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Inciting the Social Imagination: Education Reseach for the Public Good

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AERA 2011

INCITING THE SOCIAL IMAGINATION: EDUCATION RESEARCH FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD

PUBLICLY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP: EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS, CAREER PATHWAYS AND CONCEPTUALIZING KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

SESSION HANDOUT

Division J - Postsecondary Education
Section 4: **Faculty, Curriculum, and Teachin**g
Location: Sheraton/ Grand Ballroom A
Date/Time: Saturday, April 9, 2011, 2:15 – 3:45 (90 min)

Chair: M. Christopher Brown II, Fisk University

Participants:

I. Profiles and Pathways: A Mixed Methods Study of the Aspirations and Career Decisions of Early Career Publicly Engaged Scholars –
Tim Eatman, Syracuse University; Staci Weber, Syracuse University; Wendy Nastassi, Syracuse University; and Adam Bush, University of Southern California.

II. College Unbound: Imagining and Operationalizing Publicly Engaged – Scholarly Practice in a New College Model. *Adam Bush, University of Southern California; Tim Eatman, Syracuse University*.

III. The Engaged Scholar in the Disengaged Institution: Framing Scholar Activism for Faculty Success – *Leon Caldwell, Rhodes College.*

IV. From Ivory Tower to Lookout Tower: Evolving conceptualizations of Knowledge Making in the 21st Century - Tim *Eatman, Syracuse University; Shuaib Meacham, University of Delaware*

Abstract

Publicly Engaged Scholarship (PES) is emerging as a paradigm expanding notions about knowledge production and a methodological toolkit for impactful, interdisciplinary, scholarly practice. While a growing literature provides evidence for its efficacy, more is needed to specify key dimensions. Shaped around findings from a national study exploring the aspirations and decisions of graduate students and early career professionals, this research symposium brings together key individual and institutional aspects of PES. The second paper presents insights from the first year of an innovative college model designed around core principles of PES. Employing a conceptual approach, two additional papers in turn, interrogate the role of "activism" in scholarship and present conceptual framing for knowledge production and institutional change in the 21st Century.

Session Summary

As institutions of higher education demonstrate an increasing sensitivity to issues of specific and immediate relevance to the "public good," there is a concomitant shift in the ways that scholarly work is being conducted (Boyer, 1996b; Calhoun, 2006). From the very beginnings of American higher education there have always been cadres of academics intentional about the public dimensions of their work. In the current era an apparent concentration of scholars who resonate with Publicly Engaged Scholarship (PES) by shaping their research, scholarly activity, teaching and practice around questions of the public good is emerging (Boyer, 1996a; Schon, 1995). As this shift registers, questions about graduate school experiences (Beckman, Brandenberger, & Shappell, 2009; Wendler, Bridgeman, & Cline, 2010), career pathways - including faculty life, work and rewards (Ellison & Eatman, 2008; Saltmarsh, Giles Jr, Ward, & Buglione, 2009; Walker, Golde, Jones, Bueschel, & Hutchings, 2008), innovative approaches for the development of higher education options (Kamenetz, 2010) and issues concerning knowledge production and institutional change (Alperovitz, Dubb, & Howard, 2008; Fitzgerald, 2007) loom large.

Pivoting on a national study of the aspirations and decisions of graduate students and early career professionals (in and outside of academe), the objectives of this research symposium are five-fold. First, it draws from compelling empirical data to delineate the career parameters and profiles of publicly engaged scholars. Second, the symposium will analyze the impact of a publicly engaged curricular model on the experiences of first generation college students. This symposium will then promote a deeper conceptual understanding of PES by examining, the rich tradition of the 'scholar activist,' and the ivory tower metaphor, which is so critical to academic identity and practice, and the impact of PES upon these dominant metaphorical conceptions. Finally, this symposium seeks to demonstrate the connections among the papers through a dialogic interaction among the panelists as well as elucidating questions and insights about PES through interaction with attendees.

Employing a panel style format, each of the researchers will give brief presentations of their scholarship followed by a discussant-facilitated conversation among the panelists' addressing the relatedness of their work under a PES frame. A major element of this discussion will be to reflect upon a series of pre-conference meetings among panelists established to facilitate a collaboration process illustrative of PES work. Session attendees will then be drawn into the exchange for dialogue and feedback. This symposium has been planned toward the development of scholarly products.

