

A Way to Represent Community Engaged Scholarship and Projects in Conservation and Preservation – Bryan Giemza

I call the chart below a *synoptic CV*. Synoptic, because it offers a way to look across multiple contributions to engaged scholarship, including community engaged scholarship. MSU's definition of these collaborations might be useful: it's "a form of scholarship that cuts across teaching, research [and creative activities], and service. It involves generating, transmitting, and applying knowledge for the direct benefit of external audiences in ways that are consistent with university and unit missions."

This emerging area of scholarly contribution often involves what scholars have termed *participatory research*. In short, projects that involve the co-creation of knowledge, and that rely on community experts as well as academics. Sometimes they involve difficult conversations (the term of art is [charrettes](#)) to surface a common vision that build on the strengths, experiences, and needs of many stakeholders. Academics who pursue [this model](#) create both academic and public products so that their scholarship is accessible to multiple audiences. Often their projects defy tidy categorization within traditional areas of scholarly endeavor. Many of them are long-tail projects that continue to evolve and change shape in ways that couldn't have been foreseen at the start. They are proudly emergent, in the sense that many of them continue to grow and achieve self-definition because of their distributed nature, [defying even the expectations of their creators](#). Some of them I still manage actively or lead. Others have passed on to the good care of community members, researchers, and other scholars or administrators. These transitions often run with career. One of the satisfactions of engaged scholarship projects is that the projects often change gracefully along with us, driving a continuous reconsideration of what can be done within the scope of a life or a vocation.

In any case, I built this chart to make projects more legible to scholars and to community members, and to encourage others to do the same. Scattered across the pages of a conventional CV or resume, these efforts are largely invisible; within this framework, they might suddenly come into view with the logic of a narrative. If any part of this presentation format is useful to representing your work, please use it, and please consider publishing to [open sources](#). Whether you are a community practitioner or an academic one, you can cut and paste from [this simple template](#) to get started. The examples from my work are meant to help imagine the very different ways these projects can unfold. In each row, you might see a through-line; how can you make them visible in your work? Below the chart are some categories adopted from Dr. Diane Doberneck that might be helpful to sorting your projects and populating your own chart.

As you will see, documenting these projects takes some effort. It can be messy, and it runs the risk of reducing them to mere "products." Yet the gift of this work is more of it and those of us who advocate for it can help make it better understood. The chart below is not meant to be exhaustive, because it really can't be more than representative. We could add more nuance with columns for academic partnerships, for instance, or for underwriting, or for naming key collaborators, or for time scale. Engaged scholarship is the InstantPot of the academic world—in one pot you can sauté, slow cook, pressure, make yogurt, oatmeal, classic meat and veg.... The joy is [in the tasting](#) (thus all the hyperlinks!).

After all, these are among the [most meaningful projects I've undertaken](#) in twenty plus years in higher education. Many of them are growing still. For example, the [San Antonio African American Community Archive and Museum](#) took its early shape from my partnership with landscape architect [Everett Fly](#) and George Frederick, and an [Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant that I authored](#) to develop community-driven archives practices. My involvement with the project began in 2015; the fruits of the project are many, and what started as a handful of community preservationists has grown to be a staffed community museum and archive that continues to expand.

My continuing role in that project has been as varied as its fruits. In early stages, thinking in the traditional model, I thought we might produce a practitioner guide; instead, the trove of [online resources](#), reflecting many project participants and community lessons, is arguably more accessible and useful. Much of my effort from the start was translational. Along with an inspired team, I explained (and am still explaining) the academic model and contemporary research surrounding community archives to funders and foundations, to partner institutions and community members—really, to anyone who shared in a vision for an archive created and curated by community members. I worked with stakeholders by researching history, holding charettes, and connecting partners, whether in boardrooms or on the brambly corner of an old ranch during a visit with a history-maker.

