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COMMUNITY-ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP AS PEDAGOGY OF POSSIBILITY AND KNOWLEDGE ENABLEMENT

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores community-engaged scholarship as a pedagogy of possibility. I argue that community-engaged scholarship provides a collaborative platform for the generation of knowledge necessary for the amelioration of societal suffering. In this chapter, I regard a pedagogy of possibility as an ethically and politically justified scholarship activity that advocates for the best in the human condition. Although there are multiple pathways of how this form of scholarship can be achieved, I suggest that community-engaged scholarship is an activist research approach focusing on the co-production of lived knowledge in an inclusive, ethically viable and innovative way. Although the chapter centres on knowledge in the twenty-first century, particularly on the academy and marginalised knowledges, I place the emphasis on community-engaged scholarship as an illustrative paradigm shift in terms of university–community relations. I argue that community-engaged scholarship can be a viable and practical way of knowledge enablement. Furthermore, I propose that the third sector is a representative of communities who collaborate with universities; thus, it is suggested that the third sector involves boundary spanning actors with multiple roles in the co-production, consumption and dissemination of knowledge and its benefits.

COMMUNITY-ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP AS PEDAGOGY OF POSSIBILITY AND KNOWLEDGE ENABLEMENT**1. INTRODUCTION**

Twenty-first century academic life is no longer pursued in seclusion (if it ever was) but rather must champion reason and imagination in engagement with the wider society and its concerns. (Association of Commonwealth Universities 2001:i)

In a twenty-first century world characterised by uncertainties and risk (Beck 2000:19), scholarship needs to be firmly embedded in the social world it describes and critiques. In an era where universities have been accused of prioritising detached esoteric studies and theorisation over socially useful scientific investigations (Gaffikin & Morrissey 2008:99-100), community-engaged scholarship (CES) opens critical opportunities for reciprocal and inclusive knowledge generation. The term CES refers to research activities, teaching and service undertaken by university staff in collaboration with community members that embody the characteristics of both community engagement (ie, reciprocal knowledge sharing, collaborative partnerships, public purpose) and scholarship (ie, demonstrates current knowledge of the field/discipline, invites peer collaboration and review, is open to critique, is presented in a form that others can build on, involves inquiry). Glassick, Huber and Maeroff (1997:10) also argue that CES may strengthen the pedagogical infrastructure of higher education institutions and enable them to produce knowledge that is responsive to the social realities of society.

Bernheim and Chau's (2003:1) description of modern society as a knowledge society necessitates a theoretical analysis of the knowledge supply chain. In arguing for reciprocal knowledge sharing between universities and communities (including the third sector), this chapter critically engages with the underpinnings of knowledge in the twenty-first century by deliberately advocating and increasingly reaffirming the knowledge capacities of communities. CES is vital to this argument as it enables community knowledge to emerge in the academic and scientific mainstream through inclusive and collaborative ways that accommodate communities' knowledges. The *White Paper for Post-school Education and Training* of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) identifies the emergent challenges facing contemporary South African society as "the persistence – and in some ways the intensification – of serious structural challenges associated with unemployment, poverty and inequality ..." (RSA DHET 2013:2). These structural challenges provide a platform through which university education and in particular CES can be used to "undertake research to meet the economic and social needs of society, building knowledge-generating partnerships with public and private enterprises, other government departments and other institutions in order to meet these needs" (RSA DHET 2013:10). In this regard CES therefore opens divergent pathways for

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communities and universities to solve emergent challenges collaboratively as it has the capacity to be rooted in communities' hopes, aspirations and social rhythms. In linking with the pragmatic and yet idealistic approach of the DHET, I argue for a pedagogy of possibility. Agger (2007:1-4) notes that a pedagogy of possibility is built on a foundation of optimism, patience, looking forward, local praxis and, above all, a prospectiveness which ensures that university community-enabled research "[i]s a matter of replacing shared knowledge of what is already real with social hope for what might become real" (Fataar 2011:86).

