

# ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP IN TENURE AND PROMOTION

## Autoethnographic Insights from the Fault Lines of a Shifting Landscape

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### Abstract

*Pre- and post-tenure faculty face immense pressure to meet professional expectations and requirements from their colleagues and disciplines. Faculty involved in community-campus engagement (CCE) for social change face additional demands to maintain relationships and continue their interventions. We present a collective autoethnography from a Canadian context reflecting on experiences as CCE faculty at various stages of tenure and promotion (T&P). We draw from our efforts working together on a pan-Canadian CCE research project, Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement (CFICE). From these experiences, we identify tensions within T&P processes and argue the need for highly contextualized narratives when faculty present their collaborative efforts, research processes with community partners, and community impact in their multiple faculty roles. From these kinds of narratives, the intra- and inter-institutional gaps, connections and spaces become clearer, especially for tenured and increasingly senior faculty, to support culture change at the institutional level, thereby increasing the value and recognition of CCE.*

### Introduction

Community-campus engagement (CCE) is often transdisciplinary, bringing together multiple forms of scholarship. For example, service-learning and community-based research is premised on mutually beneficial partnerships, integrating teaching and/or research with discovery, theory, action, and reflection. Some engaged scholars bring CCE into selected facets of their academic life, while others see it as a central approach to scholarship with interrelationship between teaching, research, and service. While CCE has many documented benefits (Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998; Peterson, 2009), the scholarly literature identifies a range of systemic and struc-

tural challenges engaged scholars are forced to confront when seeking to have their activities recognized within their discipline or academic unit. Specifically, tenure and promotion (T&P) expectations are known to play a critical role in inhibiting engaged scholarship (Barreno, Elliott, Madueke, & Sarny, 2013; Foster, 2012; Israel et al., 1998; Moore & Ward, 2010; O'Meara, 2002; Russell-Stamp, 2015; Sobrero & Jayaratne, 2014; Tremblay, 2017). In turn, increasing the quality and quantity of CCE oriented toward social justice and positive impacts for communities hinges on creating conditions in which the value of engaged scholarship is better understood within the academy.

Within the context of a neoliberal shift in North American universities (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2000), we recognize that pre- and post-tenure faculty struggle to continue the momentum of their community-engaged interventions both inside and outside their home institutions. This is especially true for those at the intersection of research, teaching, and service for social change. In Canada and the United States, T&P is the basis for full-time faculty employment that includes protections for due process. While the tenets underlying tenure (e.g., job security and academic freedom) were established alongside the university system, it has only been connected to academia since the establishment of the American Association of University Professors in 1915 and much later in Canada through the Canadian Association of University Teachers (for a history of tenure in the United States, see Ludlum, 1950; in Canada, see Horn, 1999, 2015). Horn (2015) notes that tenure is necessary most of all to protect “those who do research, [ . . . ] that does not produce quick results and satisfies no commercial demand” (p. 35). This is particularly relevant for engaged scholars. While the origins and intentions of academic tenure in the United States and Canada are similar, Acker and Webber (2017) note some significant differences. For example, nearly all Canadian postsecondary institutions are public; unions play a larger role in Canada with collective agreements, spelling out the tenure and promotion processes.

In this article, we present our collective autoethnography from a Canadian context reflecting on our experiences as CCE faculty at various stages of tenure and promotion (T&P). We draw from our efforts working together on a pan-Canadian CCE research project, *Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement (CFICE)*. These reflections highlight our different positionalities, stages of development, and different contexts of institutional understanding of CCE in relation to T&P within varying disciplines and universities. From these experiences, we identify the tensions within T&P processes and argue the need for highly contextualized narratives when faculty present their collaborative efforts, research processes with community partners, and community impact in their multiple faculty roles. The connections and spaces made intra- and inter-institutionally, especially by tenured and increasingly senior faculty, to disseminate knowledge, impact, and research processes also support culture change at the institutional level, thereby increasing the value and recognition of CCE.

In the next section, we begin with a review of the literature on the relationship between tenure, promotion, and community impact within the broader neoliberal context. We then outline our method of constructing our collaborative autoethnography as an approach to understand these complex and highly contextual issues. Key themes that surfaced from our analysis are presented next and followed by a discussion of new insights that come from our analysis and steps for ongoing transformation, including cross-institutional interventions at the national level.

## Tenure and Promotion and Engaged Scholarship

Though not universal, the goal of attaining tenure is common for faculty within Western academic institutions. Studies have demonstrated greater faculty willingness to take on innovative research methods and expand conceptualizations of research impact once tenure has been secured (Nir & Zilberstein-Levy, 2006; Tien & Blackburn, 1996). As academic institutions in North America face increasing neoliberal “pressures of corporatization and flexibilization” (Bauder, 2006, p. 228), moves by faculty toward tenure are complicated as institutions implement higher student-to-faculty ratios and measures toward more contract and part-time labor (Bauder, 2006; Dobbie & Robinson, 2008; Etmanski, Walters, & Zarifa, 2017; Frye, 2018; Ginsberg, 2012). The gendered and racialized dimensions of this process also become evident with consistently lower proportions of marginalized people holding tenure positions or taking longer to secure tenure within many institutions (Finkelstein, Conley, & Schuster, 2016; Perna, 2001; Stewart, Ornstein, & Drakich, 2009; Sturm, 2006).