If that sounds like relatively glamorous work for an academic—well, it is, and to borrow a familiar phrase, the toughest work I’ve loved. The flip side is that these projects often involve long commitments and the thoughtful stewardship of lasting and meaningful relationships. In my experience, they are not one-and-done service projects, and they court a high risk of failure as well as reward. The best of them entails putting aside the “expert” mantle, recognizing that all of us have expertise in the pathways of our lives, and the subtle ways we are connected. Some [open up a space for more authentic histories](#) and connections to emerge. Interestingly, many of these projects resulted in the creation of archives, perhaps supporting the adage that researchers who push new enquiries might find fulfilment in generating their own primary sources where none exist. Engaged scholarship can indeed [create new resources](#) for public and academic researchers, a contribution to profession and commonwealth that can be overlooked by scholarly reward systems. It can also point to [different systems of valuation](#) between academic and public audiences, and surface problems that invite thoughtful cooperation between them.

Along the way I’ve discovered like-minded collaborators in places ranging from the Yucatan to Ecuador. And I am still finding new collaborators, taking me to forgotten apple orchards, into school systems, and even a few [cenotes](#) (pools of water in limestone caverns, sometimes caves). In addition to current engaged scholarship projects I’m developing, I now serve at the Provost’s Fellow for Outreach and Engagement at Texas Tech University, where translation is once again a large part of my role.

Among the questions that I address with collaborators: *How can we involve more community members and faculty in this work? How do we ensure that the academic reward system of tenure and promotion recognizes it, and that community expertise is equally honored? How do we offer mentoring for faculty and community members who appreciate its transformative and integrative impacts?*

In all these projects I owe a great deal of inspiration to colleague/collaborators such as Mr. Everett Fly, Dr. Patricia McAnany, Dr. N.Y. Nathiri, Dr. Woody Register, Dr. Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld, Dr. Karida Brown, and Dr. Bill Ferris. They demonstrate what scholars can do by exercising persistent vision and using the connective power of institutions for the greater good.

Community Engaged Scholarship Project	My role	Primary community partners	Community Products (including co-created outputs)	Academic Products (peer reviewed unless otherwise indicated)
Building a Model for All Users: Transforming Archive Collections through Community-Driven Archives	PI and project leader; team leader; facilitator and partner institution liaison. For a good overview of these projects by Chaitra Powell and other members of the Community Driven Archives Team, see “A Continuum of Archival Custody: Community-Driven Projects as a Path toward Equity”	See entries for EKAAMP; Student Health Coalition; Historic Black Towns. These partner communities all participated in developing practices in community archives, spanning the American South.	Various ; see individual entries for EKAAMP; Student Health Coalition; Historic Black Towns and Settlement Alliance.	<p> Charting New Courses in Community-Driven Archives (Giemza et al) – a website for practitioners, academics, archivists/ILS professionals </p> <p> My article, “More than Words: Respectful Stewardship and the Balance of Community Archives,” <i>Letonica</i> 36 (2017) </p> <p> Archival backpacks for community use </p> <p> See additional entries under related projects. </p>
Student Health Coalition (also called Appalachian Student Health Coalition)	Conference/exhibit creation as director of Southern Historical Collection; charette facilitator; fundraising and development; archival consultant and team facilitator	Student health coalition members and the community members they served, including their medical catchment; Save Our Cumberland Mountains; many related nonprofits and clinics founded by members	Digital archive and new materials, including new media; annual conferences. This is an example of real co-creation with academic and community support—and community governance to guide the process.	<p> Digital archive </p> <p> Physical archive </p> <p> Annual conferences </p>