CES serves a dual purpose for communities and university researchers: on the one hand, to know better the conditions of the possibility of hope; on the other, to define principles of action to promote the fulfilment of those conditions (De Sousa Santos 2011). The underlying goal of the social change characteristic of CES confirms the approach as being amenable to a pedagogy of possibility. This chapter argues that CES can be a crucial pathway towards a pedagogy of possibility. It further highlights what is entailed in CES and to what extent it can be a critical model of knowledge enablement. I also explore how CES can be an important platform for the creation and consumption of socially transformative knowledge-generation approaches. Lastly, I critically discuss knowledge enablement between the third sector and universities as a possible application of CES.

2. COMMUNITY-ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP IN AN ERA OF UNCERTAINTY

Ever since Ernest Boyer's watershed publication *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate* (1990), there has been a growing legitimacy for community improvement oriented research. To define CES, one needs to be clear about the meaning of scholarship. As articulated in the current literature, scholarship is teaching, discovery, integration, application and engagement that has clear goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methods, significant results, effective presentation and reflective critique that is rigorous and peer reviewed (Commission on Community-Engaged Scholarship in the Health Professions¹ 2005; Glassick *et al* 1997). This definition, which expands the seminal work of Boyer (1990), critically sets a yardstick towards acceptable, replicable knowledge. Boyer (1996) admits, however, that this definition does not do justice to other forms of knowledge created legitimately through avenues other than traditional research. This is an important admission as it lays bare the challenges of using an immutable conceptualisation of knowledge that does not allow for reciprocal knowledge sharing and creation as advocated for by CES.

¹ Hereafter referred to as Commission Report.

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CES is scholarship that involves the faculty member in a mutually beneficial partnership with the community (Commission Report 2005). Others, like Driscoll and Sandman (2001:11-13), conceptualise CES as the collaborative generation, refinement, conservation and exchange of mutually beneficial and societally relevant knowledge that is generated in collaboration with, communicated to, and validated by peers in academe and the community. CES is a distinct type of scholarship in that it emphasises genuine collaboration and enables sharing of expertise (O'Meara & Rice 2005:28). Likewise, Lerner and Simon (1998:3-4) stress that CES is characterised by bidirectional relationships that blend multiple stakeholder efforts. This creates opportunities for innovation in theory, research, practice and policy machinations. It is therefore important for universities to exploit these opportunities to enable them to increasingly play a leadership role in addressing problems of the larger community by having discursive and research relationships outside of the academy (Gelmon, Jordan & Seifer 2013). Minkler (2005) and Lasker and Weiss (2003) note that CES is more of a research framework for conducting community-based research than a methodology. Gelmon *et al* (2013) stress that CES should ideally be based on five fundamental principles:

1. Scholarly investigation of real-life social problems;
2. definition of problems by and with the community;
3. collaborative development of knowledge to solve public issues between academe and the community;
4. utilisation of institutional resources to solve real-life challenges; and
5. shared authority in defining success.

These principles encourage an assets-based approach to the development of communities and strengthen community resilience. The above-mentioned principles of Gelmon *et al* (2013) are underpinned by a myriad of philosophical constructs. An evolutionary realist philosophy of science is one such construct. A realist philosophy of science leverages multiple contributions and conceptual frameworks of contributors using a pluralistic methodology for advancing knowledge (Deiaco, Hughes & McKelvey 2012). There is a deep-seated respect for multiple perspectives on reality and a firm belief in the many ways in which knowledge can be acquired and utilised. This is important as it makes universities participants in a learning society where discovery, learning and engagement are integrated activities (Holland 2005) aimed at the betterment of society. In addition to the evolutionary realism mentioned above, CES builds upon critical theory and constructivism. Critical theoretical approaches tend to rely on dialogic methods which combine observations and interviews with research strategies that nurture conversation and reflection