The significance of this symposium resides in the fact that it includes one of the first empirical, data-driven pictures of an increasingly prominent research paradigm, and one of few to be conducted on a national-scale. This symposium complements the empirical with a data-driven analysis of the manner in which a PES curriculum impacts the experiences of one of the most challenged demographics in higher education, first generation college students. Finally, this symposium provides sophisticated conceptual and theoretical insights into PES by examining historical traditions identifying alternative metaphors through which to perceive the academy from a publicly engaged perspective.

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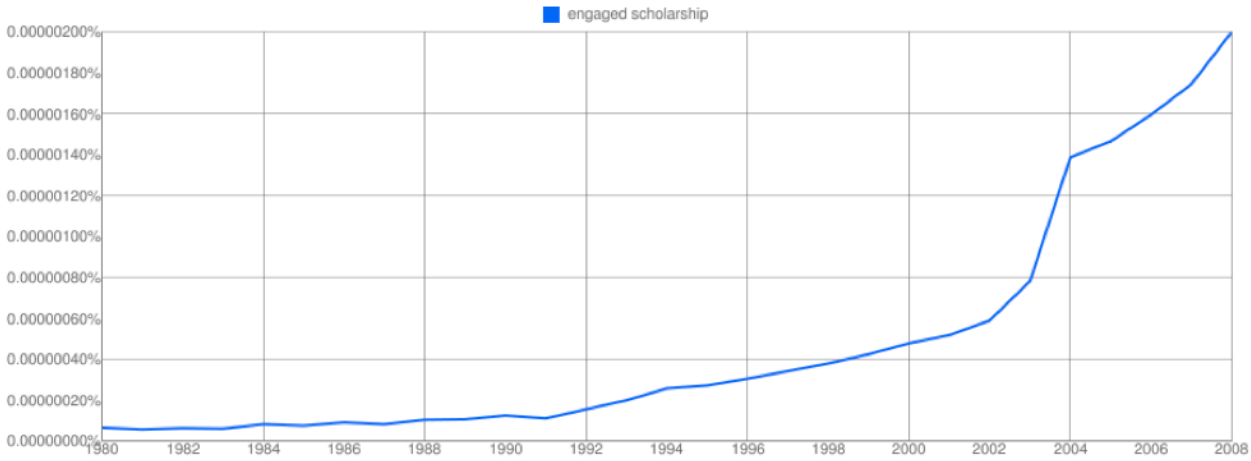
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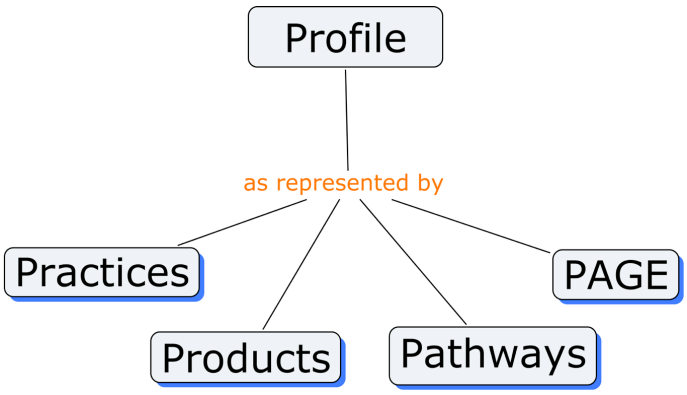
Paper 1 Title: Profiles and Pathways: A Mixed Methods Study of the Aspirations and Career Decisions of Early Career Publicly Engaged Scholars

Imagining America
Artists and Scholars in Public Life

Link to Summary

Research Questions

1. What profile(s) best suit the emerging publicly engaged scholar in the cultural disciplines (arts humanities & design)?
    a. Origins of identification, philosophies
    b. Types of interests, projects, and work.
2. How does graduate education prepare students to become publically engaged scholars?
    a. Mentoring
    b. Training in engaged research methods
    c. Culture of public purpose and legitimacy of community engagement
3. What professional pathways exist for publicly engaged scholars?
    a. Range of options
    b. Factors relating to sector choice
    c. Risks and benefits of particular pathway choices
    d. What *kinds* of programmatic resources and structures do students interested in public scholarship consider most effective or influential?
4. What impact does the PAGE program for graduate education in the cultural disciplines?
    a. Demonstrate the value added of the program.
    b. What next steps related to publically engaged scholarship do PAGE participants take in actualizing career options?



