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Public Philosophy and Tenure/Promotion: Rethinking "Teaching, Scholarship and Service"

Christopher Meyers

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Abstract

One of the responses to the attacks upon the contemporary university, particularly upon the humanities, has been to encourage faculty to engage in so-called 'public intellectualism.' In this paper I urge (some) philosophers to embrace this turn, but only if the academy can effectively address how to credit such work in the tenure and promotion process. Currently, public philosophy is typically placed under 'service', even though the work is often more intellectually and philosophically rigorous than committee work, even sometimes more than publications. I address this problem by providing an analysis of what is academically valuable about good scholarship and then showing how much of public philosophy achieves those goods. From this I argue that the academy should abandon the traditional categories of teaching/research/service and replace them with a holistic and qualitative single category of "teacher-scholar." I then recommend that evaluation criteria should be very inclusive, giving credit to the wide range of activities in which faculty participate and I provide some suggestions for how those criteria should read.

Introduction

The traditional university is under siege. From MOOCS, to right wing critics, to legislative and accrediting bodies' demands for greater accountability, to program cuts or threats of cuts, and even to mainstream and moderate commentators,[1] the noise for overhaul is loud and pervasive.

The critiques have been particularly harsh on the humanities, philosophy included, and some have in response urged a "public" turn as a way of (re)affirming relevance. See, for example, the Imagining America consortium, whose mission statement states: "Imagining America advances knowledge and creativity through publicly engaged scholarship that

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draws on humanities, arts, and design. We catalyze change in campus practices, structures, and policies that enables publicly engaged artists and scholars to thrive and contribute to community action and revitalization."[2]

While I reject the notion that the humanities, even the most esoteric, should *have* to justify their worth, I recognize that we *need* to do so; for the foreseeable future, at least, the loudest and most powerful voices in the conversation will continue to demand such justification. Furthermore, while most of the critiques are of the sort noted above – i.e., explicit and direct – many are also indirect and subtle. When was the last time, for example, that a U.S. president called for an increase in grant funds to study, say, epistemology, as opposed to the perennial calls for an increase in STEM education? See, for example, the latest example in President Barak Obama's "Initiative for STEM Master Teacher Corps."[3] While it would be unthinkable for Obama to ever directly disparage humanities teaching, his indirect appraisal is apparent in its absence from his proposed programs.

There are thus good defensive reasons for humanities faculty,[4] philosophy faculty in particular, to embrace the public turn:[5] Like it or not, warranted or not, doing this work will help remind people of our importance. There are also, though, excellent *positive* reasons for the turn. As the last several decades of the practical ethics movement attest, philosophers have a tremendous amount to offer to the public sphere. We are especially, maybe even uniquely, skilled at analyzing and evaluating a wide range of real world problems, at discerning the salient elements in those problems, at getting at the conceptual and theoretical concerns that are often at their root. In short, done well, practical or public philosophy helps people *make sense* of the world and its problems, from which there is a greater likelihood of achieving viable resolutions.

Such work is also good for *us* – as philosophers, scholars, teachers, and as *people*. First, it pulls us out of our heads, forcing us to see the relationship between theoretical and conceptual pondering and practical, often life-altering, issues; second, it improves our teaching by allowing us to bring realistic examples into the classroom; and, third, it shifts our focus away from the often petty politics of the university and toward things that matter.

In short, we *should* be doing public philosophy, or, again, at least *some* of us should. Done well, the work will help others, it will help protect our place in the university, and it will help us be better teacher-scholars.

Even, however, when these benefits are recognized and highly valued by our peers, even the most accomplished public philosophy is rarely counted for anything more than

'service' in tenure and promotion evaluations. People doing public philosophy routinely describe the difficulties they face in being expected to do it *and* meet the customary publication standards required by their respective institutions. This is a particular burden for junior faculty: Demanding that they meet standard publication requirements *and* undertake a rich agenda of public philosophy is unrealistic and unjust. Most are wise enough to see the writing on the wall and to accordingly delay their engagement in public work until post-tenure – sometimes with corresponding detriment to their most productive faculty development.[6]

There are good reasons for delay: Much of the public work requires a seasoned view of problems and the kinds of relationships that normally develop only over time. Furthermore, publishing, with the associated layers of peer review, serves to establish philosophical credibility. I will further discuss these concerns in a moment, but my point here is that we need to find a way to encourage publishing *and* public work (for those interested in and suited to it), within reasonable requirements.