With senior tenured faculty often maintaining substantial decision-making control over hiring and the tenure approval process, new and tenure-track faculty are often encouraged to pursue narrow research paths toward highly specialized expertise that produces short-term outputs (Boyer, 1990; Diener, 2009; Ellison & Eatman, 2008; Gardner & Blackstone, 2013; Youn & Price, 2009). Another important layer is the high degree of variation across institutions, disciplines, and departments (Barreno et al., 2013; Doberneck, 2016; O’Meara, 2002), where faculty need to respond to T&P guidelines and practices attentive to their home academic unit as well as to the requirements of university-wide T&P committees. Significantly, Alperin et al. (2019) note that the academy frequently maintains only broad conceptualizations of impact relating to the public realm; within this context, faculty are offered “neither explicit incentives, nor clear structures of support” to pursue research serving the public good, with the value of community-oriented outputs often measured at the discretion of evaluation committees (p. 17). These varied situations influence a complex path to tenure for faculty committed to engaged scholarship and to supporting impact in community.

Existing scholarship identifies clear challenges that engaged scholars experience in being recognized for T&P (Freeman, Gust, & Aloschen, 2009; O’Meara, Eatman, & Petersen, 2015; Sobrero & Jayaratne, 2014). Recent studies of tenure drawing upon interviews of faculty regarding their experiences in their respective academic units has provided a rich overview of barriers for faculty involved in CCE (Baker, 2001; Barreno et al., 2013; Martinez-Brawley, 2003; Moore & Ward, 2010; Terosky, 2018). Challenges experienced by faculty emerge in part through the differential value institutionally ascribed to CCE and where that value is placed along a research/non-research binary in the academy. Although there is a wide range of variation in T&P guidelines, practices, and cultures within which these are located, recent scholarship outlines fairly consistent barriers.

T&P expectations influence the depth of participation by faculty in CCE and associated opportunities for community impact. In general, scholars note the colonial and productivist structures of universities as barriers where community is viewed as an object to be studied (Ahmed, Beck, Maurana, & Newton, 2004; Buys & Bursnall, 2007; Hale, 2008; Pillard Reynolds, 2019). The perception of CCE as only service to the community or community activism and not research continues in many fields (Seifer, Wong, Gelmon, & Lederer, 2009;

Tremblay, 2017). In both formal and informal communication related to T&P, faculty are typically informed of standards that include publishing in discipline-specific journals, paying close attention to journal impact factors when deciding where to submit research articles, and presenting at reputable conferences (O'Meara et al., 2015; Tremblay, 2017). For scholars involved in CCE, publishing in discipline-specific journals may mean postponing development of community-based work, spending less time building relationships with community (Calleson, Kauper-Brown, & Seifer, 2005; Checkoway, 2015), and choosing not to develop outputs that, while meaningful to community, would be less recognized through a T&P lens (Jackson, Schwartz, & Andrée, 2008). In addition, discipline-specific conferences and high-impact journals in many fields may be less open to including community-engaged research, and the conferences or journals where engaged faculty publish their research may be less valued within their discipline or academic unit.

Scholarly literature provides a range of recommendations for what individual engaged faculty can do to facilitate their T&P, including the following: develop collaborative research projects that include tenured faculty and full professors for mentorship and institutional support; build a case for how students benefit from CCE in the classroom; show that highly regarded institutions encourage CCE; prepare a strong tenure dossier that includes a carefully reasoned argument demonstrating alignment between their engaged scholarship and the university's mission; annotate T&P documents to clearly demonstrate roles in publications, collaborations with community partners, and community impact; and select external reviewers carefully (Barreno et al., 2013; Beere, Votruba, & Wells, 2011; Brunner, 2016; Hutchinson, 2011; Jordan, 2007). In addition to individual faculty action, for CCE to be valued institutionally, senior administrators (many of whom are also faculty) must also play a role in communicating that engaged scholarship is indeed important in promotion of the university and in policy documents, filtering down to department levels (Baker, 2001; Ellison & Eatman, 2008). In the U.S. context, team efforts of faculty and senior administration are making inroads (O'Meara et al., 2015), and the Elective Carnegie Community Engagement Classification System continues to provide guidance to postsecondary institutions for institutional effectiveness in community engagement (Saltmarsh & Johnson, 2018).

Studies have also described how engaged scholars have been leading efforts to have CCE better understood and valued in their institutions, often incrementally as a "tempered radical" (Dostilio & Welch, 2019). Furthermore, research has demonstrated an active mentorship of pre-tenure faculty to broaden institutional perceptions of productive research and pedagogy, encourage innovative engaged methodologies, stimulate honest discussion of challenges in practice, strengthen relationships among sympathetic faculty and administrators, and ultimately influence positive culture change within and across institutions (Boehm & Larrivee, 2016; Brunner, 2016; Eatman, 2012; Moore & Ward, 2010). Foster (2012) moves beyond a review of specific actions, offering a typology of interventions that are either contextual or structural. Contextual interventions comprise individual faculty actions, including those identified above, that at minimum support one's own tenure and also intersect across research, teaching, and service. Doing engaged research that overlaps with teaching and results in peer-reviewed publications is an example of a primary contextual intervention. Structural interventions occur through program and policy change that clearly support engaged research in T&P. For example, Foster refers to a policy in

the University System of Georgia requiring that faculty who are engaging with schools need to improve student outcomes, thus this research would not require a defense during a tenure review. At the same time, Foster acknowledges that resistance to this policy can occur by others with influence in tenure decisions. Foster's typology offers a useful way to begin to understand how engaged scholars are seeking to shape T&P decisions. In this article, we advance this typology by bringing forward examples demonstrating that contextual and structural interventions are rarely discreet. They often go hand in hand as part of a multipronged effort to have CCE recognized and valued within their institutions with transformative potential.