Paper 1 Title: Profiles and Pathways: A Mixed Methods Study of the Aspirations and Career Decisions of Early Career Publicly Engaged Scholars

KEY DATA POINTS (SURVEY):

Identity



Demographics

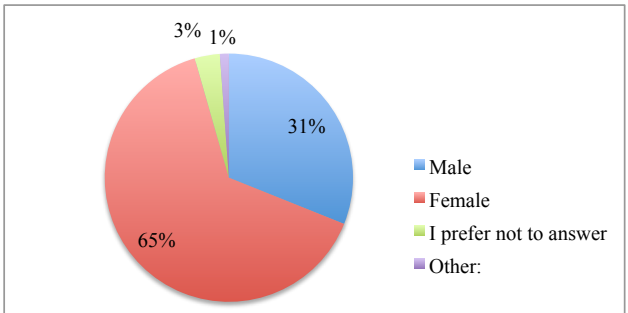


Figure 1. PES survey participants by gender.

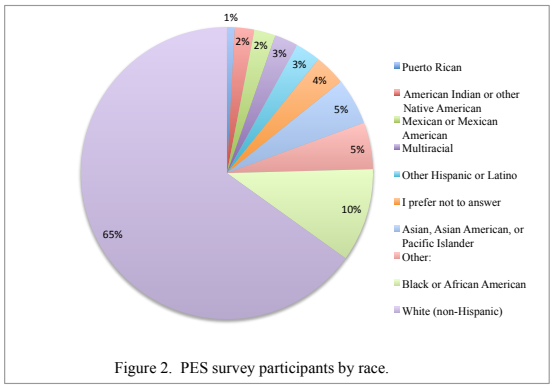


Figure 2. PES survey participants by race.

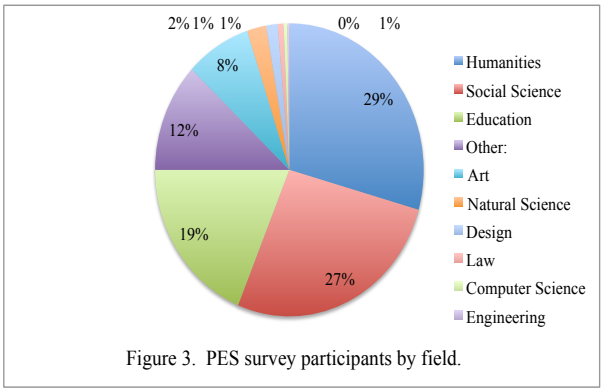


Figure 3. PES survey participants by field.

Paper 1 Title: Profiles and Pathways: A Mixed Methods Study of the Aspirations and Career Decisions of Early Career Publicly Engaged Scholars

KEY DATA POINTS (SURVEY CONT.):

What do you hope to accomplish through your engaged scholarship? (Select all that apply.) Total responses (N): 429 Did not respond: 5

Answer	*Frequency*	*Percentage*
Social entrepreneurialism	60	13.99%
Enhance research methodology	170	39.63%
Enact or support civic leadership	171	39.86%
Provide support/mentorship for your research population	203	47.32%
Personal growth	259	60.37%
Improve pedagogy	261	60.84%
Enact or support civic engagement and responsibility	291	67.83%
Expand knowledge, methods, and/or scholarship in the public	311	72.49%
Promote social justice	319	74.36%
Expand knowledge, methods, and/or scholarship in the discipline	331	77.16%

How important was/is it for you to find a position after graduate school at a college or university that values publicly engaged scholarship? Total responses (N): 431 Did not respond: 3

Answer	*Frequency*	*Percentage*
Not important	40	9.28%
Somewhat important	69	16.01%
Important	86	19.95%
Very important	122	28.31%
Extremely important	114	26.45%

Paper 1 Title: Profiles and Pathways: A Mixed Methods Study of the Aspirations and Career Decisions of Early Career Publicly Engaged Scholars

KEY DATA POINTS (STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS):

Spheres of Commitment:
Individual:
- Why public scholars do this work?