Under the current model, however, public work is in essence *discouraged*, since it is typically counted as only service and there is often a requirement that the faculty member also fulfill their obligation to the standard level of campus committee work.[7] It is placed under service in part because our colleagues don't know where else to put it. To them, it's neither teaching nor scholarship, so it must fall into service.

My argument here is thus two-fold: I will first urge a revision of those traditional boxes, replacing them with a single, qualitative and holistic evaluation of "teacher-scholars." I will then make the case that much of public philosophy is philosophically rigorous and of real benefit to the person doing it, to the department and university, and to the community – often far more of each of these than some publications. That is, I will argue that public philosophy can be deeply important and revelatory of the skills and qualities necessary to be a tenured member of the academic community.

Replacing the Boxes with 'Teacher-Scholars'

Finding a way to appropriately credit public philosophy is a good but probably not sufficient reason to revise a decades-old model of faculty evaluation: There are just not enough folks doing such work to justify the messiness of revision. Faculty members' conservatism means we are protective of (our own) historical institutions and resistant to change. Many colleagues with whom I have discussed this proposal have quite quickly

embraced it; others have gotten on board as the conversation/argument progressed; while the majority has dismissed it, usually with a "if it ain't broke, …" response.

Well, my position is the current system *is* broken, or at least so flawed as to warrant the mess, and not just because the system cannot account for public activities. First, even for folks who do not do public work, the boxes create artificial and not rationally sustainable lines. My campus, for example, has long fought over whether to count academically rigorous and well-reviewed, if ultimately unsuccessful grant applications as service or scholarship. What about serving as a reviewer for a top-notch journal, a position granted because of one's success as a scholar and also requiring real scholarly evaluation of the work? Or where does publishing a lower division textbook fall, under teaching or scholarship?

I have been doing public philosophy for nearly 30 years – in health care settings, in newsrooms, at town hall meetings, in school districts, in op-ed columns, and in area businesses. While most of my colleagues deeply value this work, I wouldn't have tried to get tenure with it alone, those many years ago. I also had the 'good luck' to have learned from a mentor's misfortune: He was hired by one dean on the (verbal) understanding that he would do extensive public philosophy, mainly hospital ethics, and that this would stand-in for some of the publication requirements. When a new dean was appointed, that agreement fell by the wayside and it was made clear he would not receive tenure. So he moved on and eventually left the profession. Having that example in hand, I made sure I got my publications, proved my teaching chops, and served on campus committees, all while also starting an ethics center, becoming a clinical ethicist for local hospitals, and engaging in a participant-observer project at two local news outlets. Only after receiving tenure did I successfully push for a revision to our department criteria to help pave the way for future public scholars, by including such work under "research activities" (with a host of caveats). But this is an ongoing fight – colleagues change, deans and provosts change, criteria get revised, and one is correspondingly and repeatedly challenged to keep making the case.

And it makes good sense why the case has to be repeated – public philosophy just isn't a natural fit within the traditional academic model, or at least not given the ways in which we categorize, in particular, scholarship and service. The problem, though, is not with the public work, but with the model. Our goal should be to seek to be and to promote excellent *teacher-scholars*, with an expansive understanding of the kinds of activities that contribute to that standing.

The work that for me most blurred the lines was serving for six years as the Chair of our campus's "Faculty Rights" team. It was my responsibility to act as at least an agent, usually an advocate, for faculty who believed their contractual or civil rights had been violated by the campus administration. The often extraordinarily labor- and time-intensive work was also very demanding intellectually (e.g., attempting to interpret vague contractual language or case precedents), ethically challenging (e.g., trying to sort out competing justice claims or institutionally-grounded norms), and often calling for exactly the kinds of mediation skills I regular employ in my role as a clinical ethics consultant. Some of the cases required considerably more philosophical and intellectual acumen than some of my publications and I frequently took what I learned from the process into the classroom, for example when discussing the adversarial system of law. And of course I was fulfilling an important service to my colleagues and to the campus.

Into which box should such work be placed? For a recent post-tenure review, I did in fact put it under "service," but in largest part because I was already a topped-out full professor and didn't need credit in *any* of the areas. If I had a junior colleague doing it, necessarily at the expense of having the time to do other more traditional scholarship, I would fight hard to have it be a major contribution to her tenure or promotion – not because it unmistakably qualified as (the more highly valued, respective to service) scholarship or teaching, but because it revealed her to be *a vital member of the academy*, a real *teacher-scholar*. Now, granted, many faculty serve in similar positions in a more-or-less pro forma way, hardly meeting the level of philosophical or intellectual engagement I'm describing here. This, though, only serves to reveal once again the importance of a holistic, qualitative evaluation of *all* one's professional activities.