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(Kincheloe & McLaren 1994). This reflective dialogue allows the researcher and the participants to co-imagine a desired outcome and collaborate towards realising it. A constructivist emphasis, on the other hand, approaches research with the intention of comprehending “the world of human experience” (Cohen & Manion 1994:36). It suggests that “reality is socially constructed” (Mertens 2005:12). Creswell (2003:8) even argues that the constructivist researcher must expose as much as possible of the “participants’ views of the situation being studied”. Gergen (1999:4) stresses that “the constructionist dialogues contain enormous potential; they open new spans of possibility for creating the future”. A forward-looking philosophical enterprise such as constructionism creates numerous dialogical opportunities to craft a desired future. These intersecting approaches do not uncover universal truths, but deliberately focus on specific local conditions and the positive changes that reciprocal knowledge sharing can bring. The formation of personal relationships, trust and collaboration enriches and validates research findings (Hale 2001) as people feel a sense of ownership in the project; therefore, against this background CES can be regarded as a philosophically and theoretically rich research approach to link universities and communities to together focus on issues that affect them. It is therefore ideally suited to the twenty-first century, as the universalisation of knowledge and solutions to problems is adverse to the plural and uneven social life of the twenty-first century.

The tumultuous nature of twenty-first century social arrangements dictates a need for increasing collaboration between communities and universities to advance the public good. The multiple challenges (social, economic and political) necessitate a paradigm shift in university–community interaction. Smerek, Pasque, Mallory and Holland (2005:7) stress that universities can stimulate significant community improvement as they possess the human, fiscal, organisational and intellectual capital critical to address significant social issues. Furthermore, Smerek *et al* (2005) note that since universities are physically rooted in their communities, there should be enough motivation to invest in the betterment of their immediate environs. These statements lay an important background for a critical discussion of CES in the twenty-first century.

CES is a form of activist research seeking to foster a reimagination of university–community collaboration and craft sustainable alternatives to communities’ emergent challenges. The need for an activist scholarship is made all the more urgent by the fact that “our troubled planet can no longer afford the luxury of pursuits confined to an ivory tower ... scholarship has to prove its worth not on its own terms but by service to the nation and the world” (Boyer 1990:23). Hale (2001) stresses that academics must identify their ethical and political inclination in order to help correct

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instances of human suffering and injustice. This call for positive change describes an inherent aspect for an enabling activist research agenda as it provides a platform for a mutually enhancing engagement. An activist research agenda intertwined with the principles of CES offered by Gelmon *et al* provides “the best possible terrain for the defence of humanity” (Burawoy 2005:25). This inherent quest for all that is good for humanity enshrined in CES makes this approach a protest at many levels. It is a protest against the exclusion of marginal knowledge and the *status quo* that favours universities’ knowledge as dominant. As a form of activist research, CES is deliberately structured against the marginalisation of other forms of knowing and is therefore a vital joint problem solving platform. Schensul (2010:309) argues that the elitist nature of the university and its claim to privilege in the production of objectively developed knowledge is incorrect. Barker (2004) further stresses frustration with the neutrality of traditional positivist science and yearns for alternative forms of knowledge generation.

Rylko-Bauer, Singer and Van Willigen (2008) advise that for activist research to be effective within the knowledge economy, academics must be ethically and politically subjective while espousing methodological objectivity. This means academics must willingly take a stand on societal disparities, at the same time offering evidence-based solutions to societal challenges. One of the suggested pathways through which evidence-based solutions can be produced and scaled up is by using third sector boundary spanning capabilities. Definitions of the third sector are contested (Schensul 2010; Corry 2010). Etzioni (Zimmer & Freise 2008:7) refers to the third sector as a societal sphere, “a third alternative, indeed sector ... between the state and the market” that is populated by organisations that are able to combine the entrepreneurial spirit and organisational effectiveness of the business firm with the common good orientation of the state and its public administration. Corry (2010) mentions that third sector organisations are in pursuit of social or community goals. This makes them amenable to CES as they are able to utilise social infrastructure for interactive knowledge production. Pohl *et al* (2010) note that interactive knowledge production is premised on the co-production of research which integrates different social worlds, in this case academic research, community life and the third sector, among others. This limits competition for relevance as knowledge produced outside academe is not marginalised with negative outcomes for society. Further discussions on the third sector and CES are provided in a separate section below.

