Mapping Intersects of Power and Reciprocity in Adult EducationDeliberative Civic Engagement and Leadership Development in Community-Engaged Scholarship

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Abstract: The purpose of this work is to assist in identifying and naming dynamic relational forces that shape the effectiveness of community engagement. Understanding power from the perspective of reciprocity supports adaptive and transformational learning necessary to increase the effectiveness of community-engaged partnerships and scholarship.

Adaptive challenges faced by campuses and communities, by definition, require new paradigms of knowing and understanding in order to intervene in ways that catalyze progress on important issues (Chrislip & O'Malley, 2013; Heifetz, Grashow, Linsky, 2009). This paper discusses the implications of a conceptual framework that intersects the notions of power and generative reciprocity (Dostilio, Brackmann, Edwards, Harrison, Kliewer, & Clayton, 2012; Gutmann & Thompson, 1996) through deliberative civic engagement to allow for promoting reciprocity and leadership in university-community partnerships. We suggest that partners need to create intentional holding environments (Drago-Severson, 2004) in which intersects of power and reciprocity can be illuminated and considered. Understanding power relations from the perspective of reciprocity will support the types of adaptive and transformational learning necessary to increase the effectiveness of community-engaged partnerships and scholarship.

Literature Review of Key Concepts
The contextual and social features of community-engaged scholarship produce a matrix of power relations that impact effectiveness. Systems that connect and network people, including community-engaged scholarship partnerships, inherently involve elements of power. Foucault (1990) defines power as the

> "...multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their organization; as the process which, through ceaseless struggles, transforms, strengthens or reverses them; as the support which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from another; and lastly, as the strategies in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallization

is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formation of the law, in the various social hegemonies (92-93).

Foucault's understanding of power includes an account of both the production of the subject and of the subjugation of the object. Rowlands (1997) applies postmodern understandings of power to outline the following four manifestations: 1) Power over, indicating control or compliance; 2) power with, such as collaborative action; 3) power to, connoting productive action to create new possibility; and, 4) power within, or the sense of agency and dignity (p. 13). These four dimensions of power overlap, bound, and define the construct of power enacted in community-engaged scholarship partnerships.

Community-engaged scholarship creates the conditions in which individuals and partnerships may be formed with possibilities to strengthen structures of democracy and deepen learning. Mezirow and Taylor (2009) identify researchers who understand ". . . transformative learning as being as much about social change as personal transformation, where individual and social transformation are inherently linked" (p. 5). Transformative learning and improving the practice of democracy are integral to community-engaged scholarship (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011; Sherman & Torbert, 2000; Kezar, Chambers, & Burkhardt, 2005: Yapa, 2009). Yet, inequalities and unbalanced power relations on multiple dimensions limit the potential, integrity, and effectiveness of community-engaged scholarship (Dempsey, 2010; Sandmann & Kliewer, 2012; Stoecker, Tryon, & Hilgendorf,, 2009). Currently, the literature fails to provide a comprehensive framework that accounts for power and reciprocity in ways that can serve to improve the effectiveness of community-campus partnerships.

Himmelman (2001) describes a continuum of community action from *collaborative betterment* to *collaborative empowerment.* "Collaborative betterment coalitions . . . are not designed to transform power relations or produce long-term ownership in communities by significantly increasing communities' control over their own destinies" (p. 281). Whereas, "collaborative empowerment coalitions . . . begin within communities or among constituencies and, after establishing mutually agreeable power relations, invite the participation of larger public, private, or nonprofit institutions" (p. 282).

The distinguishing characteristic between collaborative betterment coalitions and collaborative empowerment coalitions is the enactment of power, that is, who in the coalition has the "*capacity to produce intended results*" (p. 278). Himmelman (2001) further insists that "the transformation of power relations in coalitions requires that power . . . must be guided by principles and practices of democratic governance, grassroots leadership development, and community organizing." (p. 278). He suggests "there also should be opportunities for people to practice becoming more powerful in a democratic manner and growing comfortable with the responsibility and accountability to others that democratic power requires" (p. 284). Thus, recognizing the implementation of practices of deliberative civic engagement, as well as mapping intersects of power and reciprocity, becomes significant for individual and social transformation in community-engaged scholarship.

Deliberative civic engagement is defined by a particular approach to public communication and concerns for partnership. Deliberative engagement is a reference to forms of communication that include "…respectful and rigorous communication about public problems" (Nabatchi, 2012, p. 8). As a result, deliberative civic engagement describes a process groups use "…to make a difference in the civic life of our community and developing [sic] the combination of knowledge, skills, and values, and motivations to make a difference" (Ehrlich, 2000, p.

vi). Therefore, as people participate in deliberative processes, they are exposed to learning as leaders in civic life and community engagement.

Deliberation seeks to uncover "justifications which are acceptable to all" (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996, p. 232). The justification process that extends from deliberation ensures that partnership parameters move towards standards of fairness and consensus. Working through disagreement by cultivating the capacity of community-engaged scholarship partners to dialogue and deliberate is essential to adaptive and leadership learning.

The educative benefits of deliberative civic engagement that are supported by evidence position individuals in ways that allow them to manage disagreement and contestation, and maintain cohesion of the group's actions and partnership. Clas Offe and Ulrich Preuss (1991) suggest that processes intended to define the general will of a group will be able to overcome disagreement when deliberation meets three criteria: 1) Fact-regarding, as opposed to dogma or pure ideology; 2) future-regarding, which moves beyond only short-term considerations; and, 3) other-regarding, which includes consideration of the public good over simple calculations of self-interest (p. 156-7). The criteria of deliberation take on different meanings depending on the orientation one has toward deliberative civic engagement and reciprocity in partnerships.

