

Barbara Dennis

2018 Personal Statement

Promotion to Full Professor as a Balanced Case

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I am a social justice scholar in the field of research methodologies. As such, critical perspectives are infused across and within my research, teaching, and service. In this personal statement, I will point out the merits of my *balanced case* for promotion to Full Professor. I chose this case as a way of framing my work in the rank of Associate Professor because it is the most authentic characterization of what I do. Promotion to Full Professor on a Balanced Case requires at least Very Good/Highly Satisfactory Performance in each of the three assessed categories (research, teaching and service). The Promotion and Tenure Criteria of the School of Education defines Very Good/Highly Satisfactory as “appreciably better than satisfactory but less than excellent performance” — evidenced in Section I below. Moreover, a successful balanced case consists of “a thoughtful and purposeful integration among the candidate’s teaching, research, and service activities” (p. 6) — evidenced in Section II below.

I came to Indiana University in 2001 on a one year, Visiting Assistant Professor contract. By the end of the third year, I was offered a Clinical Assistant Faculty position with a split appointment in Multicultural Education and Inquiry Methodology. Clinical Faculty are assessed in the categories of Teaching and Service only. In 2008 I was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in the Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology (home to the Inquiry Methodology Program). This constitutes an unusual path to tenure and promotion for Indiana University.

Overview

During my tenure as Associate Professor, my research, teaching, and service as a critical scholar has gained international attention. My primary contributions as an Associate Professor involve both articulating and innovating critical methodological concepts and practices—specifically, critical participatory ethnography which draws on critical theoretical perspectives explicated in Section II. I’ve published primarily in international venues, including the top journals in the field of qualitative inquiry in education such as *Qualitative Inquiry* and *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*. This includes 16 peer-reviewed journal articles (six single authored) plus eight peer-reviewed and invited book chapters (all single authored). I also co-edited a book titled *Qualitative Research: A Reader on Philosophy, Core Concepts, and Practice. Series - Counter points: Studies in the Postmodern Theory of Education* (2013, Peter Lang LTD). This book included chapters by an international and multidisciplinary group of scholars who articulate an integration of theories with practices. During my time in rank, I delivered six plenary and keynote addresses and two invited workshops. My scholarship has advanced methodological concepts/practices of validity (such as Dennis, 2013 and Dennis, 2017), ethics (such as Dennis, 2009 and Dennis, 2018), and participation (such as Dennis, 2010

and Call Cummings, Dennis, & Martinez, 2017). The substantive focus of my research is linked to social justice issues, which parallels my commitment to critical methodologies.

I teach courses on qualitative and introductory research methodologies for graduate students. At the Associate rank, my pedagogical accomplishments have included two teaching awards, one book contract (with co-authors), two refereed journal articles, one case study, and four conference presentations. I co-authored all of these publications with students and former students including scholarship reflects research *on* teaching (such as Ross, Dennis, Zhao, & Li, 2017) and research *as* teaching (such as Clark & Dennis, 2017). These publications are listed in my CV under teaching rather than in the category of scholarship. Over the last ten years as I taught 144 different graduate courses to a total of 855 students, my teaching became more centered through critical theory and methodology. I also served on many dissertation committees. My leadership in the program resulted in (a) developing two new courses “Feminist Theory and Methodology” (Y633) and “Methodological implications of Social and Psychological Theories” (Y600); (b) co-creating the year-long two-course sequence “Critical Qualitative Research I and II” (Y612; Y613), (c) supervising graduate Associate Instructors, (d) hosting more than ten visiting scholars in my classes (Y612); and (e) contributing to the development of a new Ph.D. program in Inquiry Methodology, which began admitting students in 2011.

My most significant service outcome in rank was a Fulbright Senior Specialist Award (2013) centered on the goal of building research and curricular capacity at Kyambogo University in Uganda. I also served as the North American Regional Editor for an international journal and as an elected member of the Peace Education SIG for the American Educational Research Association. In addition, I published two papers (with colleagues) about this service in peer-reviewed international journals with another one in press, delivered two invited two-day workshops, and gave two presentations (with co-authors). These publications are listed in my CV under service, rather than under scholarship. Evidence of my leadership at the university includes my service as Coordinator for the Inquiry Methodology program since 2011.