The boxes also contribute to a "teaching to the test" mentality: What's the minimum percentage of positive student evaluations needed for tenure? How many journal articles and what's the ranking of those journals? Is serving on one committee a year sufficient? While quantitative criteria can provide piece of mind to junior colleagues, since they know they cannot be denied tenure or promotion if they've met them,[8] they can also motivate complacency: "I've met the criteria, now I can relax."

The exhortation I regularly give junior faculty is that I am looking for colleagues who keep striving to be better teachers, who engage in research, and who endeavor to improve the campus environment because that's *who they are*. Their *identity* is largely defined through these activities. They enjoy the work and can't imagine not doing it. They don't do it because it necessary for tenure and promotion, but because they are teacher-scholars who do

good philosophy, expressing their best talents through writing, teaching, engaging, and/or philosophical consulting.

This approach, furthermore, seems workable with most, maybe even all the university's disciplines. How can we with a straight face say that when, say, Poet Laureate Robert Hass is writing poetry, the work is not as academically respectable as when he is writing *about* poetry? Ditto for all the great novelists, and biographers, and field and lab scientists, and management consultants, and social workers, and psych counselors. They are *doing* their discipline in all those activities. And when we go to evaluate them, we should be looking for their respective strengths within *all* the noted options so as to create a holistic and qualitative assessment of their accomplishments as teacher-scholars. Let me thus turn to the argument for why public philosophy should be given a significant place in those holistic assessments.

Why Public Philosophy Isn't a Natural Fit

There are a number of reasons public work gets marginalized – some good and some not so. Among the not-so-good reasons:

1. Academicians are inherently conservative: We wish to preserve the values and processes in which we were raised, too often in an unreflective way.
2. Critically evaluating the boxes (teaching/research/scholarship) is, for some, frightening: Significantly adjusting, let alone completely moving past these long-established categories might open the door to much greater threats, like reconsideration of tenure itself. Better to leave it alone, the thinking goes, since only a very few faculty are impacted.
3. "I had to publish; so should you." I actually had a senior colleague tell me this many years ago when I first proposed revising my department's criteria. Fortunately his 'hazing' argument did not prevail.

I assume it is sufficiently apparent why none of these bad, but nonetheless commonly cited reasons can sustain thoughtful evaluation: First, that academics are conservative, and I believe we truly are and generally for good reason, is a justification for moving *slowly* and *reflectively*, but not for rigidly holding onto processes just because we've always done them that way; second, yes, we should be diligent in our fight to resist the corporatization of the academy, including threats to tenure, but it is a slippery slope to argue that thoughtful changes to the tenure process will undermine its critical place in the university; and, third, even if we charitably rephrase the 'hazing' argument into, "There are good reasons I had to

publish and those apply to all similarly situated faculty as well," it still begs the question as to what those good reasons are and whether they can be satisfied in other ways.

What, then, are the better reasons for rejecting public philosophy as a vital contribution to tenure or promotion? They include:

1. How and where should public work be categorized? Is it scholarship? Teaching? Service? All of the above? None of the above? This confusion is best revealed via examples, so let me very briefly describe two that are fresh to mind, as I was engaged with them in the two days leading up to this writing. Both are wholly typical of this kind of work.

In the first instance, I was acting in my role as ethicist for a local hospital. Ethics committee members and I were discussing the case of a dying man whose family was in denial over that fact. The treating team wanted to declare that additional treatment, beyond palliative, was medically ineffective and cruel to the patient. This declaration would thus have (arguably) given the team sufficient grounds for making a *unilateral* decision to put him on comfort care. Many skillful and loving attempts were undertaken in the hope of bringing the family to a point of acceptance, but to date they had been to no avail. So the treating team wanted to know if they could ethically make the decision unilaterally.

Such cases are exceedingly complex, with each bringing a unique mix of legal, ethical, religious, emotional, medical, and economic complications. Being able to be an effective counsel in such cases requires specialized reasoning skills, a strong knowledge of the ethical considerations underlying the various options, the ability to be an effective communicator, an appreciation for institutional politics and power dynamics, and at least a strong familiarity with the legal, religious, emotional, medical, and economic elements.