The marginalisation of knowledge produced outside of academe is detrimental to the development of solutions to problems and challenges faced collectively by humanity. Importing solutions without consulting the people living with the challenges is not

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only detrimental to the total ownership of solutions, but also to the consumption of knowledge. Figure 2.1 below represents the centrality of CES in the scholarship of teaching, research and service. Figure 2.1 further illustrates how CES has the potential to be aligned to and fully integrated with the three core functions of a university. The space occupied by CES is ultimately one that seeks to ensure equal representation of all forms of knowledge in the mainstream.

FIGURE 2.1 Centrality of community-engaged scholarship in higher education

CES is, however, unique in that it is at the epicentre of reflection and discovery where diverse groups of individuals can gather to articulate a vision, theory and practice and collaborate to create an altered social imaginary. CES has the advantage of including multiple stakeholders with divergent interests around a common theme.

3. KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION AND THE UNIVERSITY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Knowledge production has always been the responsibility of a few recognised specialists (Gibbons 2007), usually resident in universities and associated institutions. In the twenty-first century however, there has been a dramatic shift as knowledge is now generated by many actors, a situation that alters conventional knowledge arrangements. Nowotny (2003:152) contends that contemporary society is engaged in a tussle for expertise: “[E]xpertise has never been so indispensable while being simultaneously so hotly contested.” There are now numerous ways in which people can get expert knowledge on issues that directly affect them. The democratisation of knowledge, fuelled by information technology, has resulted in the university no longer holding the position of privilege with regard to knowledge generation. Gurstein and Angeles (2007:3) point out that “in a globalised world in which public issues and social problems stretch across wide spaces, affecting ever

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larger numbers of people, it becomes increasingly important for individuals and communities to learn together". Furthermore, society now has highly informed and articulate individuals who seek to be informed and involved in decisions that have the potential to affect them. CES offers an avenue of inclusion for these individuals to interact with academe. The existence of a counter-expertise has vastly extended the boundaries of what can be regarded as knowledge. The counter-experts are usually labelled as such by mainstream academics seeking to marginalise other forms of knowing as inconsistent with the scientific stream. The counter-expertise challenges the dominant knowledge establishment and seeks to use advocacy avenues to gain a voice. Although much of this work exists in the "grey literature" (Aina 2000), it poses an interesting wealth of experience which mainstream scholarship can use. This begs key questions regarding the process and nature of authentic knowledge production, for instance: What is knowledge? What are the characteristics of knowledge production in the twenty-first century? What should be the role of the university in these new social arrangements?

The rest of this section grapples with these issues and uses social theoretical expositions to make its arguments.

In a knowledge society, knowledge production is mostly characterised by two modes (Kraak 2000; Gibbons 2003). Mode 1 knowledge production is pure, disciplinary, expert-led, supply-driven, hierarchical, peer reviewed and restricted to higher education institutions (Gibbons 2003:120). Mode 1 characterises the traditional scholarship and is more typical of the modern era where knowledge was the preserve of universities. Mode 2 knowledge production is described by Kraak (2000:2-3) as problem solving knowledge which is intrinsically transdisciplinary, transinstitutional and heterogeneous. I will discuss why universities need to move increasingly towards Mode 2 research and why it is important for universities to restructure their knowledge-generation processes to be effective in their social response function.

The twenty-first century has been described as the knowledge society (Bernheim & Chaui 2003), which makes knowledge the legitimate currency in contemporary life. It is, however, not just any knowledge but one characterised by a context of application (Gibbons 2007) in which knowledge has become an integral part of the global capital arrangements. The institutions producing this knowledge are central to not only its distribution and usage, but also to how it is packaged. Universities have a bigger part to play in society due to their increased visibility and student intakes. The World Declaration on Higher Education (1998:2) in its preamble affirms that:

Owing to the scope and pace of change, society has become increasingly knowledge-based so that higher learning and research now act as

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essential components of cultural, socio-economic and environmentally sustainable development of individuals, communities and nations.

This spells out the need for universities to be closely embedded in the social arrangements of the societies in which they are located.