While existing literature on the relationship between CCE and T&P focuses on the challenges for faculty, there is limited mention of collective CCE experiences of faculty from different postsecondary institutions, especially in the Canadian context, which is yet to have a comparative classification or critical mass of engaged scholars and senior administration to offer team building interventions on a sector-wide scale that also highlight and celebrate CCE within and beyond T&P processes. Gendered differences are mentioned in relation to recruitment and T&P in general but not within the specific context of CCE and among collective experiences where positionalities are also considered. Our article also explores how advocacy for and recognition of CCE has changed over time in relation to our T&P trajectories and our diverse positionalities.

## Method

Faculty have used autoethnographic method to show how individuals succeeded in T&P via engaged scholarship (Cutforth, 2013; Driscoll, 2005; Foster, 2012; Jacquez, 2014, 2018). This method presents personal narrative and enables a high level of personal reflexivity and highly specific and contextualized accounts. While storytelling is an important element of this writing, autoethnographic formats are varied and inventive to include vignettes (Lee & Gouzouasis, 2017; Perkins, 2017), streams of thought (Boncori & Smith, 2019; Szwabowski, 2018), poetry (Denshire, 2014; MacDonald, 2018; Szwabowski, 2018), performance scripts (Bhattacharya, 2014), and music (Lee & Gouzouasis, 2017). Furthermore, autoethnography provides an understanding of social and cultural realities from researcher experiences that serve as the basis of social critique and possibilities for change (Chang, 2013; Lapadat, 2017) to validate and inspire others (Diener & Liese, 2009). In this journal, it has been used to reveal the inadvertent replication of hierarchy between campus and community (Tilley-Lubbs, 2009); transformational experiences in teaching; new understanding of organizations and systems as well as new identities (Harrison, Clayton, & Tilley-Lubbs, 2014); and new perspectives and awareness related to the concept under study (Miller-Young et al., 2015).

The faculty authors of this paper, all engaged scholars at different stages of tenure in three different disciplines and four universities, adopted a collective autoethnographic method. This approach added a collaborative component that built on our individual autoethnographies to present our varied experiences with T&P processes and interventions to incorporate CCE into the cultures of our respective institutions. We (faculty authors) did so in order to gain a broader perspective of our individual experiences to support strengthening CCE. We

also drew from our collective experiences working together on the Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement (CFICE)<sup>1</sup> project. CFICE's mission was to explore opportunities for increased community benefit from CCE oriented to healthy and just communities. Funded as a major partnership grant by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) over seven years (2012–2019), CFICE has been a significant driver and intervention in CCE at the local, regional, and national scale.

For this article, we began by preparing a description of our individual autoethnographic journey in response to several prompts that were provided by the lead author. We had a series of discussions, identifying themes based from our experiences and collectively drawing out insights to understand what has enabled us to become engaged scholars, our advocacy for engaged scholarship, the tensions between our engaged scholarship and T&P expectations, and the impact of these efforts for community as well as pre-tenure engaged scholars. We then organized our individual autoethnographies, according to these themes and distilled them further into what we call our collective autoethnography by presenting a third-person narrative with specific salient experiences in the first-person. From these experiences, we note that individual and collaborative autoethnographic method create highly contextualized, location-specific narratives and collective understanding of both the rewards and challenges of engaged scholarship. It also surfaces greater complexity of academic culture than what one individual autoethnography could offer, where engaged scholarship is at once increasingly accepted institutionally but also continues to rub up against the preference for recognized and individually created scholarly outputs for T&P. Although helpful for identifying themes for faculty interventions and possibilities, we do not claim these are universally applicable. We speak from our own experiences, recognizing the high degree of variability across academic units and institutions and that our insights may support faculty in their multiple roles as researchers, teachers, and administrators in their own institutions.

We recognize that vulnerability arises in the creation of autoethnography (Haynes, 2011; Reed-Danahay, 1997), including in the context of our CCE advocacy, which challenges traditional norms of T&P as well as the so-called identity-proper of being an academic. Yet, this vulnerability is with purpose to instigate and shape social change (Holman Jones, Adams, & Ellis, 2013). We are attentive to our diverse positionalities associated with our identities, including gender, race, immigration histories, and how we each navigate both community and scholarly relationships and outputs in relation to our own institutions. In presenting the interplay of these dynamics (e.g., positionality, the institutional specificities related to engaged research), our autoethnographies become examples of culture (ex)change in action. Reflecting upon our respective CCE journeys, we highlight who we are individually; the intersections between community impact in engaged scholarship and impact in academic research, teaching, and service; the enablers of our own engaged scholarship and recognition in T&P; contextual (individual) and structural interventions that have also overlapped for recognition and gradual transformation of CCE; and ongoing challenges within these processes.

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1. Community First: Impact of Community Engagement comprises over 60 community partners and over 20 universities. For more information, see <https://carleton.ca/communityfirst/>.

## Collective Autoethnographies

In the collective analysis of each of our journeys in CCE, we note that our personal histories, activism prior to and during our academic trajectories, and being brought into CCE community by colleagues and mentors have shaped who we are and our engaged scholarship. The enablers of our work in CCE and advancement in T&P include a long-term commitment to social and environmental justice endeavors not only as individual faculty but also as administrators as part of committees in our departments and throughout our institutions. We have been supported as students of engaged curriculum as well as by faculty mentors, funding opportunities for CCE from Canada's major granting councils, funding agencies, our own institutions, and, in one faculty's case, the inclusion of requirements relating to CCE in their tenure-track position.

