for great variation between programs." Indeed, such variety is important to meeting the needs of community partners and partnerships; in a recent survey of community organizations partnering with the University of Alberta (Dorow et al., 2011), many respondents emphasized that their research and learning needs were multi-faceted, interdisciplinary, and variable by project and partnership (see also Sandy and Holland, 2006; Flicker et al., 2008b).

Universities, Engagement, and the Arts: Institutional Dilemmas in Knowledge Production

Because community engagement requires infrastructures of support, the engaged scholarship literature has necessarily been as concerned with the organizational and professional cultures of the university as it has been with the actual practices by which university and community players come together. Building on Boyer's pivotal 1990 book Scholarship Reconsidered, Sandmann et al. (2008) call for "second-order" changes in universities that would fundamentally revise "institutional culture and underlying policy" (p. 50), including a major re-thinking of the role of faculty and the models of knowledge generation within which they work. These scholars assert that fundamental change is necessary to sustaining an ethically and professionally high standard of engaged practice, to ensuring that postsecondary institutions—and particularly public ones—carry out their mandate to contribute to the public good (see, for example, Hall, 2009; Stanton, 2008; Boyer, 1999), and to realizing the continued relevance and viability of higher education. As Finkelstein (2001) points out, these efforts must address both "an academic culture that views engagement as secondary to the 'real' duties of the university [and] a public that increasingly perceives faculty interests as disconnected from societal needs (Mathews 1996; Rice 1991)" (p. 43).

One of the main tasks of engaged scholarship thus becomes to study the barriers and opportunities for formalizing engagement as a core institutional value and practice in higher education (Holland, 2005; Watermeyer, 2011; Sobrero and Jayaratne, 2014). This body of research has foregrounded successful models of institutional transformation in support of community engagement, including collective efforts to re-orient tenure and promotion standards (see, for example, Ellison and Eatman, 2008 and http://engagedscholarship.ca/). Organizations such as the Kellogg Commission and Campus Compact in the United States,

and Campus Community Partnerships for Health and the Canadian Alliance for Community Service-Learning in Canada, have been important leaders in these efforts. At the same time, this body of work has contended with where and how change within higher education—the downloading of administrative work, a general mismatch between rhetoric and reward, an instrumental flattening of disciplinary distinctions, the increased power of external funders to shape university agendas, and growing compartmentalization of teaching, research, and service—poses ideological and institutional tensions for community-engaged scholarship (Diamond and Adam, 1995; Colbeck and Wharton-Michael, 2006; Winter et al., 2006; Wade and Demba, 2009).

Amidst these changes, the very questions of where and how knowledge is produced and which knowledges "count" are at stake for both university and community partners. Gibbons et al. (1994) distinguish between Type I knowledge, which refers to the conventional one-way creation and dissemination of expertise, and Type II knowledge, a development of the later twentieth century which understands knowledge as inseparable from the multiple contexts and interests in which it is situated and applied. This second mode, where knowledge production is "no longer the privileged possession of the university" (Onyx, 2008, p. 93) is a double-edged sword: it has the potential to invite both the corporatized imposition of instrumental forms of community-university engagement *and* the transformative integration of more collaborative and sustained forms (cf. Ang 2005). Szorenyi-Reischl (2005) is among those scholars offering a "cautionary tale" about the instrumental role that engaged scholarship can and does sometimes play in the bid by universities to compete and survive in the marketplace of knowledge, for example, in misdirected vocational creep or in delimiting the terms of scholarly production (Winter et al., 2006; O'Meara et al., 2011; Watermeyer, 2011). As we found in our project, this is a concern voiced by both detractors and advocates of engaged scholarship. Community engagement suffers without institutional supports and guiding principles, but it is not an easy task to operationalize it in ways that embrace flexible and diverse approaches to knowledge.

The variety of ways in which academics approach the production and use of knowledge—what we here call their dispositions—thus becomes an important entry point for understanding and responding to the complex relations between postsecondary education and community engagement. These dispositions "mediate" university-community partnerships; furthermore, better understanding of them (of what makes academics "tick") can illuminate the challenges and possibilities for community-engaged research and teaching. A small body of existing research addresses this link between philosophies of knowledge and the place of community engagement in higher education at mid-levels of analysis, comparing, for example, the shaping effects of modes of knowledge in professional and non-professional disciplines or of pre- and post-tenure faculty rankings on attitudes and approaches to engagement (Vogelgesang et al., 2010; Doberneck et al., 2010; O'Meara et al., 2011). While some of this literature takes into account both individual-level identity factors and broader institutional and cultural factors (Wade and Demba, 2009; Colbeck and Wharton-Michael, 2006; see O'Meara et al., 2011 for an overview of this research), it is mostly concerned with whether faculty or whole institutions are engaged, what types of engagement (e.g., service-learning, community-based

research, etc.) are being pursued, and/or to what degree (see Sobrero and Jayaratne, 2014; Vogelgesang et al., 2010; Doberneck et al., 2010; and Colbeck and Wharton-Michael, 2006). Some useful, basic typologies of academic perspectives on knowledge have emerged. Colbeck et al., (2006) differentiate among faculty approaches according to what they call epistemes of "objectivity" versus "solidarity." Bloomgarden and O'Meara (2007) find a continuum of approaches to linking research, teaching, and community work: integrated, (i.e., if only there were appropriate time, resources, rewards, etc.) and non-integrated. For the most part, however, the literature has only minimally attended to the nuanced relationship between modes of knowledge production (how academics understand their own and the university's role) and comportments of engagement (how academics approach and undertake community-engaged research, teaching, and service).