University:
- The mission of the university
- The department's commitment to public scholarship
- The university's relationship with its community

Community (local, national, abroad):
- Who are the public scholars' collaborators?
- Importance of "local" work

Identity:
- Teacher
- Engaged artist
- Activist
- Change agent
- Scholar
- Multiple hats

Motivation:
- Tools for change
- Personal
- Innate
- PES as pedagogy

Bridging Worlds:
- Higher education and community
- Higher education and K-12 education
- Theory and practice

EMERGENT TYPOLOGIES:

Profile 1 – Cradle to community scholar (Sarah)
Profile 2 – Artist as engaged scholar (Cynthia)
Profile 3 – Teacher to Engaged Scholar (Tomas)
Profile 4 –Program coordinator to engaged administrator/scholar (Selinda)
(Profile 5) – Engaged interdisciplinarian
(Profile 6) – Activist to scholar
(Profile 7) – Engaged Pragmatist

Paper 1 Title: Profiles and Pathways: A Mixed Methods Study of the Aspirations and Career Decisions of Early Career Publicly Engaged Scholars

Profiles:

Sarah:
I am a publicly engaged scholar, I think. After volunteering in a nursing home as a child, I worked there after graduating college with an art degree. Working there raised many questions for me, which lead me to study aging in graduate school. I found support in a professor who also served our community as a child psychologist. Her mentorship gave me the encouragement I needed to bridge my interdisciplinary interests in art and aging.

Tomas:
For years, I taught in urban city schools. When I decided to return to graduate school and become a faculty member, I could not fathom leaving secondary education all together. In order to keep one foot in the K-12 arena and another in higher education, I learned the benefits of community-based research teams. I now work with community members, local educators, faculty, and students on school reform and enhancing classroom learning.

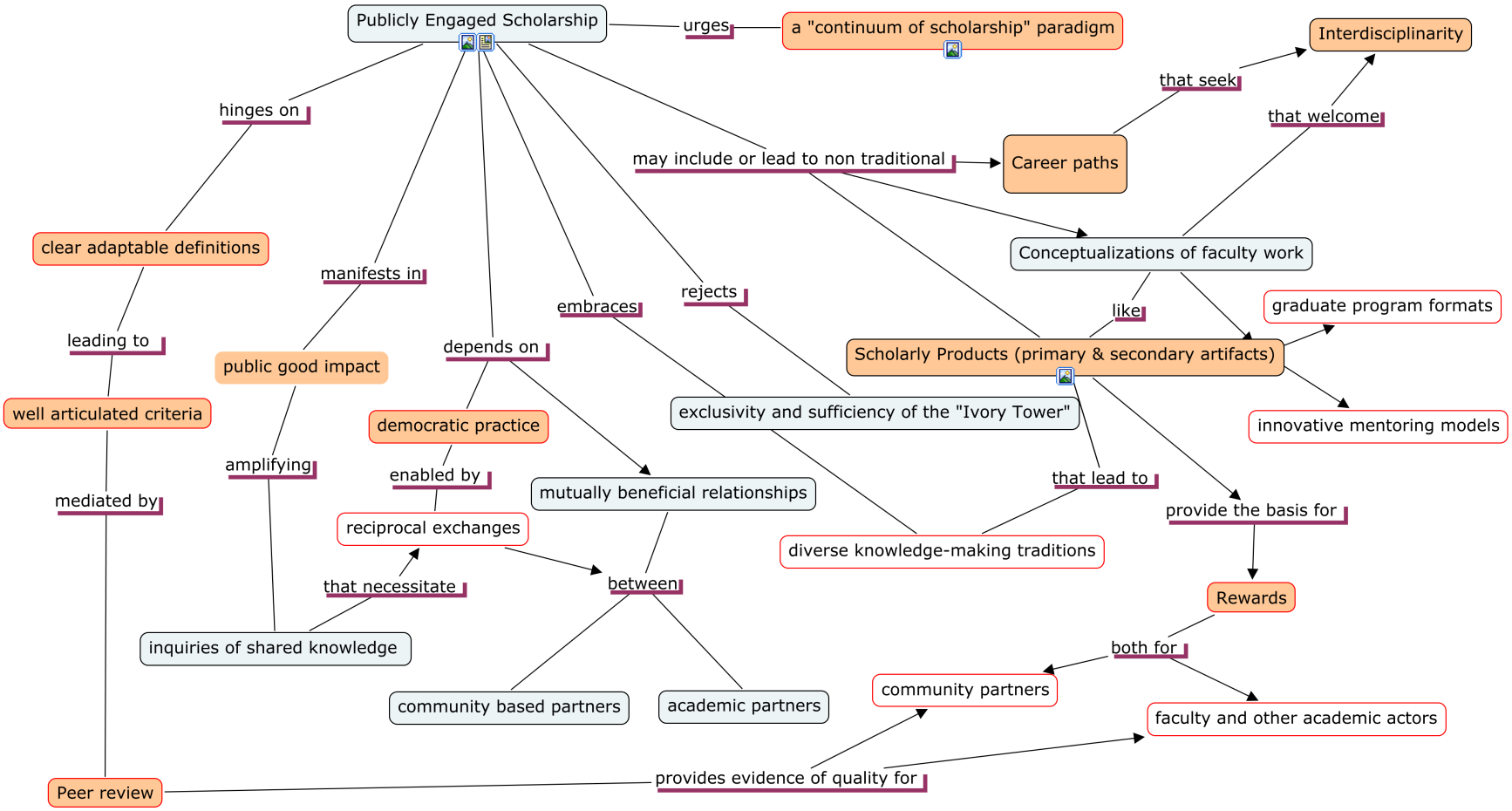
Cynthia:
I am an artist, an activist, and a scholar. I use documentary film as a creative outlet to give people a voice. When I applied to graduate school I wanted to remain local, so I would not have to uproot my family or leave my artist community. My advisor introduced me to his work and used the term publicly engaged scholarship. I now have the language to support the work I have always done. I am a publicly engaged artist tied to the academy.