When one is engaged in this work, one is clearly *doing philosophy* in much the same way I'm doing philosophy as I write this essay – carefully thinking through problems and seeking best, reasoned solutions. One is also *teaching* – part of the goal in these consultations is to educate the staff so they do not need to rely upon the ethicist. And one is clearly providing a *service* – the work is often done pro bono, as a way of giving back to the community and as part of the historical service commitment attached to being a professional. So where should this activity be categorized when, say, putting together a promotion file?

The second example involved being interviewed for a local reporter's story on high Valley Fever rates among prisoners at a few California prisons.[9] She wanted to know about the ethics associated with transferring out those prisoners at a higher risk for infection, while transferring in a less vulnerable, but still at-risk, population. To be able to meaningfully contribute to her story, I needed an adequate understanding of the medical background and a richer one of the justice considerations and the surrounding social and political context (e.g., California's prisons are currently under Federal receivership with a mandate to reduce over-crowding and to improve prison health care). While I had some such understanding at hand, I also needed to do some quick research on relative rates of infection, etc. And then I needed to take these exceptionally complex notions, including difficult and abstract questions about proportional justice, and translate them into language accessible to the average newspaper reader. That translation also includes having enough experience as a news source to know what the reporter needs and also to be sufficiently circumspect in describing problems, particularly political system failures.

Again, the thinking and communicating is deeply *philosophical*, the results include *educational* benefits to the reporter and readers, and it provides a beneficial *service* to the community. So into which box does it get placed come review time? The historical bias has been to consider it service, but given the kind of work involved, that is simply a category mistake. There is such a qualitative difference in the philosophical and intellectual requirements in this work and serving on most campus committees as to make it a difference in kind, not just in degree. If anything, it is closer to scholarship. Forcing it into any of the standard boxes represents, thus, a forced and artificial approach, done only because the model does not provide a viable alternative. By contrast, as I will argue below, characterizing the work as part of an inclusive description of what it means to be an excellent *teacher-scholar* is none of those; it is, in fact, a perfectly coherent fit.

2. Most of our colleagues really do not understand the work we do, how intellectually, philosophically and emotionally demanding it can be, and we don't always do a good job of educating them. While this is certainly true, the fault is mainly our own – we need to be more consistent and thorough in describing the nature of the work and how much of it we do.

3. In an academic world where numerical data increasingly seem to be the coin of the realm, public work is impossible to quantify. Part of my response to this is "amen;" i.e., that problem points to the fundamental inadequacy of quantification: So much of what we do – inspiring students, changing peoples' way of thinking about the world and their place in it, helping to make someone's final days or hours more

peaceful – cannot be captured in an Excel sheet. But, just as we have to recognize the need to justify philosophy's place in the modern university, so also must we acknowledge that numbers are in fact the currency. Like it or not, we have to engage this method of evaluating our work.

It is thus our responsibility to find ways to quantify, and it should be relatively easy to do, even if, again, the resulting information is only partial and misleading: How many consults did one perform this year? How many hospital policies or op-ed pieces did one write? How many people attended workshops, panels or lectures and what was their feedback to them? How many students are participating in programs, what did they learn, and what was their review of them?

4. The last reason is also the most telling: The normal reliance on peer-review is either absent or complicated enough in public work as to discourage its acquisition. While there are various ways of obtaining external assessment of public work (e.g., soliciting blind letters of evaluation from associated non-academic professionals like physicians, hospital administrators, and community leaders), the process generally will not be and probably cannot be as rigorous as that obtained via the layers of peer review present in publications. These constraints are why I will argue, below, that even the most accomplished public philosopher must also establish her philosophical acumen via publishing.

However, once those credentials *are* established, public philosophy, done well, should be accepted as being as important, as rigorous, and as meaningful as publications. To see why this is the case, it is helpful to do a meta-analysis of the value of traditional research and then see how public work in fact satisfies all the same considerations, in many cases even more effectively.

Comparing Research and Publications with Public Philosophy

In my experience, it is surprising how little thought academics give to the purpose and importance of scholarship. We do it *because that's what academics do*, as we learned from our mentors, who learned it from theirs. And then we reinforce it in tenure and promotion reviews.

Scholarship is, I am convinced, vital to a university's mission, namely: educating, advancing ideas, creating an intellectual environment, and bettering the lives of others. Scholarship is what distinguishes universities from trade schools and community colleges,

where the teaching and service may be first-rate, but where scholarship is optional and, generally speaking, the exception. University scholarship is a source of knowledge creation and, maybe even more importantly, of the enhancement of a campus's intellectual culture.

Specifically, then, why is it important? Here are seven goods it promotes:

1. Doing it provides evidence of a faculty member's engagement with, and knowledge of, ideas, problems and solutions in her field. Successful scholarship shows that one has the relevant expertise, as judged by our peers.