San Antonio African American Community Archive and Museum	<p>Original grant writer and founding partner; facilitator and partner institution (foundations, higher ed) liaison; advisor and current board member; consultant on archival design, security, and workflows; workshop and charette facilitator; Kronkosky foundation liaison; mentor and collaborator with public scholar to the Archive; strategic plan contributor and participant; continuing grantwriting consultant</p>	<p>Community archivists, including volunteer docents, practitioners, and preservationists, from San Antonio and the region; college students from partner institutions</p>	<p>A staffed, freestanding museum/archive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community presentations and history harvests • Museum programming and special events <p>Harvests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performances and festivals • Guided history tours • Media—newspaper, TV interview, radio interviews • Community workshops • Exhibitions, archives • Performances, festivals • K-12 and professional development curricula • Other products too numerous to be listed here 	<p>Conference presentations: “SAAACAM Can!: Growing a Community Archive for Impact in San Antonio,” 2019 Regional Engaged Scholarship Symposium, Texas Tech</p> <p>“Digital Humanities and Community Collections: A Case Study,” Thinking through the Archives - Digital Humanities Best Practices Workshop, USC (Mellon Foundation), April 2018</p> <p>San Antonio Express article</p> <p>Exhibit and media coverage, “There’s a Story Here”</p>
East Kentucky African American Migration Project	<p>Conference planning and exhibit creation as Director of Southern Historical Collection; grantwriter; archival consultant and facilitator</p>	<p>Members of the diaspora of Lynch, Kentucky, from across the United States; the Eastern Kentucky Social Club</p>	<p>Oral histories and artifacts; events and reunions</p>	<p>Physical archive</p> <p>Exhibit, launch and conference featuring community creators and curators: Gone Home: Race and Roots through Appalachia</p> <p>Invited presentation, “Unfree Labor and Containment Schemes in East Tennessee,” A Colloquium and Teaching Workshop Exploring Unfree Labor in the U.S. South, 1865 to Present</p>

Southern Futures	One of four principal investigators (with Ben Edwards, Malinda Lowery, and Elizabeth Engelhardt)/writers of a campus-wide initiative now housed in UNC's College of Arts and Sciences and the Center for the Study of the American South	Various throughout North Carolina and the region	Various, in development; a representative sampler is here	<p>My article: “Concerning Our Dirty Little Imperium, the Archive, and Southern Deeps” (Giemza)</p> <p>Southern Futures podcast</p> <p>Curricular/fellowship opportunities</p>
Maya from the Margins	PI; Institutional liaison/leader; project participant; archive facilitator; curriculum creation; service as board member of InHerit/The Alliance for Heritage Conservation	Teachers and high school students from Lumberton, NC; high school and early college students from Valladolid and other communities in Yucatan, Mexico; their parents and respective community supporters	Community exhibits and events; student-curated traveling exhibits; exchange program; curriculum; newsletters	<p>Received Robert E. Bryan Public Service Award (2018) “For exemplifying outstanding engagement and service to the state of North Carolina and working in partnership ... with community members”</p> <p>Article in Southern Cultures</p> <p>Received Society of American Archivists Diversity Award (nominated my participating colleagues and the project)</p> <p>Conference presentation: RBMS Diversity Panel, “From North Carolina to Yucatan: Maya from the Margins,” New Orleans</p>

Adaptive reuse and cultural tourism projects: Loray Mill (with the Community Histories Workshop), Museo Fabrica Imbabura (Ecuador)	Project and archival consultant; exchange participant	Ecuadorian community members; multiple community archives; project developers in NC; community researchers in NC	Public history exhibit; digital resources; teacher and expert delegation exchanges; curriculum	White paper: Adaptive Reuse, Community History, and Archival Practice (contributor) Digital exhibit: Loray Mill Project Curriculum: Ella May and the Loray Mill Strike Conference workshop leader: The Politics of Cultural Infrastructure, “Decolonizing Cultural Institutions: A Workshop,” Puebla, MX, 2017
Patrimonio cultural, ecología, y conservación de cenotes yucatecos (PACECCY), funded by National Geographic Society and other grantmakers A K-12 project that engages students and community members in the cultural heritage of cenotes.	Archival consultant and advisor; contributor to curriculum development and grantwriting; onsite workshop facilitator. This is a sibling project that emerged after Maya from the Margins (see above).	Community docents; community elders; middle school students (interviewers and curators); teachers in Yucatan	A freestanding community archive in Tahcabo, Yucatan Oral history collections Exhibit materials	Cenotes curriculum and workbook, “ Science and Knowledge of Yucatecan Cenotes ” for K-12 instruction The Mayanist Vol. 3 no. 1 (credited) Workshop and K-12 teacher meetings in Yucatan (Historia oral y la tradición oral presentado)
Historic Black Towns and Settlements Alliance/Preserve the Eatonville Community	Archives advisor and liaison; archival appraiser; <i>Black Communities</i> Conference Planning Committee; Grantwriter and strategic and policy affairs consultant to PEC	Memory institutions and local government in historic black towns; affiliated community colleges and universities; nonprofits in localities	Gathering of mayors; academic conferences; Zora Festival; podcasts;	NPR Interview Black Communities Conference, “Connecting and Documenting Black Communities,” Durham, April 2018