In Section I of this personal statement, I present my work within the three categories of research, teaching, and service. In Section II, I highlight the purposeful underlying integrations that characterize my balanced case for promotion. Thus, in Section II, I illustrate how the works presented across the three categories of research, teaching and service in Section I are fundamentally integrated through a critical orientation and long-term collaborations.

Section I: Research, Teaching and Service

(1) Research

According to ResearchGate (March 21, 2018), my in-rank article reads are at 2,250 with 201 citations. Though this tool is limited in its accuracy, ResearchGate reports that site activity related to my publications is higher than 62.5% of its members. According to Google (March 21, 2018), the number of citations of my in-rank refereed journal articles is modest. My scholarship has primarily been cited by other scholars who are refining methodological concepts and practices of critical qualitative research in education, specifically oriented toward/through the

substantive and methodological values of equity, social justice, and liberatory opportunities. My research has been published in leading, peer-reviewed, international journals in the field of qualitative research (*Qualitative Inquiry* and *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* are examples) as well as open access journals (for example, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*) and newer, up-and-coming journals (for example, *Ethnography and Education*). The social justice and equity substantive focuses of my research has resulted in publications in top journals in respective fields (such as *Culture, Health & Sexuality: An International Journal for Research, Intervention and Care* and *Sex Research*). These publications also indicate the interdisciplinary quality of my scholarship.

I was the lead editor for the 2013 book *Qualitative Research: A Reader in Philosophy, Core Concepts, and Practice*. The chapters in the book are organized according to theoretical and practical modes of thinking about and doing critical qualitative inquiry. It includes scholars from around the globe and across disciplines - work that is not regularly situated within a unified publication. In my role as lead editor, I significantly influenced the successful completion of the book. I provide more information about this book in Section II.

There is a clear trajectory from my pre-tenure scholarship to my current research/publishing. My leadership in the field is evidenced by the publication of one co-edited book, two invited keynote addresses at international conferences, and three invited talks for plenary sessions at international conferences, 16 refereed, international journal articles and eight peer-reviewed book chapters. I also delivered 18 presentations at international conferences.

To break this down further, my scholarship contributes to the field of critical qualitative methodology. Specifically, my research impacts the field's conceptualizations of validity and ethics. My scholarly work on methodological **ethics** has evolved over the years. My most recent publication (2018) critiques traditional practices by drawing insights from contemporary readings of new materialism (Karen Barad, 2008; Aaron Kuntz, 2015) and post-qualitative inquiry (Elizabeth St. Pierre, 2014). I re-oriented my own thinking and current work on ethics in ethnography from problematizing ethical dilemmas in the field (see Dennis, 2009; 2010; 2013a) toward writing about a mutual co-engagement in ethical accountability that necessarily links researchers with community members. These publications and presentations at international conferences resulted in my serving as special editor of an issue focused on ethics (*Ethnography and Education*, 2010). My article in that issue was selected by Routledge for its Class of 2010 award designation. I was also invited to give a plenary talk on "Ethics" at the 35th Journal of Curriculum Theorizing Conference on Curriculum Theory and Classroom Practice in 2014.

My scholarship on **validity** in the social sciences introduces an alternative framework for understanding validity which continues a pre-tenure trajectory (particularly writing about validity in feminist ethnography (publishing as Korth, 2005a). There are disagreements amongst qualitative researchers about whether or not the term validity is relevant to their studies. I drew on empirical findings to critique and synthesize the literature which resulted in a new formulation that integrates 4 characteristics: uncertainty, *Dasein*, "as if" qualities, and Habermasian (1984) truth categories (Dennis, 2013a). The 2018 article examines the *Dasein* character of validity through an empirical example. I define *Dasein* as "that quality of my self-understanding which must, at the end of the day, be mine to care about and to claim" (p. 3). I

push this idea forward through a post-Marxist theory of praxis that suggests the recognition of others (though tenuous, limited, and provisional) is needed for one to understand oneself as a valid and worthwhile being. One's self-understanding and the investment one must make in that endeavor cannot be passed off to another, and yet, that self-understanding gains its validity through the freely-given recognition of an other. "Praxis, then, is the (ethical) labor of understanding the Self by recognizing the Self as Other, the Self in Other" (p. 4). I used this idea of praxis to reconstruct different forms of praxis within researcher-participant interactions in the context of interviews. For example, I called one form of praxis "listening past the facts" which happens when the interviewer tunes into the gist of what is being said, and not the particular details, which may or may not be correct. This establishes validity by inferring the points that people are trying to make even if their examples or details are faulty. Doing this lets participants know that one is oriented toward understanding them. Further impacts of my scholarship on validity include three other peer-reviewed and international journal articles (Zhao, Li, Ross, & Dennis, 2017; Dennis, 2016; Lee, Nargund, & Dennis, 2011).