**Nadine Changfoot:** Influenced by my parents' experiences growing up in apartheid South Africa, my student activism during my undergraduate and graduate years continued by way of introduction into engaged scholarship at the time of my appointment in the early 2000s. While I pursued tenure through the solo scholarly publications recommended and accepted by my peers, I also began research with community and learned about impact in terms of community pride and recognition they accrued through scholarly publication. My engaged research grew through mentorship, as did my relationships with community in race relations, community arts, and anti-poverty activism. I was invited to join CFICE as academic co-lead for the Community Environmental Sustainability Hub (Peterborough-Haliburton, ON) and in research leadership roles with Re•Vision: The Centre for Art and Social Justice because of these relationships. I continue to maintain, build new relationships and partnerships with community, orienting to social justice in areas of disability, neighborhood capacity building, aging, and decolonization. As a non-white, cisgendered woman faculty, I am aware of the challenges experienced by non-white faculty engaged in CCE.

**Peter Andrée:** I identify as a white, cisgendered man and a first-generation immigrant to Canada from the Netherlands. As a student and advocate for social and environmental justice, I was drawn to praxis-oriented professors, courses, and research methodologies. When I became a university professor, I brought my activist skill set (such as popular education tools) to this work. My mentors encouraged me to pay attention to traditional political science metrics. Thus, my successful tenure, and subsequent research awards that position me well for promotion to full professor, are grounded in engaged scholarship, but I recognize that much of what this work involves (e.g., the preparation of policy briefs and hosting webinars) are considered tangential to my books and journal articles in T&P processes. I was part of the Carleton University faculty members and community partners that initiated the CFICE project in 2011, initially serving as the academic co-lead for the Food Security Hub, then becoming the project's Principal Investigator in 2014.

**Charles Levkoe:** I was first exposed to CCE during my master's work from which I came to understand that community-engaged scholarship could be used to conduct rigorous, meaningful research. Afterward,

I spent 10 years working in the non-profit sector, with grassroots initiatives in Canada and internationally. Through this work, I became aware of the wealth of knowledge and experience held by activists and practitioners as well as their deep understanding of potential solutions to inequality and ecological degradation. My decision to return to graduate school was rooted in a commitment to support this work. Toward the end of my PhD, I was invited to join two major CCE projects that enabled me to continue my community-engaged research and teaching. Besides meeting the criteria for an academic position, having strong community partnerships and institutional support provided evidence and impact of engaged scholarship. I recognize that many of my achievements are, in part, related to the power and privilege that I carry as a white, cisgendered man and have dedicated my scholarship to community engagement and social change while advocating for institutional recognition for CCE.

Michelle Nilson: My first experiences with CCE began as an undergraduate student and continued beyond graduation as the coordinator of a community-campus partnership program. This role served to deepen my interest in community-campus and school-campus partnerships. During graduate school, I served in roles that fostered dialogues between policy makers and academics in the area of higher education. Now, as a cisgendered white settler and in the privileged position of being a tenured faculty member, developing shared inquiries and understandings of pressing educational and social issues has been instructive to my own settlement. Through my faculty position, I've collaborated with school districts and community foundations to understand critical issues like chronic absenteeism and future aspirations of vulnerable youth. Recently, my work has taken on a national scope through conferences and network development. Like Changfoot, I believe that it is important for faculty in positions of power to use their positions to advocate for equity in participation, recognition, and contribution of the work that is done in partnership with students, staff, and communities.

Our long-term commitment to social and environmental justice has shaped our individual and collective knowledge outputs, and it continues to shape and inform our continuing evolution as engaged scholars. We each found ways to pursue engaged research pre-tenure, with the most recent tenured faculty among us (Levkoe) having experienced mentorship as a postdoctoral fellow through CFICE. He was recently hired as the Canada Research Chair in Sustainable Food Systems, where engaged research is an integral part of the role, demonstrating the priority of CCE at his university. Having been brought together through our roles in CFICE, while also involved in additional CCE, we have come to better understand the high variability in each our practices within our respective disciplines and institutions as well as how we continue to grow and strengthen both conviction and practice and the importance of building relationships at all scales. From our discussions, a key underlying driver to our commitment and engagement is our pursuit of impact for community across our research, teaching, and service.



## Community Impact Through Engaged Scholarship

As engaged scholars, we have each prioritized working with non-profit organizations and/or social movements. In doing so, we recognize that traditional research and pedagogical norms situated in the academy are disrupted or disrupting to varying degrees within complex processes of collaboration. For example, engaging with community as an actor or entity is not monolithic but reflects highly specific contexts. We also recognize that community partners hold unique knowledge, perspectives, and expertise. Our community-centered approaches to joint inquiry and relationship building within CCE have enhanced the quality of our research and teaching and opened additional opportunities for research, dissemination, and service even when we are cautioned otherwise.

Levkoe recounts,

While many professors and fellow students warned me against doing CCE because it was so involved, messy, and time consuming, it didn't sway my decision. Upon reflection, I couldn't have done it without strong mentors, networks, skills, and experience built over two decades of academic and community experience. Today, as an associate professor, I have continued to center my research, teaching, and service within community. This is reflected in my research program, co-authored publications, service-learning courses, and sitting on numerous organizational boards and committees (see, e.g., Kepkiewicz, Levkoe, & Brynne., 2018; Levkoe et al., 2016; Levkoe, Erlich, & Archibald, 2019).

Involvement in CFICE and the Re•Vision Centre, for Changfoot, has added in her own words “credibility and legitimacy to my engaged research and teaching.” She has recently folded-in service through the curation of an artist residency which centered Indigenous knowledge in partnership with community. She has co-authored with research participants/disability community activists now research collaborators (Changfoot, Ansley, & Dodsworth, 2018), also extending readership into the community. At the same time, she has been told informally that CCE counts less than a discipline peer-reviewed scholarly publication for promotion. However, according to national Tri-Council guidelines, it meets knowledge mobilization guidelines where knowledge outputs are co-created with users themselves (SSHRC, 2019). It could also be viewed as counting in that new knowledge is created *with* research/community partners, disrupting the hierarchy between researcher and research participant (Rice, LaMarre, Changfoot, & Douglas, 2018) by giving voice to and sharing voice with disabled persons.