2. Related, it also shows we have the intellectual skill-set and communication abilities to address those issues and even to extend the conversation in new and fruitful directions.

3. Good scholarship promotes an active and engaged campus intellectual climate. The difference between campuses with a flourishing intellectual culture and those without is palpable: Faculty are sharing ideas with one another and with students; guest speakers are common; grants are bringing extra money; and people are attending (or hosting) conferences, with the associated scholarly invigoration.

4. Plain and simple, good research makes us better teachers (and vice-versa). This point, now widely accepted,[10] also reinforces my central thesis, that the traditional and distinct boxes of teaching, research and service are artificial and inadequate to capture what we do – there is just too much overlap in the activities. Questions that arise in teaching often lead to new scholarship, which returns to inform teaching, and then is used to assist other faculty in their work.

5. Prestige in the academic world is largely attached to scholarship. One makes a name for oneself, one's department, and one's university through the number and quality of publications, with the latter assessed principally by the prestige of the journal or publishing house.

6. While it may sound quaint in the contemporary academy, research is undertaken to seek out truth, or at least to help make better sense of the world, human relations, and abstract ideas. Such truth-seeking produces a range of pragmatic benefits, often well beyond those one would predict, and it also has intrinsic value – it is simply a good thing to distinguish truth from falsehood, regardless of the discipline.

7. New research often results in discoveries that translate into improvements in people's daily lives – everything from antibiotics, to sewage disposal and clean water systems, to smart phones. The discoveries can also include better interpretive models or conceptual and theoretical tools that help make better sense of problems, and solutions, in a range of real-world contexts.

In sum, research and scholarship is profoundly important to what academics do and are: it changes how and where we work, and it enhances the communities in which we live.

Well, *some* research and scholarship does this. Some is garbage, written merely to meet a tenure or promotion quota, published in an obscure journal and read by 15 people. This reality again reinforces the value of moving beyond the discrete boxes and toward the teacher-scholar designation, where one would stress the *qualitative whole*.

This reality also serves as a good segue to assessing the achievements of public philosophy. My position is that a careful analysis of the nature of, and the impacts from, public work reveal it to satisfy these seven values at least as effectively as many, even most, publications.

The opening caveat is that I am talking about public work done *well*, wherein the philosopher has mastered the range of skill sets, particularly the communication skills, necessary to this work. Most of us are not trained to take focus our philosophical tools *outward*, or at least outward beyond the classroom; nor are we trained in mediation and consensus building or in the use of accessible language and style – exactly to the contrary. In short, it is and should be a small subset of philosophers who engage in public work, people with the inclination to pursue it conscientiously enough to acquire those skills and to give up other career-enhancing opportunities.

Let us thus consider how public philosophy achieves the seven values, via review of the two examples provided above (the clinical ethics consultation and the newspaper interview). I pick them for consistency's sake and because they are the sort of routine activities in which public philosophers regularly engage. They are not, however, by any means among the most important, difficult or consequential that public philosophers regularly engage.

1. Evidence of engagement with, and knowledge of, ideas, problems and solutions: One dare not participate in clinical ethics consultations without a rich knowledge base including, but not limited to, the ethical principles or norms relevant to the specific case; the medical facts; institutional and professional standards, politics and culture (all while being fiercely

independent of organizational power structures[11]); legal and economic implications; and the particulars of family dynamics. One dare not because, more often than not the issues have life and death ramifications. While providing a news interview rarely has such potentially profound consequences, one still must have a rich understanding of what is at stake in the problem (again: ethical, political, social, and historical stakes), and one generally has very little time to do the necessary research to get up to speed.

2. An intellectual skill-set and communication abilities: As revealed in both examples, successful public philosophers are very quick on their feet, able to discern and evaluate all the above noted facts and the personalities involved. They are able to quickly sort through the slough to determine the most important considerations at work. Then they must translate their usual philosophy-speak of abstractions and concepts into accessible language, particularly for news media, who need complexity and nuance communicated at their readers', on average, ninth grade reading level. And they must have sufficient rhetorical skills to help others, often others with deep emotional investments, work their way toward consensus.

3. Creating an intellectual community: Much of the work of public philosophers takes place outside the academy and the results are not normally tangible in the same way a book or offprint is. This is why it is so important for us to regularly communicate, educate, on what we do – through colloquia, in department meetings, and via any resulting publications. More directly, though, many of those engaged in public philosophy are also those most involved in organizing campus programs – speakers, workshops, and panels[12] -- helping to foster thereby a rich and diverse intellectual climate.