Asking about perceptions and practices of engagement in the context of an Arts Faculty brings its own forms of complexity. Types of knowledge production across HASS disciplines vary dramatically, from the literary and performative to the statistical and experimental. What's more, some aspects of HASS can quite easily be understood as a contribution to the public good by enlivening public culture, while others can seem obscure and unrelatable. HASS fields are vulnerable to accusations of irrelevance and to pressures to demonstrate "what good we are" (Denning, 2005; Giroux, 2010). Part of the rub lies in the commitment across many HASS disciplines to research "that makes issues more complex rather than more simple. . .whose usefulness lies in opening up new questions rather than providing answers to existing ones" (Ang, 2005, p. 481). In addition, Arts Faculties usually have not been as centrally engaged in debates about continuing education as other sectors of the university, such as education or extension units (see, for example, Fenwick et al., 2006).

It is on the shifting and uncertain terrain of institutional restructuring, and the place of arts and of engagement within it, that we undertook the Arts Community Engagement Study (ACES) in the University of Alberta's Faculty of Arts (Smith Acuña, 2012). While the study was initially aimed at discovering how faculty and contract instructors perceive and practice community-engaged research, teaching, and service, the questions we asked revealed a range of approaches to the academic role and the locus of knowledge production; these approaches varied by gender, discipline, rank, and length of service, and just as importantly, engendered varying definitions and practices of community engagement.

The Study Context and the Study

The Faculty of Arts at the University of Alberta houses more than twenty departments and interdisciplinary programs encompassing humanities, social sciences, and fine and performing arts. In response to the University's "Dare to Deliver" academic plan, which espouses "citizenship," "connecting communities," and "uplifting of the whole people," the Faculty of Arts' own plan asserts that it strives to "increase collaboration with each other and involvement in our communities: local, national, and international" (http://uofa.ualberta.ca/arts/about/academic-plan). The document does not particularly emphasize engaged scholarship; it does,

however, refer to community partnerships, engaged citizenship, and CSL alongside discussion of topnotch research and innovative learning.

This context of renewed discourses of engagement prompted several Faculty units to collaborate on the ACES project in 2011.[1] The study was deliberately designed as a multi-method, multi-stage study that would unfold over several months. Two exploratory focus groups with Faculty-level committees were followed by an Arts-wide survey sent to all faculty and contract instructors (appointed at two-thirds' time or more). Once the results were in, a dozen in-depth interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of survey respondents who had indicated openness to being contacted.

Of the 350 faculty and more than 100 contract instructors who work at least two-thirds' time in the Faculty of Arts, a total of 115 responded to the survey, for a response rate of some 25%. Respondents represented all HASS sub-areas within the Faculty, although the majority of respondents identified themselves as from the humanities or social sciences.[2] While respondents also came from all ranks, the highest numbers of respondents were full professors and contract instructors—those, perhaps not surprisingly, who sit in the positions of most and least power in the system. In the conversational interviews that followed, we deliberately sought perspectives across the range of areas and ranks represented in the survey, although the final sample of people who agreed to be interviewed (and thus the case studies presented below) was mostly from the humanities and social sciences. Closed-ended questions were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The twelve interview narratives and the qualitative survey responses, which were received from three-quarters of respondents and ranged from short phrases to paragraphs, were coded thematically. Identifying information of all participants was anonymized.

Below we extend the findings summarized in the official ACES report (Smith Acuña, 2012) by providing deeper and more focused analysis of the project's qualitative data. The goals and findings of the original report thus form a crucial backdrop to our discussion. One such goal was to discover "from the ground up" how people defined community-engaged research, teaching, and service in their reflections and descriptions of practice. Arts academics were found to eschew rigid definitions of community engagement in favour of dynamic, interdisciplinary, and flexible conceptualizations. In addition, participants' motivations (the why) were inseparable from the what and who of their community and public activities, and the configurations of these relationships were by definition quite variable (Smith Acuña, 2012).

In addition to asking respondents to define engagement and to describe their own

community practices and partnerships, the survey also asked them to rate and reflect on the importance of engaged research, teaching, and service in the Faculty and in their own work.

[1] The study was funded and advised by the Community Service-Learning Program, the Faculty of Arts, and the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies. Nicole Smith Acuña was the lead researcher and writer for the project; Sara Dorow (then director of the CSL Program) was the principal advisor on the project.

[2] This includes Anthropology, Economics, English and Film Studies, History and Classics, Modern Languages and Cultural Studies, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology and Women's and Gender Studies.