(2) Teaching

My teaching philosophy follows critical theoretical tenets which impacts both the substance and pedagogy. Those tenets are explicated in Section II of this personal statement.

Teaching Through Courses. I only teach research methodology courses for graduate students. I orient the content and pedagogy in each of these classes towards anti-oppressive and critical perspectives. I have been nominated for teaching and mentoring awards over ten times during my career. As Associate Professor, I was awarded Indiana University's Trustees' Teaching Award in 2017 having been nominated multiple times. In 2016 I received the Gorman Award – the School of Education's Career Teaching honor. In rank, I have taught a total of 14 different courses, including four different special topics type courses (using the numbers Y650 and Y660), and Discourse Theory and Analysis (Y631). Below I focus on the nine classes I teach most regularly. I predominantly teach courses through face-to-face modes, but at least annually, I teach a course online. My course evaluations are similar across modes.

The bulk of my teaching is in the field of qualitative inquiry. Each year, I teach the two-semester course sequence "Critical Qualitative Inquiry I and II" (Y612; Y613). Students dive into critical theories and methodologies, conduct fieldwork, explore analytic possibilities resonant with critical theories, and present a final paper at a round-table symposium. The starting framework for this class is Carspecken's (1996) critical ethnographic theory and practices. One outcome of this course is that students make significant progress toward their dissertation methodology and early inquiry projects. Most of my work on dissertation committees stems from this class.

I also regularly teach "Feminist Theory and Methodology" (Y633), a course that uses feminist pedagogies. Feminist pedagogical insights inform all of my teaching, but I orient this class entirely through collaborative feminist principles. Students conduct a collective research project and develop their own syllabus, which means every time I teach it, the course is different. Two semesters, as capstone disseminations, students hosted school-wide events to create dialogue around their findings (using photovoice methodology to conduct the studies). Photovoice, as developed by Wang and Burris (1997), is a community-based, artistic, participatory approach for

community members to study their own well-being with an eye toward transformation and political engagement. In its most recent years, the course has had important outcomes for student scholarship. Students from the 2014 class organized a Roundtable Symposium at the 2015 annual conference of the American Educational Research Association (the largest international conference on educational research). My paper, “Feminist Research ~~Conclusions~~ in Dialogue,” co-authored with one of the students (Dennis & McNabb, 2015) was included for presentation. Eight students from the 2015 class presented extensions of their work—four students have presented together on black women in college beauty pageants and the other four students have continued their collaborative work using bodymapping to explore the lives of Student Affairs’ professionals. Five students from the 2016 course and I presented outcomes of feminist pedagogies at both a national and an international conference (see Borowski et al., 2017 and White et al., 2016).

I teach the introductory course “Qualitative Research in Education” (Y611), through which students are exposed to an overview of the field and are asked to conduct observations and interviews. This course is offered both online and face-to-face. This course is a pre-requisite for our more advanced qualitative research courses.

I teach “Action Research” (Y510), a course on critical participatory action research drawing on the work of the Public Science Project (<http://www.publicscienceproject.org>). In this course, practitioners learn of the history of participatory and action research projects in the field of education. They review the literature on critical participatory action research (CPAR) and learn the principles and processes involved in conducting a CPAR study.

One of my popular and well-enrolled courses is “Narrative Theory and Inquiry” (Y630), an advanced qualitative research course. This course draws principally from the field of critical hermeneutics, exposing students to both narrative inquiry (following Jeong-Hee Kim and Catherine Kohler Riessman) and inquiry as narrative (following the work of scholars like Patricia Clough). One outcome from this course is a publication with former student Jana Clark (2017c) titled “We are all ships coming home to ourselves: An autoethnographic poem in two parts.” (Described in Section II in more detail.)