4. Better teaching: There is nothing like a real world case to elucidate core philosophical concepts, at least when those connections are carefully elucidated. What better way to show, for example, what it means to treat someone as a mere means than a clinical ethics case in which family members are forcing a loved one to continue life-sustaining treatment so as to meet their emotional or economic needs; or a prison policy that risks the health, even the lives, of prisoners so as to save money? In short, public activities enrich and enliven in ways that even the best written material cannot touch.

5. Prestige in the academic world: Prestige is undoubtedly attached to publications. Even the best-known public philosophers – people like Peter Singer and Jürgen Habermas – gained their reputation mainly through publications. There are certainly opportunities for career development and acclaim within public work – organizations like the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, the Society for Applied Philosophy, and the American

Society for Bioethics and Humanities – are often foundational to faculty members' careers. But even there, the prestige is generally associated with one's success as a published scholar, rather than with the actual public work.

But, for establishing a *non-academic* reputation, the public work is far more important. Most non-academics are impressed by books, but likely could care less about journal articles. If, however, one is able to provide real assistance in their daily struggles with ethical issues, if one motivates community conversations via lectures, panels and workshops, or generates real improvements in social justice, there can be considerable resulting prestige – for the individual, her program, and her university. This often also results in financial support for these and related activities.[13]

6. Truth-seeking: One of the most important things to come from the public philosophy movement, particularly as exemplified in practical ethics, has been a reconsideration of ethics theory and its "application" to real world problems. The top-down model that dominated the early "applied ethics" movement – "applied" precisely because the belief was that one needed only to take a good theory and apply it to problems – has been largely replaced by models that stress a bottom-up approach, in which contextual contingencies are the driving factors in practical ethics decision-making. Does this mean practical philosophers have discovered a truth about the nature of ethics decision-making and its relationship to ethics theory? It is much too early to draw that conclusion. But that this model – really *these* models, as there are many different versions – has become so dominant in the field certainly speaks to *something* truthful.

And this is of course only one way in which public philosophy participates in truth-seeking. Given its often in-the-trenches nature, such work is more experimental, with both successful and failed attempts to, for example, redefine democratic participation,[14] promote journalistic accountability,[15] and address a wide range of issues in health care ethics.[16] Each of these programs, and the many more like them, discover new truths about the nature of practical ethics – what approaches succeed in what environments, how to alter institutional and political structures to prevent recurrences of common problems, and how to better incorporate ethics theory and conceptual analysis into these contexts.

7. Making the world a better place: Since the raison d'être of public philosophy is activist, this one is obvious. When done well, public philosophy directly improves the lives of others, whether by helping motivate systems to ease poverty, creating greater social responsibility in business practices, pushing for more ethical journalism, or easing someone's passage into death.

The conclusion: Public philosophy is on aggregate *at least* as successful at accomplishing the values associated with good scholarship and should be afforded comparable worth in tenure and promotion reviews. That said, such worth will likely not occur within the current system of evaluation and its discrete boxes: Public philosophy just isn't (traditional) scholarship; nor is it (classroom) teaching; nor is it (campus) service. It is all of those and none of those. What it *is*, however, is the sort of work (some) philosophers can and should be doing, since it is, per the above arguments, core to what it means to be a successful teacher-scholar.

Another way of thinking about the connection is by realizing that in both cases one is *doing philosophy*. When we write, we *do philosophy*, through the written word, and when we teach we *do philosophy* (among many other things) through oral presentation and stagecraft. My claim is that when we are engaged in meaningful public work, we are *doing philosophy* –evaluating problems through conceptual and logical analysis and seeking resolution to those problems via reasoned and ethical examination – in at least as rich and sophisticated way as when we are writing and classroom teaching. The audience is (typically) different and the style is more accessible, but the same skill sets and reasoning method are at work.

Consider how expansive the philosophical tent is these days: The discipline has found plenty of space (and respect) for people who do philosophy via, for example, exegesis of historical texts, logical analysis, language investigation, existential treatises, evaluation of gender norms, and via review of ethics theory and practical problems. I simply want to extend that list to include doing philosophy through public work.

Tenure and Promotion Criteria

If evaluation of faculty was always sufficiently rational, motivated by the goal of mentoring faculty into becoming effective, valuable and valued members of the academic community, while also recognizing that some will not achieve that and must be dismissed (or not promoted), then the only needed criterion would be: "We seek to advance excellent teacher-scholars, the determination of which will be made by one's peers." The reality, however, is that such reviews are often marred by personal hostilities, jealousies, and injustices. The criteria, thus, have to be sufficiently explicit and detailed to produce just outcomes.