In light of the declaration quoted from above, the production of knowledge needs to operate in Mode 2. The quest for the sustainable development of individuals, communities and nations makes it impossible for knowledge to be solely a prerogative of research in universities. The dispersal of knowledge production spaces creates a need for connections to be made to tap into alternative sources of knowledge production. These alternative sources of knowledge are normally embedded in the lived realities of communities and are therefore indispensable to their continued existence. Any efforts towards sustainable development therefore need to be more holistic and incorporate local communities' ways of knowing. The quest for sustainable development in its broad sense necessitates a futuristic orientation which implies that universities have to cast their core functions of teaching, research and service (community engagement) on a long-term basis as well.

CES can be a key platform to enable multiple stakeholders to focus on general humanitarian issues like global warming and poverty (among others) as its research principles are based on collaboration. In terms of the defining characteristics of a knowledge society, social responsiveness and mutual accountability become core ethical imperatives that must guide universities as centres of knowledge production. Solutions that are generated in collusion with people affected by them have a better chance of being scaled up than if people are not included. Barker (2004:124) and Macfarlane (2007:53) concur that there has to be a direct link between the university expertise and the strengths of the community through the integration of teaching and research as well as the integration and application of scholarship which includes reciprocal practices in the production of knowledge.

When one discusses knowledge in the twenty-first century, it is a concept that should have lived relevance to whoever has it, and also a utility value when it is transferred. CES is an amenable research strategy that seeks to engage the public to scale up their lived knowledge and also how it can be scaled up to improve the human condition. Marginalised communities have clear strengths (Schensul 2010), and identifying these strengths is not the responsibility of one single discipline alone. Specific disciplines produce specific knowledge and therefore universities themselves need to restructure discipline offerings as societal problems are not limited to a single discipline. Robust knowledge production seeking to ameliorate borderless social challenges can only occur if disciplinary borders are broken down: knowledge created

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through broader transdisciplinary, social and economic contexts that occurs within contexts of application and involves greater involvement with local communities and governments (Gibbons *et al* 1994) has a greater chance of being sustainable and fostering transformation than a 'silo' approach. In effect, there has been a dramatic shift of knowledge from being single discipline to interdisciplinary (Bernheim & Chaui 2003). CES enables transdisciplinarity as it changes discipline-based knowledge to problem-centred approaches that cover application and have relevance to the communities of practice applying it.

4. COMMUNITY-ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP AS A PEDAGOGY OF POSSIBILITY

The twenty-first century is described as a new scientific age: an age of possibilities and probabilities (Bernheim & Chaui 2003). A pedagogy of possibility in this new scientific age rests on the cultivation of a tradition of research and engagement that learns to look for ways to a better world as a means of cultivating hope (Sinclair 2008). In this regard CES performs the valuable social task of helping researchers and the public to remember that problems are "not all there is" (Solnit 2004:9), and alerting them to already existing possibilities. De Sousa Santos (2011) disparagingly notes that for some thinkers, the possible is the most uncertain and the most ignored concept in Western philosophy; yet only the possible permits to reveal the inexhaustible wealth of the world. CES becomes a research inquiry into the alternatives that are contained in the horizon of concrete possibilities. If practised as a pedagogy of possibility, CES entails a symbolic expansion of knowledge sources, applications and agents in order to foster or frame a desired future. In a world characterised by structural inequalities, this intervention can maximise the probability of hope in a background of continued frustration (De Sousa Santos 2011). CES in this regard imagines the possible while at the same time defining the principles that can lead to the fulfilment of the possible. Marginalised communities are characterised by isolation and deprivation; however, using CES to explore possible pathways creates innumerable alternatives for such communities. Crafting solutions from the ground up (Kretzmann & McKnight 1993:1) entails a deliberate focus on helping the community stakeholders to work on their strengths to solve challenges.