Impartialist orientations to deliberative civic engagement are the most common approach to understanding the role deliberation has in responding to disagreement (Held, 2006). The impartialist perspective assumes that the best way to overcome disagreement is to link the goals of deliberative democracy processes that produce ". . . an expectation of rationally acceptable results" (Habermas, 2004, p. 546). The impartialist view advances an understanding that disagreement can be overcome by connecting deliberation to the consideration of all possible public positions and all associated justifications. Deliberation and disagreement, from the impartialist perspective, becomes what Benhabib (1992) refers to as ". . . reasoning from the point of view of others" (p. 9-10). Deliberative processes that are perceived as legitimate will be able to overcome disagreement because individuals will be prepared to accept the strongest publicly justified position.

Critics of the impartialist view suggest it is unrealistic to measure standards of deliberative civic engagement against ideal-speech conditions. Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson suggest that deliberative processes ought to account for non-ideal conditions. Gutmann and Thompson (1996) suggest that *incompatible values* and *incompatible understanding* will always be an element of associational politics.

Community-Engaged Scholarship Framework

Deliberative civic engagement and dimensions of community-engaged scholarship intersect once we accept that partnership development and sustainability must recognize the limitations of consensus and agreement in applied settings. Once non-ideal conditions are assumed, the principles of reciprocity play a key role in negotiated deliberative processes and community-engaged scholarship. The general conception of reciprocity presented by Gutmann and Thompson (1996) bounds the parameters of partnership into an area that would only accommodate disagreement that can still produce "mutually acceptable reasons" for collective decisions and "adheres to basic levels of respect" (p. 79).

Gutmann and Thompson (1996) assert deliberation avoids gridlock and allows for the negotiation of disagreement when individuals justify public positions with ". . . reasons that can be accepted by others who are similarly motivated to find reasons that can be accepted by others" (p. 232). Locating a space of agreeable justification that will be accepted by all is an essential

component of associational politics. The general principles of reciprocity point to the essential elements of deliberative civic engagement and community-engaged scholarship that hold partnerships together.

Dostilio, et al, (2012) offer such nuanced orientations of reciprocity – those of exchange, influence and generative reciprocity. Generative orientations of reciprocity shape the possibilities of adaptive and transformative learning by allowing for the possibilities of disorienting dilemmas, reflective thinking and dialogue, shifts in frames of reference, and shifts in actions (Mezirow, 1990, 1991, 1998). *Generative reciprocity* (Dostilio, et al, 2012) is a synergistic joining of partners across diversity of interests and perspectives from which emerges a new entity that would not have been possible within either partner alone, that is, a transformational partnership. Generative reciprocity, emerging from deliberative civic engagement, is an orientation that allows for transformative learning to occur. These various concepts of reciprocity inform the basis and design of deliberative civic engagement spaces.

Generative orientations to reciprocity support what Martin Luther King, Jr. refers to as *creative tensions* that produce the conditions for transformative learning. When speaking in regard to the relationships between nonviolent direct action and social change, King (1963) highlights how this idea of creative tensions leads to a type of transformative learning that can point toward social change. King urges us to consider how creative tensions can facilitate a learning process that moves people beyond ". . . myths and half-truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal . . ." (King, 1963, p. 3). The concept of creative tension can be constructed within deliberative civic engagement frameworks, tied to community-engaged scholarship, and designed to produce generative orientations to reciprocity that maintain the potential of transformative learning.

Community-engaged scholarship can be understood as a holding environment (Drago-Severson, 2004) in which adults might experience opportunities for transformative learning (Mezirow, 1990, 1991, 1998; Mezirow and Taylor, 2009). Drago-Severson (2009) suggests that the developmental growth of individuals and an organization depends upon reflective practices in "a community where open and honest communication is the norm, where critical dialogue is a priority, and where a supportive, trusting environment encourages and embraces risk taking" (p. 76). Bernard Manin, Elly Stein, and Jane Mansbridge (1987) argue that deliberative civic engagement is in itself an educative and training process, and any instrumental outcomes of deliberation are likely a result of ". . . educative effect of repeated deliberation" (p. 363).

Transformative learning that is linked to community-engaged scholarship meets the identified conditions precisely because community-campus partnerships are contexts in which different stakeholders are negotiating their individual and organizational interests (Dempsey, 2010; Giroux, 2013; Sandmann & Kliewer, 2012; Stoecker, Tryon & Hilgendorf, 2009). During the process of forming community-campus partnerships that are working toward a common goal, competing interests among stakeholders will inevitably emerge and be expressed within differentials in power, communicative action, and orientations of reciprocity. Expressions of, and exposure to, differences in perspectives and actions might serve as catalysts for appraisal of previously held assumptions, beliefs and perspectives, which inform frames of reference (Mezirow, 1990, 1991).

There is a need for individuals to exercise leadership in ways that make space for ". . . inclusion, deliberation, and transparency . . ." (Dostilio, 2014, p. 243). The process of building reciprocal partnerships within community-engaged scholarship provides opportunities for transformative learning, and provides a bridge for the scholarly process to address adaptive

challenges of the 21st century. In order to improve the outcomes of community-engaged scholarship, we suggest that partners create holding environments (Drago-Severson, 2004) for the enactment of deliberative civic engagement, where intersects of power and reciprocity are acknowledged and mapped among individual and organizational partners.

Conclusion

This manuscript presents a framework from adult education research and practice that assesses the potential of community-engaged scholarship to be designed as deliberative partnerships that build spaces of generative reciprocity and engagement. Our research aims to map the dynamics of power and reciprocity through deliberative civic engagement. We suggest this frame as a potentially generative design for community-engaged scholarship that engenders transformative learning for practice within democracy.

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