These latter findings also provide useful context for our qualitative analysis of dispositions. The majority of respondents placed importance on community-engaged teaching (60%), research (65%), and service (70%) as part of their scholarly practice, although community-engaged service was the only category where actual activity in the last three years (75%) exceeded the degree of importance placed on it. Only 50% and 55% reported actually doing engaged practice in teaching and research, respectively. As Sobrero and Jayaratne (2014) point out, academics continue to correlate engagement with the category of "service," especially given the ways institutional reward systems and disciplinary cultures work. Indeed, in another set of survey responses, faculty and instructors indicated that they saw service as the area where Arts should most increase recognition of engagement. However, some of what respondents reported as "service" (such as public workshops or conferences) could probably, under different institutional circumstances, be considered engaged research.

Positions and Dispositions

In keeping with a number of previous studies (Bloomgarden and O'Meara, 2007; Vogelgesang et al., 2010; Colbeck and Wharton-Michael, 2006), the ACES project included analysis of how philosophies and practices of engagement vary by gender, discipline, and rank; not wanting to assume that rank was a proxy for length of experience, we also looked at the influence of number of years at the University of Alberta. These demographic variables, or positions, have significant explanatory power in part because they are inseparable from the epistemologies and philosophies, or dispositions, of academic practitioners. Put another way, being a woman or an associate professor or a sociologist is probably more meaningful as a correlate of community engagement if it is also examined in relation to philosophies of knowledge and perceptions of the professional role of the academic.

Themes emerging from our rich array of open-ended survey responses suggested that dispositions among faculty and contract instructors varied along two key spectra. First is what we call a spectrum of dispositions toward the *locus of knowledge production*. This ranged from a philosophy and practice that espoused the Joint and Collaborative production of knowledge by multiple institutions and actors, to a philosophy and practice of University-Centric knowledge production. Most respondents fell somewhere in between these two ends of the continuum: some saw engaged activities as adding interest and meaning to the central activity of university-produced knowledge, while others (especially in the fine and performing arts) saw community-based collaboration as a built-in disciplinary necessity. The second is what we call a spectrum of dispositions toward the *role of the academic*, which ranged from those who placed themselves in the role of Networker/Facilitator of knowledge to those who understood their role as that of disseminator, or Knowledge Provider (akin to what Colbeck et al., 2006 call positions of "solidarity" and "objectivity"). Again, there was a range of qualifying dispositions in between, such as those who actively sought to disseminate their expertise outside of their usual academic subfields, or who saw their engagement as fulfilling the public mandate of the university. Analysis of these two spectra also took into account variations in respondents' definitions of community and in their ideological views and experiences of the university as an institution.

In what follows, we analyze position (demographic characteristic) and disposition (philosophical and epistemological tendency) together, considering in turn gender, rank, number of years at the University, and disciplinary area. We first compare the statistical survey outcomes on each factor, and then enhance these findings with discussion of the more in-depth understanding of disposition afforded by the qualitative analysis. While tendencies in community engagement certainly vary by demographic characteristic, these are given more meaning when studied in light of people's lived philosophies and practices of engagement. The subsequent case study of two pairs of faculty allows us to take our understanding of dispositions even further and to demonstrate the complexities of engagement as they play out in the humanities and social sciences.

We start by considering gender. A number of studies have found that female academics are more likely to report involvement in their local communities than males (see O'Meara et al., 2010 for an overview). The ACES survey found no difference between male and female respondents in the reported levels of engaged teaching and research, even though women were more likely to take part in the survey (53% of participants identified as female in a Faculty that is about 40% female) and to report engagement in the area of service (Smith Acuña, 2012). Perhaps, as Ward (2010) suggests, gender is significant as a predictor of engagement only insofar as it is aligned with more collaborative knowledge modes and professional goals. Along these lines, qualitative analysis of open-ended responses by females and males in the ACES project showed a clear tendency for females to describe a disposition espousing the Joint Production of knowledge and the role of Networker/Facilitator. This was especially pronounced among women in disciplines in the humanities and in the fine and performing arts, a disciplinary difference discussed below.

Previous research has also been quite attentive to professional rank as correlated with engagement, usually finding that faculty in higher ranks are more likely to be involved in community-engaged scholarship (Vogelgesang et al., 2010), although contingent teaching staff have been found to be more involved in engaged teaching practices such as service-learning (Antonio, Astin, and Cress, 2000). In the ACES survey (Smith Acuña, 2012), associate and full professors were most apt to report community engagement of any sort. Both contract instructors and assistant professors were significantly less likely to report engagement in the service category, and assistant professors were significantly less likely to report engaged teaching. Interestingly, there was no significant difference in engaged research across the ranks. Dispositions toward knowledge production help to flesh this out a bit more. We found associate professors most apt to espouse a model of shared and collaborative knowledge production compared to their junior colleagues. Full professors, however, were quite split between the two "ends" of the disposition spectra: about half expressed a more traditional University-Centric knowledge position (see also Bloomgarden and O'Meara, 2007; Finkelstein, 2001) skeptical of the "push" to engagement, while the other half were quite favorably disposes to collaborative engagement. In describing why engagement was part of her practice, one full professor wrote, "[because of] my public role as an intellectual, my sense of where my richest learning happens, and my desire to be part of broader social, cultural, and political communities."