A pedagogy of possibility creates hope, imagination and social innovation as it pushes communities and universities to use available energies and resources to make the world a better place. That scholarship must be "embedded in a kind of reflexivity that imagines a better world ..." is also averred by Fataar (2011:87). Sinclair (2008) stresses that making the world a better place is partly a moral or ethical enterprise,

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deliberately focusing on changing the present for a better tomorrow. My focus on a pedagogy of possibility is therefore informed by “calls for dialogical engagement informed by pragmatic alternative imaginings” (Fataar 2011:86). I therefore argue in this chapter that an effective use of CES can achieve dual research and practice outcomes. The outcomes include a deep-seated understanding of difficult situations and contexts through dialogicality and furthermore the advancement of pragmatic or applied knowledge. I agree with Sinclair (2008:10) who reminds academic researchers of the importance of an “ontology of attachment, engagement ... likely to provide the impetus for social change and for making a better world, [rather] than nostalgia and estrangement”. Any quest for a better tomorrow therefore rests on a direct intellectual affront of currently lived realities.

CES provides a critical pathway for an enhanced but yet unknown tomorrow by “revaluing the present as the real site of action in the world” (Rose 2004:19). A focus on the present fosters an opportunity to craft a desired future; hence CES becomes a collaborative expedition towards securing mutually agreed futures. Furthermore, a focus on the present enhances humanity’s ability to combat social inequities rather than disillusionment and estrangement which are inimical to possibilities. CES encourages increased attachment to and engagement with the social world, and a pedagogy of possibility therefore rests on a call for more and not less involvement of universities in society.

5. CES AND INCREASED UNIVERSITY INVOLVEMENT IN SOCIETY

Knowledge occupies a contested terrain in the twenty-first century with expertise no longer guaranteed to be vested in universities alone. Although universities have locational stability, the knowledge supply chain favours academics that are socialised to believe in the trickling down of knowledge despite knowledge existing in multiple ways. It is therefore imperative for universities to create enabling environments for other types of knowledge to also gain their place on the knowledge supply chain. Although universities’ contribution to the broader regeneration agenda of communities is critical to the development priorities of communities, in most cases this is not bidirectional: for CES to be utilised as an enabling framework for enhanced university–community links, there are certain fundamentals which universities themselves need to transform. The universities need to transform their operational competencies to build capacity to engage effectively with other knowledge outside of academe. Gibbons *et al* (1994) argue that the extensive social distribution of knowledge creates fertile ground for transdisciplinarity. Such transdisciplinarity opens the creative capacities of researchers to integrate and build their work in broader

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outcomes orientations. It even becomes an exercise well worth engaging in if the community members whose problems are being addressed are directly engaged. Transdisciplinary initiatives underpinned by the creation of new knowledge can be key to innovative problem solving (Christensen 1997). CES is the platform that enables universities to increasingly share their expertise in transdisciplinary teams in collaboration with community members in order to solve cross-cutting challenges.

6. THIRD SECTOR, COMMUNITY-ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP AND ACADEME

The need for a boundary spanning entity to highlight the efficacy of evidence-based solutions is critical in a knowledge economy. Scott (1998:196) defines boundary spanning as the “bridge between an organisation and its exchange partners”. Friedman and Podolny (1992) also stress that boundary spanning incorporates multiple types of relationships with outside agents. The prominence of relationship building in boundary spanning actions overarches the identification of mutually beneficial issues, allowing partners to symbiotically work towards their realisation. Williams (2002) reveals that boundary spanning organisations create strategic alliances, joint working arrangements, networks, partnerships and many other forms of collaboration across organisational boundaries. In their discussion of service learning and community engagement within a South African context, Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo and Bringle (2010) recognise that partnership building is ultimately key to fulfilling the national agenda of South Africa, which is centred on community development and social transformation. HEIs in this regard are expected to forge sustainable partnerships and encourage boundary spanning as a way of expanding the knowledge supply chain. Thomson *et al* (2010) further describe a Community – Higher Education – Service Partnerships (CHESP) triad model of partnerships comprising third sector organisations, universities and community residents collaborating to solve locally emergent challenges. The CHESP model represents how third sector organisations and academic institutions can evoke institutional strategies and devise collaborative pathways to solve common challenges, use limited resources effectively and ultimately satisfy an unmet need.