<p>Creating Livable Futures</p> <p>A university-wide initiative housed in the Honors College. It is a student-centered, humanistic and broadly interdisciplinary environmental program. The initiative is interested in envisioning better futures and fostering resilience and antifragility during a time of convergent global challenges. It is inspired by, and anchored in, the ethos of the Sowell Family Collection in Literature, Community, and the Natural World (this page created by participating students through my wiki.edu course)</p>	<p>Faculty director and PI; grantwriter; curriculum development</p>	<p>Partner organizations for outreach</p>	<p>Sowell conference; workshops; continuing education (OLLI); climate simulation. Many of the Livable Futures sponsored and affiliated events invite public attendance and participation as part of a program of outreach, as in this climate simulation training event. The affiliated student groups it has generated constitute another vector of outreach and engagement.</p>	<p>Proposed certificate program</p> <p>My article, “The Disobedient Archive,” <i>Graffylia</i> 6 (2022)</p> <p>My related courses: <i>The Use and Abuse of Evolutionary Theory, How to Have a Climate Conversation, How to Be Disinformed</i>; also, around a dozen Livable Futures courses offered by participating faculty</p> <p>A community-based student art residency</p> <p>Livable Futures Student Fellowship</p> <p>Sponsored curriculum development for university-wide undergraduate climate series</p> <p>Sowell Imprint TTU Press Series</p> <p>Student orgs: Clean Campers, AIRE (Alliance of Innovative, Reliable Energy), EcoTech, Project Climate</p>
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The Lost Apples of Texas	Instructor; documentary writer and producer; researcher	Various communities in NM and Texas canvassed by students; Paris, TX; Lubbock orchard owner	Grafting workshop	Course: The Lost Apples of Texas (First Year Experience)
Lubbock School District Partnership for Preserving Hispanic Community History (proposed)	Project leader and PI; coordinator/liaison to partner institutions, both academic and community-based	Lubbock Independent School District including five participating public schools; Guadalupe Parkway Neighborhood Center; teachers and social workers; student tutors	Capstone exhibit; archive creation	[Under development - awaiting grant to commence project] Proposed: Professional development Curriculum development Exhibit production Tutoring and mentoring

Examples of Academic and Community/Public Products (adapted from Diane Doberneck; I've added some items to her lists)

Academic products	Other examples involving academic service as a peer reviewer	Public products	Other examples involving public service as a peer reviewer
Dissertation	Journal editor	Community presentations	Grants reviewers—competitively funded grants
Thesis	Blind reviewer for academic journals	Powerpoints	Curation of community materials and exhibits
Journal article	Book editor	Infographics and similar resources	Practitioner associations' awards and recognitions
Book	Editor of volume of book chapters	Newsletter articles	Community awards and recognitions
Book chapter	Conference organizers	Media—newspaper, TV interview, radio interview	
Conference poster	Conference proposal reviewers	Community workshops	Conference presentations and posters
Conference presentation	Grant reviewers—competitively funded grants	Exhibitions	Strategic planning
Grant proposal	Juried shows	Performances, festivals	Curriculum development
Artistic performances	Competitive awards committees	K-12 or professional development curricula	Outreach and programming vetting
Archives and collections		Archives and collections	Exhibit and archive curation
Data sets and representations		POD casts, blogs, youtube channels, webpages	
Digital humanities		Published practitioner resources of all kinds	
Multimedia projects			
Curriculum development			

See Doberneck, D. M., & Carmichael, C. E. (2020). [The unfurling tool: Unpacking your community-engaged work into multiple scholarly products](#). *Journal of Higher Education and Community Engagement* 12(3): 5-19.