If anything united supporters and detractors among the full professors, it was a concern with the lack of infrastructure to support engaged practice if it was to be built into institutional expectations. Further investigation, however, suggested that this was more an effect of length of service. Professors with the longest tenure (25 years or more) by and large saw institutional espousal of engagement as both a positive and an increasingly necessary direction, even if it should be exercised with some caution. As a professor with more than twenty years of experience and a history of active engagement put it, "It is to be recognized and rewarded in those people or areas where the work is most vital and obvious. It is not to be expected that its value will be the same for everyone." Mid-career tenure-track faculty (with 10 to 15 years of service) were often concerned with implications for the reward system and with individual and institutional prestige (cf. Bloomgarden, 2008). For contract instructors, on the other hand, rank overwhelmed length of service in shaping their perspectives on engagement. Regardless of length of time at the University of Alberta, and regardless of level of involvement in engaged scholarship, they tended to express concern about the implications of formal adoption of engagement for workload and for the plurality of academic practice. As one contract instructor wrote, "I'm not sure how you can demand that we . . . work with fewer resources and support staff, all the while suggesting that we broaden our research scope and do more to put your name in the community."

There was shared concern across all ranks and lengths of service that institutional adoption of community engagement needed to support and recognize the diversity of approaches found within and across disciplinary cultures. For the purposes of this project, and in keeping with the Faculty of Arts' own practices, respondents were coded into the broad disciplinary areas of humanities, social sciences, and fine and performing arts.[3] When compared to their colleagues in the humanities (see also Vogelgesang et al., 2010), respondents from the fine and performing arts were significantly more likely to report involvement in both community-engaged research and teaching, and respondents from the social sciences were significantly more likely to report involvement in community-engaged research (Smith Acuña, 2012). Qualitative analysis of responses from fine and performing arts disciplines showed a clear pattern of identifying with Joint Production of knowledge and with the academic role of Networker/Facilitator. Their examples and perspectives were replete with reference to the absolute necessity of such collaborations to success in both research and teaching. "Being part of a community of like-minded performers, listeners and supporters is important for development and growth as an artist. There are opportunities for students to meet and interact with others pursuing similar careers and studies," said one respondent. This was not a purely instrumental position; most respondents in the fine and performing arts also spoke to the need for the university as a public institution to share resources and facilitate research for the public good. Similar perspectives were found across other disciplinary areas, but not with the

---

[3] While "Interdisciplinary Studies" was initially included as a code, this category was not included in statistical analysis because of overlap, by definition, with the other three categories.

same consistency.

There is an important caveat to these findings. Whereas respondents from the fine and performing arts often expressed frustration that their engaged work was not recognized within the formal tenure and promotion system, some respondents from the humanities and from interdisciplinary programs expressed frustration that their engaged work was not recognized as engagement. One person wrote that the survey's assumptions about community engagement reflected those of a "social science model." Many others in the humanities emphasized that for them, engagement was about igniting passion and interest in a theory, topic, or even a method—what one respondent jovially called "academic evangelism"—whether it be in a public talk on linguistic preservation or in a partnership with a local youth organization or even in other disciplines within the university. These varied configurations of engagement challenge the respective end points of the two spectra of dispositions; they also blur the boundaries separating teaching, research, and service. In the following section, we further muddy the waters of relationships between modes of knowledge and approaches to engagement through a case study of two pairs of faculty—one from the social sciences, the other from the humanities.

Digging Deeper: the Muddy Waters of Arts' Dispositions toward Engagement

As Smith Acuña (2012) suggests, practices and forms of community engagement are a matter of the complex lived reality of academic work. Dispositions shed light on how academics understand their work, and thus, in turn, on the range of approaches they take to engagement. Part of what qualifies these dispositions, as discussed in the previous section and in the extant literature, are factors such as rank, experience, and discipline. But there is more to it than that, as was evident in the narratives collected from our follow-up interviews with survey respondents sampled from across disciplinary areas and ranks. These interviews highlighted the "messy" world of human practice (Wolf, 1992) where academics perceive and practice engagement in ways that contradict or at least complicate the modes of knowledge production they espouse. Two pairs of interviews stood out as especially instructive because they both reinforced and unhinged the relationships between positions and dispositions that emerged from the survey results. The first two are, at first glance, "one-way" social scientists who understand themselves as experts; the second two, on the other hand, appear as "two-way" interdisciplinary humanities scholars who understand themselves as collaborators. Yet in both cases, their actual practices and experiences of engagement unsettle the predictive power of positions and dispositions. Their narratives also highlight activities not necessarily recognized as engagement by themselves, their colleagues, or the institution.