Collaboration has also figured centrally in André's work for years, in his words, “giving me new research ideas, strengthening my analysis, feeding my teaching and research opportunities for my students, and contributing to the impact of my work in scholarly circles and in the public sphere.” However, he also recognizes that “internalized academic norms have led me to walk a fine line between doing work collaboratively and defining my own voice.” For example, while undertaking his PhD research, André co-authored a report with fellow activists on the regulation of genetically modified organisms that he then turned into a single-authored academic journal article, bringing theory to bear on the case (André, 2006). This article was important in activist circles because its criticism was published in a reputable journal, but for André the strength of the article comes from the community-embedded research process that led to it.

In one partnership where Nilson worked with community, a set of research questions and design were developed that shed light on the reasons for chronic absenteeism in K–3. She notes, “without trusted relationships integral to the research, we could not have come to deeper understanding of the complex relationships between families and schools.” Materials developed out of this collaboration included presentations to the regional principals and vice-principals, multiple interviews with media, informational materials for families about the unintended consequences of chronic absenteeism, national and international research presentations by the team, two master’s theses, and three co-authored peer-reviewed academic articles. Chronic absenteeism was significantly reduced across the early grades in the partnering schools.

These vignettes illustrate the central role that engaged scholarship has come to play for each of us. While sometimes working at cross-purposes to the norms of our disciplines, engagement with social movement and community partners is about “strengthening analysis,” “reciprocity,” “credibility,” and “legitimacy” in community settings that ultimately contribute to sustained community impact. The tensions characteristic of engaged scholarship also come to fore. Andrée’s 2006 article was strong because it was created through embedded research, but it was not presented as such in the literature in order to serve his career (and, ironically, the activist community) better. Changfoot’s co-authored chapter may count less for promotion than her solo and faculty co-authored journal articles, but it is read within her activist community(ies). The next section offers further examples of the challenges and tensions we have experienced directly as engaged scholars applying for T&P.

## The (Ongoing) Challenge of T&P

Within our varied positions as engaged scholars, we have each experienced the constraints of T&P processes identified in the literature noted above. Here we address the pressure to produce certain types of outputs, our experience with the shifting CCE landscape in relation to T&P, and our advocacy for engaged scholarship within our own T&P journeys. Finally, we highlight the issue of co-investigation and co-publishing as natural outcomes of CCE that remains under-appreciated in the academic sphere.

All of us have felt, in one way or another, the pressure to produce specific types of scholarly outputs and the challenges and compromises associated with it. Changfoot writes, “As a PhD student and pre-tenured faculty, I was made aware that engaged scholarship was not considered acceptable for T&P.” In spite of this, she started to pursue research with anti-poverty activists and community artists who welcomed her upon her arrival in Peterborough/Nogojwanong, publishing a scholarly article (Changfoot, 2007) that supported community pride and self-reflection as well as her T&P. Engaged scholarship increased after being awarded tenure “with mentorship that helped me see how I could make it align with the demands post-tenure and because of the community it created, personally and professionally.” Andrée and Levkoe faced similar pressures. They both responded by trying to achieve two sets of goals in parallel. Andrée writes,

My pre-tenure work is a story of doing engaged scholarship in all of its forms and then squirreling away on the evenings and weekends to create the academic outputs I knew my disciplinary colleagues value— notwithstanding the toll this took on my family life.

Levkoe comments,

My academic-activist work involved doing things that were required by academic standards including publishing, participating in academic conferences, teaching, student supervision, and service in the university and professional associations as well as taking on additional tasks necessary to engaged scholarship. For example, it meant making time to support community organizing, communicating with community groups, sitting on boards and executive committees, undertaking community-focused knowledge mobilization, and most importantly, just spending time in community.

Like Andrée, Levkoe “felt like [he] was doing two full-time jobs.” He adds, however, “I was not a victim in any of this; it was a conscious choice I made to engage in this type of meaningful and important work.”

The landscape of recognition for CCE is shifting, with our institutions embracing CCE. However, this shift is not taking place uniformly across and within institutions, thereby creating mixed messages for engaged scholars. Nilson’s story is instructive here. When she applied for T&P, “there were clear divisions within my institution. The president and senior administration were supportive of CCE, rewriting the academic mission and vision of the institution to reflect an orientation to become the most community-engaged university in Canada.” Her immediate colleagues and dean were also supportive of her work. However, her T&P committee was comprised of faculty members representing a myriad of programs, and many were unfamiliar with CCE approaches. “There was a significant misalignment between what I presented to the committee and their expectations.” As suggested in the Community-Campus Partnership for Health’s *Community-Engaged Scholarship Review, Promotion & Tenure Package* (Jordan, 2007), Nilson mapped out and indicated with an asterisk on her CV the artifacts she had created with community partners. As suggested by Jordan (2007), she also demonstrated their impacts in terms of “informing school district staff and leadership, impacts for thousands of students, including the academic articles, books, and chapters that resulted from these works.” She notes,

there have been changes to the T&P process since I was granted tenure, but recent T&P cases of colleagues whose work focuses on social justice and arts CCE facing similar challenges leads me to believe that the changes proposed have not yet been fully adopted into the Faculty culture.

Changfoot also sees a tension between her institution’s written recognition of CCE and what it could mean for individual faculty members. She reflected,

Will the outputs of my engaged scholarship enable me to attain the rank of full professor? I still experience a culture that, on the one hand, values CCE and, on the other hand, more readily recognizes solo scholarly publications in more traditional, disciplinary-accepted venues compared to co-authored ones in venues less recognized.