Selinda:
After graduating college, I accepted an offer for coordinator of service learning. I loved my job, but envied the faculty members who taught their students using service learning as a form of pedagogy. Thus, I began to pursue my PhD part-time and use public need to inform my scholarship. I now teach community-based classes because I believe in the pedagogy of public scholarship. I am still untenured. Other than that, I have my dream job and would not change a thing.

Paper 1 Title: Profiles and Pathways: A Mixed Methods Study of the Aspirations and Career Decisions of Early Career Publicly Engaged Scholars

Conceptual Map

Focus Question: What are the key elements of publicly engaged scholarship (PES)?



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Paper 2 Title: College Unbound: Imagining and Operationalizing Publicly Engaged - Scholarly Practice in a New College Model.

Link to Summary

COLLEGE UNBOUND

Intervention model



Individual

- Connectedness:
- Identity in Engagement
- Transition and Persistence

Institutional

- Tensions between CU actual experience and traditional College model—uncertainty, size, responsibility/burden of representation, developmentally appropriate individuation
- Relationship between home, college, and the surrounding community
- Development of Core Learning competencies

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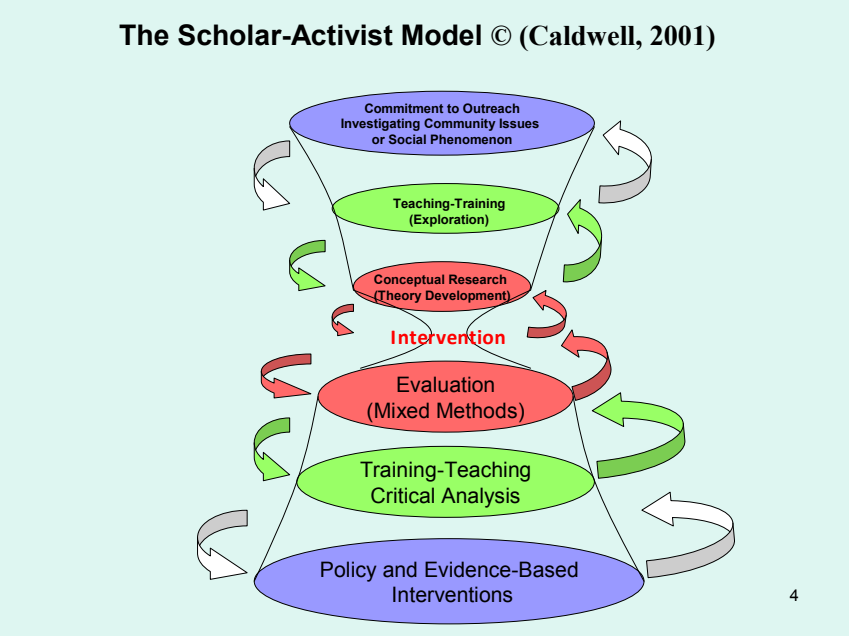
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Paper 3 Title: The Engaged Scholar in the Disengaged Institution: Framing Scholar Activism for Faculty Success