Case 1. David and Michael are two male professors in the social sciences who have been at the University of Alberta for at least fifteen years. Initial coding of their responses to the survey pegged them as disposed to the more traditional academic role of providing knowledge to the "outside" world from a position "inside" their domain of expertise. This outside world included government and private industry as much as outreach to other departments and

universities. Both David and Michael saw this sharing of knowledge as part of the public mandate of the university, and located it mostly within the domain of service rather than research or teaching. Michael, for example, indicated that he saw engagement as a matter of aiding public understanding, and when responding to a question on the institutionalization of community engagement wrote: "We already have service as an area of activity and community engagement falls under that. This is to be a research university and internationally recognized research is the priority so any community engagement should fit into or be a product of that mandate." While David also located his work within the domain of academic service, he indicated some frustration that the university system did not recognize it more as a part of his role. When discussing this frustration in the interview, he explained: "I wouldn't make community engagement a compulsory part of the annual evaluation but. . . it could be fleshed out more and made on the same par as administration and professional activities [within the service category]. I think that would help."

Interviews with David and Michael reinforced but also unhinged some of these basic dispositions. First, the "obligation" to engage communities, whether local or international, turned out to be more than a matter of capitulation to institutional mandate: it stemmed from a personal-professional commitment to responsive dialogue. "The taxpayers pay my salary, right?" said David. "Given that there's a demand for [my knowledge], I should provide it." Michael was driven by an interest in "good public policy," emphasizing how it involved "me taking some of the results of my work out to the community to try and educate, or, alternatively, being approached to participate in some work that helps somebody solve some problem." In other words, these two long-time social scientists narrated a combination of internal and external stimuli for their advice-giving activities, including a regular stream of requests from a variety of communities.

Second, this was not purely a one-way street, but rather one where engagement fed, in turn, the primary work of the academic (albeit on a parallel track). Both professors understood the work of disseminating knowledge as further enhancing their own expertise as researchers and thus, to some extent, their work in the classroom. In this way, David and Michael represent a softer and more versatile version of what Bloomgarden and O'Meara (2007) call the "non-integrated" view (where academic activities of research and teaching remain separate, and engagement is not integrated with them). As Michael put it: "Those kinds of experiences which, over a lifetime you get quite a number of, do provide some good examples in courses . . . I think it helps you as an individual see and look at issues with a degree of practicality but it also helps you, especially in the classroom, talk about real world examples." David saw public engagement as always a secondary consideration to "pure" research with the added if unintentional bonus of contributing to classroom instruction:

> My personal interest is in research and I think that reflects the University's priorities to be internationally recognized. That's the first thing in terms of thinking about a project. . . . And then secondly I guess is, is it something that maybe is a benefit to the community? I guess this is where community engagement comes in. I regard

that as the service role that I would have in the University. . .I have probably done almost nothing that has been focused simply on [community-engaged] teaching but I guess a number of the things that I've been involved with that might be considered community engagement are things that provide examples in the teaching environment. So that's sort of my perspective on I guess part of my role at the University that might overlap with what I consider community engagement. I think it's community engagement. I'm not certain exactly what community engagement is.

David's uncertainty around the parameters of what "counts" as engaged scholarship is what we thought, and hoped, might surface through the ACES project. David said that his public engagement work was "mainly one directional," contrasting it to the "real community engagement" exemplified by colleagues involved in activities like community-based theatre. Not long after the interview, however, he sent an email to the interviewer to say that their discussion had sparked further reflection on the benefits of his public engagement to his scholarship. "I now want to acknowledge that my 'community involvement' has played a crucial role in my research productivity," he concluded. While faculty for whom engaged scholarship is a core value, and community organizations frustrated by shallow involvement from university partners might rightly balk at the idea of engagement serving primarily the purposes of traditional academic goals, the point is that for both David and Michael this is, in practice, a version of the two-way street, where public engagement pumps knowledge in and out of the academy. Attention to these social scientists' actual forms of engagement thus problematizes the easy description of their dispositions as purely University-centric Knowledge Providers. David's revised understanding of engagement suggests an opening between the very service and research categories that he had initially insisted remain discrete. The invitation to narrate his actual practices revealed this opening, much as Bloomgarden and O'Meara (2007) found that "on reflection, the simultaneous pursuit of teaching, research, and community goals did yield practical or intellectual synergies [individual faculty] had not previously realized" (p. 11).

Case 2. Carl and Renata are, respectively, male and female assistant professors in the humanities who see themselves as engaged scholars—as inciters and facilitators of learning and discovery in multiple arenas. This was already somewhat evident in their survey responses, which had shown them to be disposed to a Networker/Facilitator role and to a philosophy of knowledge production that if not purely Joint was strongly motivated by its relevance beyond the university. In the survey, Renata defined engagement as "taking research beyond the borders of the university and engaging the broader public," while Carl indicated that it meant "being open to public involvement in one's work, and extending one's work into the public" across the domains of research, teaching, and writing. Indeed, he was frustrated that something like a widely read magazine piece was relegated to professional service; "in some cases, publishing for a wide audience should be considered as valuable as publishing in a scholarly journal."