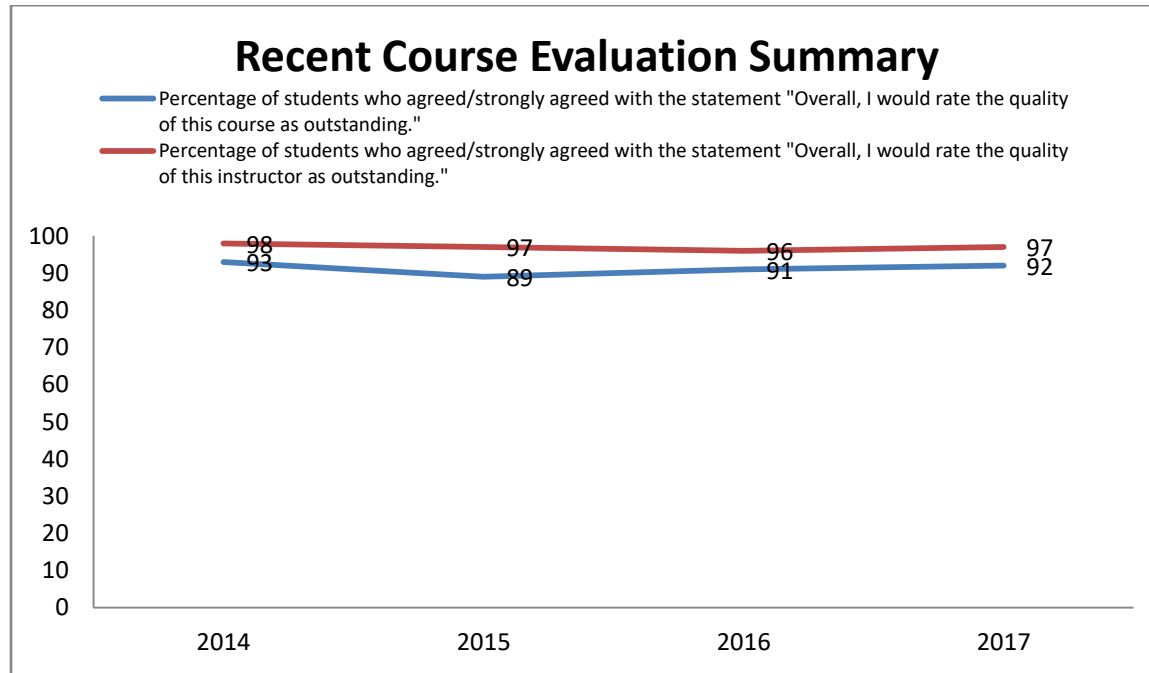
The Ph.D. in Inquiry Methodology requires Y600: Methodological Implications of Social and Psychological Theories. I developed this course to help students conceptualize the tight connection between substantive fields and methodological theory/practice. Habermas’s *Logic of the Social Sciences* forms a starting place for our conversations. Teaching difficult texts like that one is most successful if I provide rigorous and extensive reading and class notes. I learned to prepare such notes at the request of international students specifically in this course and in Y612. I now write similar notes for all of my courses.

For many years I taught and shepherded the instruction of our two courses that introduce students to educational research—for master’s students, “Strategies for Educational Inquiry” (Y520), and for doctoral students “Methodological Approaches to Educational Inquiry” (Y521). In these courses, students explore basic methodological concepts and practices. They learn to think critically about knowledge production and they construct a big picture of educational research. These courses are required courses and they speak across and into the traditional divide

between qualitative and quantitative approaches to inquiry. I was involved in creating a distinct course for doctoral students (Y521) in response to a long history of divided interests and outcomes of the Y520 course (originally serving both master and doctoral graduate students).

My course evaluations and syllabi are available on the website BarbaraDennis.org, but below I summarize the most recent 4 years of course evaluations by focusing on 2 school-wide questions:

- Overall, I would rate the quality of this course as outstanding.
- Overall, I would rate the quality of this instructor as outstanding.



Typically, I teach Spring, Summer, and Fall. In rank (Fall 2008 – Spring 2018), I taught a total of 855 students (as obtained from our SIS university enrollment data).

Teaching through Dissertations. As an Associate Professor, I have served on 81 (as of April 1, 2018) completed dissertation committees for students from the School of Education as well as from the School of Informatics, School of Public Health, Jacobs School of Music and the Department of Sociology. Though I served primarily as methodologist, I directed over a dozen of these dissertations. I am also on the dissertation of committee of Mr. Nathaniel Mayengo, Mbarara University, Uganda.