Link to Summary



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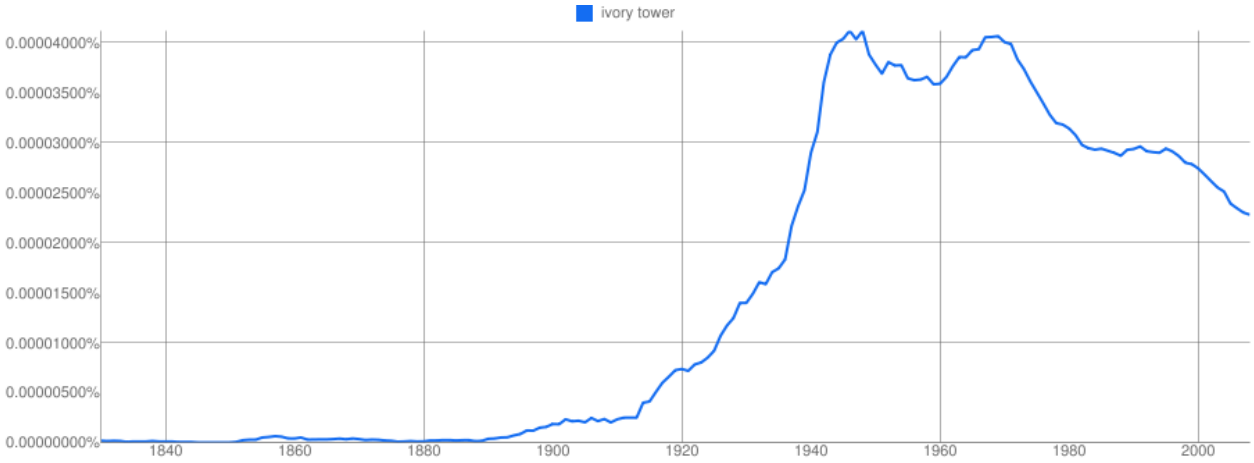
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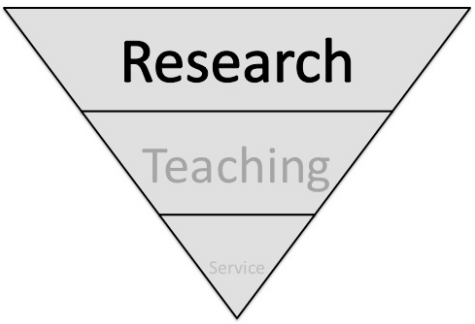
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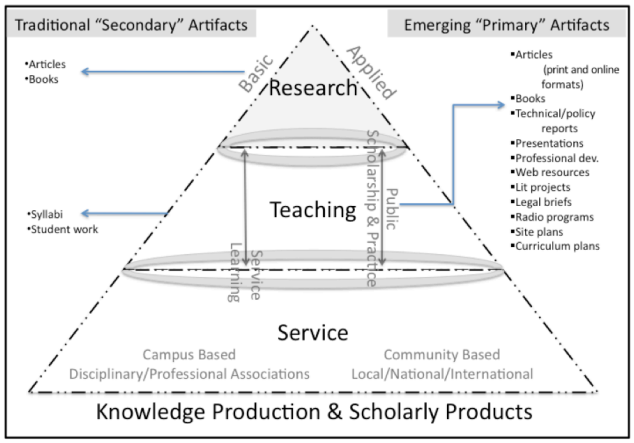
Paper 4 Title: From Ivory Tower to Lookout Tower: Evolving Conceptualizations of Knowledge Making in the 21st Century







"Traditional" Scholarship



Paper 4 Title: From Ivory Tower to Lookout Tower: Evolving Conceptualizations of Knowledge Making in the 21st Century

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