Renata and Carl located engagement outside of service and largely outside of the university,

and (yet) integrally linked to the academic enterprise. In their respective interviews, they both gave examples of creative public projects that were part and parcel of their core research but were also meant to facilitate input and learning and access for diverse audiences—a democratization of knowledge. Carl pointed out that "whatever it is I'm researching, my first and foremost thought when I sit down to actually write or present at a conference is not to specialists. I think, how would I explain this to one of my cousins at Thanksgiving dinner?" Their networker roles were not only about the mobilization of ideas, but about the people and places involved, i.e., an event held in an outdoor public venue or a long-term collaboration with a non-academic practitioner. Stepping outside of the "actual physical barriers" that made the University "ghettoized" and "onerous" to navigate was important to both of them, as was embracing the idea of the public. Indeed, they similarly eschewed the word "community" as either too specific or a hollow buzzword. As Renata put it, "When I'm thinking about my research in this event, it's about non-academics and the general public, meaning all ages, free event, open access and hopefully in an accessible environment." Such public outreach and in-reach was both enjoyable and rewarding. As Carl put it, "It's just more rewarding to have your work connected to people outside." Renata emphasized not only that public engagement projects needed to be fun, but that she herself was having fun in the process.

Not surprisingly, Carl and Renata were both unequivocally supportive of engaged scholarship as part of institutional mission and policy. Carl said of community engagement, "I think it's essential. I'm totally behind it one hundred percent." Where they parted ways, however, was in their sense of efficacy and recognition in the institution. Much of Carl's interview narrative was devoted to the barriers to both doing and being recognized for his community-engaged research and teaching:

> There are the barriers of your day-to-day life. I feel like I have a full slate of things to do between teaching, all these students who want to come talk to me about their papers, all these emails I get, all these service requirements I have to do, all the committees I have to serve on. The demands to constantly have something published . . . . A lot of this community engagement stuff requires extra effort and extra time. It's simply not there. That's why I'm a big proponent of it being a part of the academic plan and having it be more a part of the job description because if it were rewarded and it were sort of seen as something that was inextricable from scholarship, then I would do more of it.

Like Carl, Renata was a supporter of more formal institutional supports and rewards for engagement, but precisely because she was rewarded for what she saw as unique circumstances. Her particular academic research was not possible without public input and practitioner collaboration, allowing her to dovetail public engagement with research in ways that were not as readily available to many of her colleagues:. "I do it because it's part of a larger cultural movement and I just think it's so important . . . and because [at the same time] it serves my own selfish research interests." This match between scholarship and engagement afforded

some recognition within the parameters of the academic system. She expressed admiration for those who "really" did engagement, including colleagues who established partnerships in both research and teaching. Carl fit that description but was stressed and frustrated, especially as an assistant professor, because his scholarship and engagement did not match up in ways that were fully recognized. As a result, Renata could take up an "integrator" position while Carl was left positioning himself as "if only…": he would do more if all the pieces fit together better, or if public scholarship were better rewarded (Bloomgarden and O'Meara, 2007).

Despite their different experiences, Carl and Renata located themselves as engaged scholars in a system where collaborative public work is not always given the central academic relevancy it deserves—or, put another way, where the culture of scholarly standards has difficulty integrating various forms of community engagement. This disconnect between practice and reward is especially poignant given the strong connection Carl and Renata made between the relevance of their work and the pressure on the Faculty of Arts to demonstrate its relevance to the University, the provincial government, and the general public. At some point in their respective interviews, they each said, "Arts is under attack" for allegedly having "no" impact or value, when they knew that its social value was both deep and in some ways immeasurable. "There is this idea that studying literature or studying films or that kind of thing is a waste of time; it doesn't lead to high paying jobs in science, technology, or business," said Renata. It thus made perfect sense to both of them that there should be more incentives and rewards for public engagement as integral. This was especially urgent for Carl: "The whole model of the University 'uplifting the whole people' [the U of A's central motto], that's part of the job description," he said. "Rather than it being an aside, it should be part of what people think about when they propose a new course or propose a new grant or a new topic of research." This is why the lack of an "incentivized structure to go out and do it," as Carl put it, was so disheartening.

In Conclusion: Dispositions and the Recognition of Engaged Practices

These cases demonstrate the usefulness of dispositions as a starting point, or vantage point, for understanding the variety of meanings and approaches that academics in HASS fields bring to engagement. By "meeting faculty halfway" (i.e., getting closer to standing in their dispositional shoes), we gain a more enriched understanding of what engagement means in their everyday worlds, and of why and how various communities do and do not figure in them. As we have tried to show, individual genders, ranks, and disciplines are important contextual factors, but when married to knowledge dispositions, they provide a richer and deeper understanding of perspectives on, and practices of, engagement. Importantly, these do not fall neatly along a continuum from "less" to "more" engaged, nor do they constitute discrete categories. As Smith Acuña (2012) phrased it in the original ACES report, "community engagement is often context specific, and . . . some teaching and research endeavors lend themselves more readily to engagement with the community than others" (p. 13).