It remains to be seen how a culture that appears to accept CCE at an institutional level will impact the processes specific to promotion to full professor for individual faculty.

As Nilson's story illustrates, there can be an important role for self-advocacy for engaged scholars within their institutions. This advocacy, in turn, can encourage the next generation of engaged scholars, as illustrated in Andrée's story:

I was told I was in a good position before I applied for T&P. Recognizing this was a privileged position, one that may very well relate to my identity as a white cisgendered man, I framed my application in terms of engaged scholarship as a form of institutional advocacy, drawing inspiration and a definition of CES from the Community Campus Partnership for Health's *Community-Engaged Scholarship Review, Promotion & Tenure Package* (Jordan, 2007). CCE is typically conducted with marginalized communities, often by women, racialized, and queer academics. I have since shared my application with pre-tenure colleagues, and I know it has served to embolden others to articulate their work in these terms.

Two additional, related issues arose as we started analyzing themes across our experiences with T&P. These are the issue of the validity of co-investigator roles in larger, partnership-based projects and of co-authored articles in the social sciences. Andrée writes, "I expect my role as project PI to be recognized when I apply for promotion, but this remains a traditional measure of success. What bothers me is that the work of my collaborators may not be similarly recognized." Changfoot notes that when discussing CFICE and collaborative research with individual faculty,

I am often asked questions that subtly devalues it in ways noted by Wiltz, Veloria, Harkins, and Bernasconi (2016). I am asked what is *your* research, or who is the Principal Investigator (PI), suggesting that collaborative research does not fully "count," yet in collaborative research I have responsibilities of a PI for specific projects in terms of method, outputs, knowledge mobilization, and budgeting.

Andrée elaborates, "I have been told by some CFICE co-investigators that they cannot invest deeply in the project, because it won't 'count' according to their discipline's expectations." In other cases, he has heard that colleagues "have been able to make the case that a co-investigator role can be as important as that of PI." He "increasingly hears the phrase 'co-PI' in relation to other large partnership projects" and sees this as an important step forward.

While each of us experience respective challenges in our engaged research, we recognize that we pursue this path because of our ongoing commitment to ourselves and our communities to do research that is impactful, thus meaningful and rewarding but by no means intended to be self-congratulatory; we see this work as ongoing because of the logics of power that create social and economic inequalities and injustices. Furthermore, notwithstanding the challenging work we do, we recognize that we have privileged roles in relation to this larger struggle against injustice. As Levkoe writes,

When I began my role as CFICE academic co-lead of the Community Food Security/Sovereignty Hub, my capacity for CCE increased. Recognizing the privilege that I carry, I continue to struggle with my role working with people that have been marginalized. While many of these individuals have been leaders in social justice research and action, I am often considered as the “expert” and expected to speak on behalf of these efforts. While this will undoubtedly be an ongoing issue, it raises important questions about ways that CCE is inherently entrenched in issues of power and the role of faculty in respect to leadership, solidarity, and social change.

This subsection reveals a number of continued institutional gaps and opportunities for further strengthening and recognizing CCE so that this scholarship can continue in a supported and better understood way. In the next subsection, we highlight some of our endeavors to integrate CCE into our respective institutional decision-making around T&P and other processes that can impact T&P decisions and support faculty in their own interventions.

## Overlapping Contextual and Structural Interventions

With the growing cultural acceptance of CCE within postsecondary institutions, we note that our interventions for recognition of engaged scholarship have the potential to provide both individual and collective benefit. Yet these interventions take time, partly due to the timing of our university service assignments, their relationship building nature, and processes that require nuance when educating colleagues about engaged scholarship and the intersections of community engagement with research, teaching, and service. They take place within our academic units and at the institutional level.

Within academic units, we have advocated for recognition of CCE in T&P both during and after tenure. In September 2018, when Levkoe applied for tenure, he had some hesitations because the trajectory of his work was not a traditional one: “I did not have many solo-authored publications, and many of my research projects have had more impact in the community than on academic scholarship.” When preparing an application package, he highlighted the impact of his scholarship on the community, and in the committee meeting he was very forthcoming about his commitment to continuing CCE:

I was asked why I had so many co-supervised students and co-authored publications. I told them that I was an engaged scholar who believed strongly in collaborative research and writing and that my colleagues and students were also engaged in CCE and co-supervision was central to this. My evaluation was extremely positive and supportive. While I may have been fortunate to have a committee that supported this work, it was clear from the discussion that not everyone understood the meaning and value of CCE.

With tenure and having served as chair of her academic unit, Changfoot was comfortable introducing draft language into new criteria for full professorship whereby a sustained program of high-quality research and dis-

semination would be inclusive of collaborative and community-based research partnerships. While the process for finalizing the criteria for full professorship continues, there was an initial acceptance to include recognition of engaged scholarship following from Canada's Tri-Council partnership grants such as CFICE. She notes, "how this will translate into the adjudication of tenure applications at the departmental level and university level will become clearer in time. Educating faculty and senior administrators of the processes, outcomes, and impact of engaged research will be important."

We have also used our faculty roles in university service to make space and shape institutional support for CCE. Levkoe, as a member of Lakehead University's Senate Honorary Degrees Committee, has advocated for community practitioners involved in CCE to receive awards. He was also part of developing a Community-Engaged Research Award to showcase scholarly projects that work closely with and impact communities. At Carleton University, Andrée set up and led for nearly 10 years the Committee on Community Engaged Pedagogy (CCEP), which serves as a community of practice, bringing together faculty and staff who support engaged learning in teaching and research. This committee has had an impact over its 10 years. The group has, among other things, organized workshops, conferences, and annual Community Connection events; contributed to strategic planning processes and the 2017 presidential search; undertaken research on the prevalence and kinds of community-engaged learning practices; and met with the research ethics board regarding better recognition for the specificities of community-based research (including course-based). As of 2019, Carleton University now has a high-level Community Engagement Strategic Transformations Group and a Community Engagement Steering Committee. The establishment of these two committees point to the likelihood that community engagement will feature centrally in the next strategic plan.