Scholarship of Teaching. As a result of my involvement in teaching our introduction course for master's degree students, "Strategies for Educational Inquiry" (Y520), former student colleagues and I obtained two Indiana University grants for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning to study graduate student conceptions of research. The outcomes of this research, so far, include a book contract, one peer reviewed international journal article, and one case study book chapter.

Service

Service across my career has consistently been oriented toward social justice and equity outcomes. This is evidenced in the committees on which I served AND the kinds of professional publications and engagements in which I participated. The primary differences between my service as an Assistant Clinical Professor and my service in the rank of Associate Professor with tenure are (a) the growth in leadership and (b) international visibility. In this section I focus on my service in rank and provide evidence of growth.

Service with Minoritized Communities. I participated in service opportunities with minoritized communities at the invitation and guidance of members of those communities. I facilitated research learning with communities whose knowledge and power have gone under-resourced and under-acknowledged. For example, I conducted workshops on photovoice theory/methodology with two different tribal colleges whose staff intended to do research that would enable native-based curriculum in early childhood education programs. I mentored their participatory research, but they conducted the studies (see Lansing, 2017 for an example of an outcome from the workshop at the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute). I am actively involved in the local LGBTQAI+ youth organization, again facilitating their research alongside their Education and Training events. I serve as a board member for the LGBT Student Services Office at Indiana University and a board member for QuERI (Queering Educational Research Institute). More on the outcomes of this endeavor in Section II.

My scholarship resulted in two service opportunities to provide 2 distinct 3-day workshops through the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In 2012, I conducted a 3 day workshop using CPAR and photovoice methodologies for the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute. Participants (early childhood educators, university instructors, and parents) learned to conduct their own research for the purposes of building indigenous cultural competencies and curriculum. Participants presented their study at the 2016 annual conference of the American Educational Research Association (AERA). In 2013, I facilitated a two-day workshop with the Lummi Nation (Washington state) on the use of photovoice methodologies with families.

Service in an International Context. Outcomes of my service with Ugandan colleagues include the development of post-graduate research colloquia, research training, and capacity building. My mentorship and service with Ugandan colleagues led to a publication in a special issue on peace education (Kagaari et al., 2017). My name is near the end of the list of authors as an indication that I served as mentor in the analysis and dissemination of the research. I hold affiliate statuses with two African universities: Mbarara University and the University of South Africa.

With respect to international organizations, I am the North American Regional Editor for the international Journal *Ethnography and Education*. I serve as a reviewer for 6 international research journals and as an elected leader in the Peace Education SIG of AERA. This year I am the Program Chair for the Annual Conference of AERA. I coordinated reviews of proposals, created a program, and planned the business meeting. Our program included two paper sessions and two round tables. I was a special editor for an issue on Ethics in *Ethnography and Education*.

Service through Leadership. In addition to the examples of leadership presented in the sections above, I am a leader on my campus, in my school, and in my program. For example, in 2016/2017 I was elected to co-chair an important ad hoc committee of the University faculty governance body. The purpose of the ad hoc committee was to articulate a proposal for separating our School of Education into two independent campus-based schools. I also served on the campus-level Budgetary Affairs Committee. At the school level, I was elected to faculty governance positions, including chair of our school policy council 2015/2016 and member for at least 5 other years as an Associate Professor. Other policy council committees I served on in rank include the Student Grievance Committee and the Faculty and Budgetary Affairs Committees in the School of Education.

Beginning in 2011, when the need arose, I began (and continue) to coordinate our Inquiry Methodology program. In this capacity, I chair meetings once a month during the academic year, coordinate class schedules, respond to program level inquiries, preside over program level decisions (like admissions decisions) and manage the inquiry core requirement/graduate studies paperwork. I make presentations in other departments about our program. I chaired two successful search committees for faculty in our program (2013 and 2016).

Section II: Integrations

This section of my personal statement represents a reorganization of some of the same material presented above for purposes of demonstrating thoughtful and successful integration of research, teaching, and service. My work is integrated through: (1) critical theoretical perspectives, and (2) rich, long-term collaborations.