At the same time, an analysis of dispositional approaches to engagement highlights the

institutional cultures and systems that allow or disallow teaching and research endeavors to be recognized and invited as engaged practices. Across the quite different sensibilities of the faculty in our case study—assistant professors in the humanities who saw themselves as networkers and integrators versus full professors in the social sciences who positioned themselves as expert disseminators of knowledge—there were important points of resonance in how they positioned community engagement in relation to the Faculty of Arts and to the University. All four of them saw engagement as part of the job description, emphasized the need for further recognition, and advocated for flexible conceptualizations of engaged practice. After all, it was from her unique context as an integrator that Renata both supported a better reward system and cautioned against a one-size-fits-all institutionalization of engaged scholarship. And it was from reflecting on his experience that David saw the relationship between traditional scholarship and engagement shifting from a one-way to a two-way track.

HASS faculty and instructors in the research university live within a system that tends to silo research, teaching and service from each other, and that is still unsure of whether or how to think of engaged scholarship from within the "economy of prestige" (Bloomgarden, 2008). Those economies vary by discipline, generation, and disposition. Some academics support breaking down those walls and transforming systems to recognize and reward such work, whether done by themselves or colleagues; others cannot fathom how any of this is relevant to the work they do. Indeed, recognition and relevance, and more specifically the relevance and recognition of HASS research and teaching in the changing sociopolitical landscape of higher education, were front of mind for many of the ACES participants. Many respondents directly experienced or at least saw the possibilities of community engagement for enhancing the actual and perceived relevance of Arts-based scholarship, while being simultaneously wary of a static, universalized model of engagement that could not take into account the plurality of their modes of knowledge production. Equally if not more important, however, were the formal and informal systems of recognition. For Carl, an assistant professor whose academic practices involved ongoing collaboration with multiple publics, the lack of formal recognition was disheartening. For David, a seemingly "conventional" full professor, an entrenched academic culture seemed to obscure his own recognition of where engagement did and could figure in his research and teaching. As Weerts and Sandmann (2010) point out, the boundary-spanning work of technical experts requires a host of other boundary-spanning roles focused on site-specific problem solving, institutional culture change, and infrastructural capacity.

Both relevance and recognition depend on more thoroughly understanding and communicating the types of publicly engaged activities in which HASS academics are indeed already involved, and to which they lend a variety of dispositions. They also depend on a transformation of institutional culture that takes that variety, as well as the variety of interests and needs of community partners (Flicker, 2008b; Sandy and Holland, 2006), as its starting place for enabling nimble modes of community-university engagement.

the University of Alberta and thank the anonymous reviewers of the article for their insightful and very helpful suggestions.

About the Authors

Sara Dorow *(corresponding author)* is a sociologist at the University of Alberta whose research and teaching interests are in community, mobility and transnationalism, oil cultures, race and ethnicity, and gender and family. She is founder and former director (2004-2012) of the Community Service-Learning Program at the U of A, which partners with local communities to support learning across the University from its home in the Faculty of Arts. Email: sdorow@ualberta.ca

Nicole Smith Acuña (M.Ed) taught with the public school board in Edmonton for 10 years before returning to university to earn a master's degree in Educational Policy Studies. She continues to work as an educator and facilitator with the Centre for Community Organizing and Popular Education, using common texts and critical questioning to engage participants in discussions around structural violence and anti-oppression. She is currently the Communications Coordinator for Sage, a seniors serving organization in Edmonton.

References

Ang, I. (2005). Who needs cultural research? *Cultural Studies: From Theory to Action*, (pp. 477-483). Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons Ltd.

Antonio, A. L., Astin, H. S., & Cress, C. M. (2000). Community service in higher education: A look at the nation's faculty. *The Review of Higher Education*, 23(4), 373-397.

Benneworth, P., and Jongbloed, B. W. (2010). Who matters to universities? A stakeholder perspective on humanities, arts and social sciences valorisation. *Higher Education*, 59(5), 567-588.

Bloomgarden, A. H. (2008). *Prestige culture and community-based faculty work*. University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Bloomgarden, A. H., & O'Meara, K. (2007). Faculty Role Integration and Community Engagement: Harmony or Cacophony? *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 13(2), 5-18.

Boyer, E. L. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. Princeton, N.J: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Princeton University Press.

Colbeck, C. L., & Wharton-Michael, P. (2006). Individual and organizational influences on faculty members' engagement in public scholarship. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 2006(105), 17-26.

Denning, M. (2005). Lineaments and contradictions of the neoliberal university system. *Work & Culture*, 2.

Diamond, R. M., & Adam, B. E. (1995). *The disciplines speak: Rewarding the scholarly, professional, and creative work of faculty. Forum on faculty roles and rewards*. Washington: American Association for Higher Education,

Doberneck, D. M., Glass, C. R., & Schweitzer, J. (2010). From rhetoric to reality: A typology of

publically engaged scholarship. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 14(4), 5-35.

Dorow, S., Varnhagen, S., and Stack-Cutler, H. (2011). *Community perspectives on partnering with the University of Alberta: The 2009 survey of local Edmonton organizations*. Network for Community-Engaged Learning, University of Alberta.

Driscoll, A. (2008). Carnegie's community-engagement classification: intentions and insights. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 40(1), 38-41.