Those criteria must also reflect the overall goals of the academic enterprise, which, as noted above and slightly expanded here, include: educating students, colleagues and the community; advancing ideas within and beyond one's discipline; creating an intellectual environment, on campus and in the community; and using one's skills and expertise to

enhance the lives of others. Tenure and promotion criteria, thus, must establish both what qualifies as success in achieving those goals and the means for evaluation of candidates' associated activities:

Educating: The academy has considerable experience with, and good tools for, evaluating success in classroom teaching, many of which could also be used if a candidate wished to show success in community education (e.g., participant evaluations, review of teaching materials and peer visitations). Different programs will give higher priority to different aspects of teaching (e.g., student perceptions versus grade reports versus the quality of classroom materials) and criteria will necessarily reflect those variations.

Advancing Ideas: In order to advance ideas, one must, first, have a sufficient understanding of existing ones and, second, intellectually rigorous suggestions for improvement. Given a natural tendency to be insufficiently objective when assessing one's own and one's close colleagues' work, we have appropriately settled on external peer review, typically as part of the standard research and publication process. While obviously not foolproof, such review is the best means we have for judging quality and the likelihood that the ideas bring something new to the conversation.

But disciplinary research is not the only place where such advancement is important: Faculty who come up with new teaching methods (e.g., on better use of online technology), or who motivate innovative programmatic designs and alignments, or who devise more effective shared governance procedures, should have such important work recognized; they have directly contributed to the structural conditions that allow a given campus to achieve its mission. Similarly, faculty who use their expertise to assist community agencies or organizations more effectively achieve their goals should also be recognized for how that work contributes to the academic mission. Criteria must thus describe what counts as success in those areas and devise methods for quantitatively and qualitatively evaluating the achievements. This would include, for example, having faculty list what they have accomplished and having associated participants write a letter describing how it made a difference in their particular program.

Because, however, the academy is still developing these standards and processes, publication remains, for now at least, the best mechanism for obtaining objective evaluations. Criteria for tenure, thus, should include some minimum publishing requirement, which could be buttressed by public work. For example, our department criteria require at least two peer-reviewed publications for tenure, or one plus a range of other add-ons, including important and externally assessed public philosophy. And, rather

than trying to define in abstraction what types of public work counts, we ask the candidate to make that case in his/her narrative, with particular emphasis on describing its intellectual and philosophical rigor. A similar balance would make sense for promotion criteria, i.e., a reduction in normal publication requirements when those are supplemented by quality public work.

Creating an Intellectual Environment: Intellectual environments are established through an array of means: Engaging one's colleagues and students on scholarly or pedagogical concerns (e.g., through department and university colloquia, shared or joint research, and participation in local or national panels or poster sessions); engaging colleagues, students and community members on topical issues (e.g., by hosting guest speakers and sponsoring or participating on panels); and providing mentorship to colleagues and students in the development of their research and teaching agendas (e.g., though workshops, brown-bags, and granting opportunities). These activities could be evaluated in the same way we currently assess service work, with candidates providing a list of those activities and explaining how they contributed to them. In fact, the latter, "explaining" requirement would improve upon current review practice in which, typically, colleagues simply *list* membership on committees, for which they may have done little or no work. It could also give greater weight to mentoring students and colleagues. We often talk about the vital role such mentorship plays in student and faculty development, but we do not currently have a good mechanism for valuing it within tenure and promotion criteria.

Bettering Others' Lives: This criterion is at once the most difficult to assess and at the same time probably the most important of academic goals. We certainly improve our students' lives through traditional classroom teaching and mentoring. We teach them worthwhile content and skills; we teach them to be more engaged and critical thinkers; we teach them to be citizen-participants; and we teach them successful life habits. But, beyond subjective and anecdotal feedback, we have no good means for measuring those impacts. We hopefully also improve our immediate colleagues' lives through good mentorship and guidance, with similar difficulties in assessment. By contrast, while judging the impact of some public work (e.g., media interviews, blogging, and serving on community boards) is complicated at best, in other cases the effects are immediate, direct and potentially even quantifiable (e.g., improving patients' and families' experiences in the dying process, working with communities to increase democratic participation, and creating new structures for addressing poverty).