As a member of the Research Policy Committee that reports to the Senate and Vice-President Research and Innovation, Changfoot had the opportunity to contribute to Trent University's Strategic Research Plan (2018), which now recognizes engagement with community based on reciprocal relationships, co-creation of knowledge, and orientation toward social change. Nilson views her role as an advocate-practitioner to inform colleagues, communities, and students about the spectrum of activities and opportunities that align with being an engaged scholar, teacher, and practitioner. At Simon Fraser University, she serves on the high-level Community-Engaged Research Steering Committee created by the Vice President Research Office, has worked closely with the associate dean and the newly formed Faculty of Education Research Hub to develop two speaker series, one for the Faculty of Education and the second for the university community.

Finally, applying for research funding and awards advances engaged research, teaching, and service, providing opportunities for partnerships with community partners, up-and-coming scholars, and graduate students. We each have worked with colleagues (both internal and external to the university) to develop and successfully apply for grants and funding opportunities related to CCE. Andrée chose to pursue a research achievement award at Carleton University to raise the profile of engaged scholarship at his institution: "I used the award to show my engaged scholar colleagues that we can win the university's 'top' prizes." He believes his award will influence how his colleagues view engaged scholarship. For Levkoe, his successful research grants are one way: "I have attempted to ensure that communities are primary beneficiaries" to hold events, support community-led projects, build

and support networks, and direct support and engagement with community partners. Changfoot directed a university fellowship award that renewed a university-community relationship, creating engaged research and teaching opportunities for disability access and understanding of the intergenerational implications of Indian Residential Schools (Kramer, 2018).

National interventions have been implemented to raise awareness of CCE and to create a national community of practice. Nilson has worked with the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education to enhance awareness of community engagement and scholarship, and she developed a pre-conference, day-long workshop on community-engaged research for Congress of Social Sciences and Humanities 2019 (the annual meeting of individual social science and humanities societies). From the CFICE working group initially called Aligning Institutions for Community Impact, Nilson, Andrée and community partners have been able to play leadership roles in helping to create and launch Community Campus Engage Canada (CCEC). CCEC is envisioned to become an independent national organization focused on building a national community of practice for CCE, undertaking advocacy around supportive provincial and federal policy and funding of CCE and establishing a national graduate student internship program for research with non-profit organizations (co-funded by Mitacs and private foundations).

In the shifting culture and context of CCE, our interventions are both contextual and structural. We see these as overlapping and not as a binary as Foster (2012) presented them from his own context. By creating spaces in our institutions for engaged scholarship to be recognized and cultivated, individual faculty (including ourselves) are supported and institutional change are enacted in the very process of incorporating engaged scholarship into institutional decisions such as T&P, appointments of university presidents, awarding honorary doctorates, creating speaker series, university-community partnerships, and conference organizing. This university service at the intersection of research and teaching holds importance for both faculty and community, demonstrating the continuing institutionalization of engaged scholarship, itself affecting gradual cultural transformation in our universities. While the overlapping contextual and structural interventions, highlighted above, show the acceptance and growth of engaged scholarship in our institutions, the question remains over the impact of these interventions in individual academic units and in T&P decision-making.

## Discussion

Drawing from our collective autoethnographies, here we focus on the common threads and draw out insights on future interventions (individual and structural and sector wide) in service of transformation to support engaged scholarship. First, our autoethnographies show that we have all experienced some validation for our CCE efforts. Indeed, there are a growing number of opportunities for engaged scholars in tenure-track positions. The landscape has shifted compared to what is discussed in the literature. The diversity in our experiences with engaged scholarship and T&P over the last 15 years illustrates this shift. At the time of Changfoot's tenure application in 2008, CCE was not recognized in T&P in her academic unit. Andrée's experience with tenure in 2011 shows that champions of CCE were available to mentor and support his engaged scholarship, but he was encouraged by

them to stick closely to the traditional expectations of his discipline. Nilson's experience illustrates how clearly making the connection between the outputs of her engaged research, their impact to community, and the scholarly outputs created from the research allowed her to bridge the support she received from senior administration with the education she provided for her T&P committee. Levkoe's most recent tenure experience among us in 2019 demonstrates the recognition of CCE both in his hiring and in his academic unit even while it was clear that educating his committee on CCE was still an important part of his T&P process.

Notwithstanding this shifting landscape, a common thread through our stories is the significant time required for parallel efforts to fulfill traditional T&P requirements while pursuing engaged research. When these are at odds, the question remains whether meeting both specific disciplinary expectations and being engaged scholars is more than what should be expected of faculty. In this situation, the burden of loss either falls disproportionately upon community and community-focused research outputs (including relationship building and the co-creation of outputs meaningful to community such as reports, webinars, or podcasts) or faculty who choose CCE research and outputs that do not count in the standard promotion model. Writing in 2016, Wiltz et al. note that engaged scholarship remains downgraded in status, seen as less rigorous, and the domain of women and non-white faculty. Mentorship of pre-tenure faculty through T&P will continue to be important.