Ellison, J. & Eatman, T. K. (2008). *Scholarship in public: Knowledge creation and tenure policy in the engaged university*. Syracuse, NY: Imagining America

Fenwick, T. J., Nesbit, T., & Spencer, B. (Eds.). (2006). *Contexts of adult education: Canadian perspectives*. Toronto: Thompson Educational Press.

Finkelstein, M. A. (2001). Toward a unified view of scholarship: Eliminating tensions between traditional and engaged work. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 6(2), 35-44.

Flicker, S., Savan, B., Kolenda, B., & Mildenberger, M. (2008a). A snapshot of community-based research in Canada: Who? What? Why? How? *Health Education Research*, 23(1), 106-114.

Flicker, S., Savan, B., McGrath, M., Kolenda, B., & Mildenberger, M. (2008b). "If you could change one thing…" What community-based researchers could have done differently. Communi*ty Development Journal*, 43(2), 239-253.

Gibbons, M., Limoges, C., Nowotny, H., Schwartzman, S., Scott, P., & Trow, M. (1994). *The new production of knowledge: The dynamics of science and research in contemporary societies*. London: Sage.

Giroux, H. A. (2010). Bare pedagogy and the scourge of neoliberalism: Rethinking higher education as a democratic public sphere. *The Educational Forum*, 74(3), 184-196.

Hall, B. L. (2009). Higher education, community engagement, and the public good: Building the future of continuing education in Canada. *Canadian Journal of University Continuing Education*, 35(2), 11-23.

Holland, B.A. (2005). Scholarship and mission in the 21st-century university: The role of engagement. *2005 Australian Universities Quality Forum*, 11-17. Retrieved from https://depts.washington.edu/ccph/pdf_files/AUQA_paper_final_05.pdf

Holland, B. A. (2001). Toward a definition and characterization of the engaged campus: six cases. *Metropolitan Universities: An International Forum*, 12(3), 20-29.

O'Meara, K., Sandmann, L. R., Saltmarsh, J., & Giles Jr, D. E. (2011). Studying the professional lives and work of faculty involved in community engagement. *Innovative Higher Education*, 36(2), 83-96.

Onyx, J. (2008). University-community engagement: What does it mean? *Gateways: International Journal of Community Research and Engagement*, 1, 90-106.

Sandmann, L. R. (2007). Conceptualization of the scholarship of engagement in higher education: A ten-year retrospective. *Learning in Community: Proceedings of the Joint International Conference of the Adult Education Research Conference (AERC) (48th National Conference) and the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE)/l'Association Canadienne pour l'Étude de l'Éducation des Adultes (ACÉÉA) (26th National Conference)*. Edited by Laura Servage and Tara Fenwick (June 2007)

Sandmann, L., Saltmarsh, J., & O'Meara, K. (2008). An integrated model for advancing the scholarship of engagement: Creating academic homes for the engaged scholar. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 12(1), 47-64.

Sandy, M. & Holland, B.A. (2006). Different worlds and common ground: Community partner

perspectives on campus-community partnerships. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, Fall, 30-43.

Seifer, S. D., Wong, K., Gelmon, S. B., & Lederer, M. (2009). The community-engaged scholarship for health collaborative: A national change initiative focused on faculty roles and rewards. *Metropolitan Universities Journal*, 20(2), 5-21.

Smith Acuña, N. (2012). *Arts community engagement study, Faculty of Arts University of Alberta*. Retrieved from http://www.csl.ualberta.ca/en/Resources/~/media/Community%20Service%20Learning/Documents/Reports/ACESReport-FINAL.pdf

Sobrero, P., & Jayaratne, K. S. U. (2014). Scholarship perceptions of academic department heads: Implications for promoting faculty community engagement scholarship. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 18(1), 123-153.

Stanton, T. K. (2008). New times demand new scholarship: Opportunities and challenges for civic engagement at research universities. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, 3(1), 19-42.

Szorenyi-Reischl, N. (2005, July). Community engagement: a cautionary tale. *Australian Universities Quality Forum*, 136-143. Retrieved from https://depts.washington.edu/ccph/pdf_files/AUQA_paper_final_05.pdf

Vogelgesang, L. J., Denson, N., & Jayakumar, U. M. (2010). What determines faculty-engaged scholarship? *The Review of Higher Education*, 33(4), 437-472.

Wade, A., & Demba, A. (2009). A conceptual model to explore faculty community engagement. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 15(2), 5-16.

Watermeyer, R. (2011). Challenges for university engagement in the UK: Towards a public academe? *Higher Education Quarterly*, 65(4), 386-410.

Weerts, D.J. and Sandmann, L.R. (2010). Community engagement and boundary-spanning roles at research universities. *The Journal of Higher Education* 81(6), 702-727.

Winter, A., Wiseman, J., & Muirhead, B. (2006). University-community engagement in Australia: Practice, policy and public good. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, 1(3), 211-230.

Wolf, M. (1992). *A thrice-told tale: Feminism, postmodernism, and ethnographic responsibility*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.