To show their success in this area, thus, candidates would be expected to detail those more obvious cases, with external evaluations of the associated achievements, while also pointing to the more general activities and discussing their impressionistic sense of the difference they made in others' lives, ideally with such 'others' (or associated persons) providing feedback as well.

Last, a point about traditional service, mainly serving on campus committees. As noted above, such service typically does not provide evidence that one has philosophical acumen, but rather that one is a *good citizen*, someone who helps with the grunt work of university life. Good citizens make for good colleagues; hence the validity of including this as a criterion, but only so long as that value is explicitly understood by all participants in the review process.

Success in these goals reveals one to be an accomplished teacher-scholar and that more wholistic characterization better captures the clear overlap among the activities. Further, for those faculty who are uncomfortable moving too far away from the tradition, these areas also obviously align with the traditional categories; that is, one could provide room within each of them for teaching, scholarship and service. At the same time, the areas provide room for richly valuing public philosophy and, per the arguments above, making better sense of the wide range of often overlapping work activities in which faculty regularly engage.[17]

Notes

[1] See, for example, Walters, Dan. "California Universities Resistant to Change," syndicated column, accessed August 18, 2013, http://www.sacbee.com/2013/08/14/5648446/dan-walters-california-higher.html; and Dominus, Susan. "How to Get a Job with a Philosophy Degree," New York Times, Sept. 13, 2013, accessed online at: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/15/magazine/how-to-get-a-job-with-a-philosophy-degree.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

[2] Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life. Mission Statement, accessed August 18, 2013, http://imaginingamerica.org/about/our-mission/. See also their publication, authored by Ellison, Julie and Eatman, Timothy K., "Scholarship in Public: Knowledge Creation and Tenure Policy in the Engaged University," 2008, available on their website at http://imaginingamerica.org/fg-item/scholarship-in-public-knowledge-creation-and-tenure-policy-in-the-engaged-university/?parent=442.

[3] "President Obama Announces Plans for a New, National Corps to Recognize and Reward Leading Educators in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math," White House Website, accessed August 18, 2013, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/07/17/president-obama-announces-plans-new-national-corps-recognize-and-reward-.

[4] *Some* humanities and philosophy faculty. As I will make clear below, not all are well suited to it, just as are suited to studio art or advanced symbolic logic.

[5] I define "public philosophy" as any work performed by trained philosophers in which the intended audience is anyone other than (or in addition to) one's disciplinary colleagues or college students. The range is thus quite broad – from clinical ethics to community activism to writing op-ed columns. See the Public Philosophy Network website for examples: http://publicphilosophynetwork.ning.com/, accessed August 20, 2013.

[6] I'm grateful to David Adams for stressing this point – personal conversation, August 2013.

[7] We also of course need our colleagues to help with campus service – doing so is part of what it means to be a good campus citizen. I will argue below, however, that unlike campus service, in which we may approach issues from a philosophical bent, public philosophy more richly entails *doing philosophy*, in much the same way that research entails doing philosophy.

[8] And, admittedly, quantitative criteria often prove decisive in grievances.

[9] Informally called "Valley Fever," coccidioidomycosis is a fungal infection that can be life debilitating, even fatal.

[10] "Every hour spent on teaching can improve our research output; every hour spent on research can improve our teaching performance. That is, teaching enhances research and research enhances teaching," Kaplan, Todd R., "Combining Research and Teaching," The Economics Network, January 2007, online at http://www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/showcase/kaplan_research, accessed August 23, 2013.

[11] See Meyers, Christopher, "Clinical Ethics Consulting and Conflicts of Interest: Structurally Intertwined," *Hastings Center Report*, Vol. 37, #2, March-April 2007, pp. 32-40.

[12] Our campus's ethics center is, for example, our campus's most active source for intellectual programs. See: www.csub.edu/kie.

[13] Our ethics center, for example, is almost wholly funded by private and corporate donations.

[14] See, for example, the "Occupy Philosophy" Affinity Group of the Public Philosophy Network (http://publicphilosophynetwork.ning.com/group/occupy-philosophy), accessed August 26, 2013.

[15] See, for example, "Holding Media Accountable," a program within the Center for Journalism Ethics at University of Wisconsin-Madison (http://ethics.journalism.wisc.edu/resources/holding-media-accountable/), accessed August 26, 2013.

[16] See, for example, The Bioethics Network (www.bioethics.net), accessed August 26, 2013.

[17] I am deeply grateful to Hugh LaFollette for the many conversations we had on this topic and for his careful critiques of the argument. The paper is much improved as a result of his insightful commentary.