Critical here is the question of the validation of knowledge mobilization and exchange associated with engaged scholarship since T&P decisions hinge so much on the validity of outputs. For engaged scholars, projects typically start through the collective or shared development of ideas and research objectives. As projects mature, the knowledge and information that is learned through the process is shared initially with the collaborating communities, in the spirit of collaboration and partnership, but also to enact principles of meaningful reciprocity and respect as partners in the work. This initial sharing of collaborative works can include but is not exclusive to presentations; sharing in meetings; social media; newspaper, magazine, and video or televised interviews; podcasts; and academic papers. Increasingly, our publications, while peer reviewed, are multiply co-authored in a diversity of scholarly journals, including some that could be viewed as beyond our respective disciplines, especially if interpreted narrowly. Yet, the research breadth and depth and reach of knowledge dissemination is also greater than what we could do as individual single authors. For engaged scholars, co-authored articles speak to the larger scale and larger numbers of research personnel on the projects as well as the knowledge held across a research project by faculty, students, and research participants who have or may become collaborators as co-authors during the project's life.<sup>2</sup> For our students, co- and/or lead authorship offers valuable training and outputs increasingly required for graduate students. For our research collaborators, co-authorship offers deserved recognition of their expertise as knowledge holders alongside and within scholarly outputs, thus also blurring the boundary between scholarly and non-scholarly knowledge to create new knowledge that bridges both worlds. Fortunately, there is a growing array of open access scholarly journals (e.g., *Engaged Scholar Journal*, *Canadian Food Studies*, *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, and *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*) that

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2. Nadine Changfoot acknowledges discussion with Dr. Carla Rice on co-authorship in larger engaged projects.



support publishing the products of engaged scholarship. The question is now how to have articles in such publications seen as of equal value to the top-ranked journals in our respective fields, in the eyes of our peers.

To strengthen our own ability to intervene and educate our peers on behalf of engaged scholarship, our individual and collaborative autoethnography reveal the importance of collaborative learning from our engaged efforts, including through our research together with CFICE and within this co-authored endeavor. Through projects like this, we begin to create both an intra- and inter-institutional understanding of our overlapping contextual and structural interventions to have engaged scholarship recognized within our respective institutions; of the diverse ways in which our engaged scholarship intersects research, teaching, and service; of the gaps in governance to help identify where connections need to be made between culture that affirms CCE in our institutions and where it may be still absent or weak; and of how external institutions representing CCE can support faculty and community organizations strengthen the practice and recognition of CCE in the postsecondary sector.

The next frontiers for the recognition of engaged scholarship in Canada are the validation of co-investigator roles in larger, partnership-based projects and the consistency in governance of CCE across institutional committees through to T&P committees. While engaged research is increasingly recognized, educating our colleagues and T&P committee members that co-investigator roles and lead roles on larger partnership grants as well as co-authored scholarly peer-reviewed publications are in principle integral to engaged scholarship because of their collaborative nature and larger scale will need to occur. The same applies to presentations, reports, and newer forms of knowledge dissemination such as webinars and video and radio documentaries, which are now largely considered “nice” but less substantive. Governance, in which some committees within an institution endorse the importance of CCE, may not carry through consistently in T&P committees. For example, where a university research committee recognizes CCE, we ask, how can this value of CCE shape and influence processes of T&P either within individual academic units or the wider university? We note that without clear connections between different areas of governance institutionally, impact for faculty, and also community, becomes uncertain when it comes to recognition of their engaged scholarship in T&P applications. CFICE’s ongoing effort to create a national community of practice toward increasing inter-institutional understanding of CCEC across Canada will also aim to inform T&P nationally, perhaps leading to an adaptation such as the Carnegie classification system to our specific context.

Our stories show that positionalities also matter. As cisgender, white males, Andrée and Levkoe are mindful of the power and privilege they carry. They understand the roles they play and their accountability in their advocacy of and listening to CCE faculty and community partners, being especially attentive to structural inequities related to gender, race, Indigeneity, class, sexualities, disability, and more. When we understand ourselves as “tempered radicals” and active mentors to faculty both pre-tenure and those tenured who would like to become engaged scholars, our individual incremental efforts within our institutions extend to more strategic directions, advocating for and ensuring the consistent value of engaged scholar research throughout and between our institutions as we become more senior in our respective institutions.

## Conclusion

From our collective autoethnographic discussion, which we encourage both intra- and inter-institutionally, we recognize that the scholarly literature does not yet adequately speak to a cultural shift that we see taking place within Canada (and hopefully beyond) toward engaged scholarship. In Canada, the national research granting bodies increasingly fund “partnership”-based research (whether with private, public, or non-profit sector partners) and call on scholars to have in place “knowledge mobilization” plans that are rooted in the idea that the users of research must be participants in the knowledge production and dissemination process. There are also many signs of the larger social and public conversation about the importance and role of higher education in the development of the future of society and employment. However, we see our own CCE distinct from narrow employment preparation by critically inflecting social justice with our CCE research, teaching, and service. Internal to our respective universities, we find a growing recognition among senior administration and our own colleagues who may not identify as engaged scholars for this kind of scholarship and institutional purpose.

The discovery of overlapping interventions from our autoethnographies provide examples of culture change in action that show signs of transformation, though still requiring continued momentum in our roles as faculty, as decision-makers in governance, and as administrators. These factors all enable our individual increasing capacity to advocate for recognition of CCE institutionally and nationally. At the same time, we also need to stress that this cultural shift is far from universal or complete. Not all institutions, units, or disciplines are opening to engaged scholarship at the same rate, and the challenges faced by many individual engaged scholars to have their work recognized and valued remain very real. The growth and recognition of engaged scholarship must be context-specific led by faculty increasingly attuned to their multiple roles, building intra- and inter-institutional understanding attentive to evolving models in other contexts.

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