Boundary spanning also entails getting into spaces that institutions would not normally get into in order to solve emergent social issues. This necessitates changing the lens one uses to view the community partners who form an enduring conduit into the community. The methodology informing a changing of the lens is briefly described by Thomson *et al* (2010:227) who state that undertaking a situation analysis enabled students at Stellenbosch University to grasp the micro-macro development processes. In this context, the situation analysis informed the stakeholders about the issue to be

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discussed and enabled the students to develop multidimensional views to co-develop solutions. However, it is unfortunate that the Stellenbosch University example, like most boundary spanning illustrations, is mostly taken from the perspective of the higher education institution.

The third sector is a crucial boundary spanning actor in the knowledge supply chain. Albertyn and Botha (2012:122) note that the knowledge supply chain is no longer dominated by HEIs but is now produced and used in multiple sites. The third sector forms part of a nexus of sites where knowledge production, utilisation and consumption is driven for the social and economic benefit of communities. During the era of Aids denialism in South Africa, the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) sought to disprove the pseudoscience emerging from the government on the link between HIV and Aids. TAC partnered with established mainstream research institutions to debunk the myths about HIV and Aids (www.tac.org.za). Furthermore, TAC undertook an aggressive grassroots campaign to mobilise communities, corporate sector and universities to produce a counter-narrative to the government. In this case, a third sector entity coordinated a multi-sectoral civic campaign connecting theories emerging from university research with evidence from practice to create a rallying point around a social concern. It is in this sense I advocate for third sector boundary spanning as a strategy to create linkages between groups in order to move ideas, information, people and resources where they are needed most (Ancona & Caldwell 1992). The TAC illustration above also highlights how third sector organisations are characterised by value-driven action and commitment (Corry 2010), which makes them strategically preferable to partner with activist scholars in pursuit of CES. As boundary spanning organisations the third sector is able to generate social capital from the connections they are able to create.

The importance of advantageously using the social capital generated by the third sector to generate new knowledge with the people who need it is crucial in today's society. I argue that the third sector must perform a key boundary spanning role to enable the creation of new knowledge. Schensul (2010) proposes that this role entails ensuring that knowledge development emphasises partnerships and egalitarian social structures that are transformative by means of:

- A focus on co-production of knowledge through a deliberate realisation that science only provides a partial solution to some of the social problems communities face;
- utilisation of community structures as a rallying point for indigenous knowledge production and creation; and
- facilitation so that benefits of collaboration are equally enjoyed by both community and academy.

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While it appears that the boundary spanning role I advocate above has more to do with creating connections between communities and the academy, I suggest that the gatekeeping role of the third sector is vital in achieving community buy-in. Furthermore, depending on the nature of the third sector organisation and the values it espouses, the fact that most operate in and within communities means they provide representation with which academe can collaborate to produce knowledge. The third sector is therefore an important ally in reimagining knowledge production, dissemination and consumption in communities that suffer from social inequities.

7. CONCLUSION

In this chapter I attempted to show the efficacy of CES in incorporating multiple knowledge streams in society. I have argued that CES is an alternative future-seeking platform with the potential to include multiple stakeholders in seeking solutions to social challenges. The localisation of problems and the utilisation of local assets make CES an amenable strategy that can achieve positive local transformation. The role of organisations from the third sector as boundary spanners is a critical enabler for the success of CES. Although it is an extension of the broader engaged scholarship perspective, CES is rooted in multiple theoretical and philosophical constructs underpinned by a quest for human flourishing. It is my contention that CES can be a viable option towards integrating multiple forms of expertise and the lived knowledge of marginalised individuals and communities. The brief discussion on the nature of the twenty-first century highlighted the need for universities to adapt to changing contexts which include a more enlightened citizenry eager to participate in policies and decisions that affect them; the democratisation of expertise underpinned by information technology; and, most importantly, the flourishing of grey literature driven by a swelling counter-expertise. This contextual environment provides a fertile space for the university to reach out to the margins, and to co-produce knowledge that has lived outcomes for society's emergent challenges. The third sector is a critical enabler of knowledge, strategic alliances and partnerships. CES is therefore the best suited platform for dialogicality and hope – both critical ingredients towards realising positive transformation and a yet unknown future.

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