(1) Critical Theoretical Perspectives

My research, teaching, and service reflect and produce thoughtful developments in critical theory and methodology. The use of the word “critical” in qualitative research literature is itself contested. Because of the diversity of definitions, it is important for me to clarify what I mean when I use the word critical. Of central importance is our acknowledgement that knowledge itself is not neutral and its assumptions cannot be taken for granted. We reject the conflation of truth with objectivity. Moreover, criticalists like myself articulate visions of a better world despite the problematic and provisional nature of those images because such ideals offer substance for challenging contemporary social life, including the extent to which the images themselves live up to values of equity, inclusivity, and openness. To enter into critical practices, we must be open to our own fallibility while also engaging sincerely and open-mindedly with others’ perspectives. Lastly, we aim to do research *with* rather than *on* people. I have pushed theoretical ideas toward practical applications and in the process returned to the theory to argue for its role in social critique.

My first-ever publication in a peer-reviewed journal, titled *Critical qualitative research as consciousness-raising: The dialogic texts of researcher/researchee interactions* began my scholarly trajectory in criticalism (publishing as Korth, 2001). In rank, I became more focused on key aspects of critical inquiry, resulting in the development of methodologies and theories to

support social justice research. Specifically, my publications have contributed to the literature on research at the margins, challenging the status quo in research practice and substance.

The book I co-edited with Lucinda and Phil Carspecken (2013) is unique for several reasons. First, each section of the text foregrounds a different layer of critical inquiry. We begin with a section on philosophical explorations. This is important in critical inquiry because we do not want to take our philosophical assumptions for granted and because we know that our research can speak back into philosophical conversations. We link our notions of core concepts to philosophical understandings. I contributed a chapter on validity to this section (more details on this chapter below). The second section of the book includes examples of methodological innovations. Because qualitative research is flexibly designed and creatively engaged, innovations are important opportunities for methodological critique and development. The third section continues a focus on methodological innovations with a specific interest in the analysis of language. The fourth section of the book moves from an analysis of understanding participant experiences in the lived context (as explored in sections 2 and 3) to methodological explorations of cultural and institutional phenomena. I contribute a chapter in this section through which I share a structural analysis of caring activities. I conducted an ethnographic study with a friendship group which provided the empirical opportunity to develop a typology of ways people interactively care for one another. The conceptualization and analysis of care differs from work in the field by thinking of care as meaningful social action and not as primarily subjective states of feeling. My approach to analysis provocatively links caring activities with a cultural critique. The structural analysis I present in this chapter forges an argument that our analyses of care can tell us about cultural vulnerabilities and structures of oppression and harm especially when care is enacted covertly. It joins the work of care theorists who speak about caring in political terms (for example, Joan Tronto, 1993). The last section of the book asks the question “What does our research do in and for the world, including for whom? Critical researchers ask these questions of themselves and this book provides some ways of thinking through how we might be accountable for the social consequences of our practices.

In 2009, a group of recently graduated students published an edited text titled *Bridging the Gap Between Theory and Practice in Educational Research: Methods at the Margins* (Winkle Wagner, Hunter, & Ortloff) which were an outcome of my mentoring and teaching. According to Amazon, Peter McLaren (Professor of the Graduate School of Education and Information at UCLA) has said “This is a wonderful book, not only for researchers and practitioners in education but for those who are interested in examining – and living – everyday life as a praxis of self and social transformation” (Accessed from Amazon.com book page, March 18, 2018). On that same page, Clifton Conrad (Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Wisconsin – Madison) wrote:

Along with evocative dialogue anchored in rigorous and unremitting questioning of the idea of 'marginality,' this finely-crafted and unwaveringly evocative text challenges the reader to reexamine the fierce grip and stultifying effects that extant educational theory and 'methodological correctness' continue to have on educational inquiry. From chapters on theory and research methods to exemplars of inquiry at/on the margins, this innovative text is a signature contribution to the literature and is destined to immeasurably enrich

and enlarge the landscape of educational inquiry for years to come. (Accessed from Amazon.com book page, March 18, 2018).

I published 2 chapters in that book (2009c; 2009d) and contributed significantly to its completion. I argue that conducting research, teaching, and service with marginalized people, through topics that are pushed to the margins of mainstream fields, and through methodologies that inspire critical dialogue, researchers can advance anti-oppressive forms of knowledge and practice in education. My chapters in the Winkle Wagner, Hunter, & Ortloff (2009) text are specifically on the topic of conducting research at the margins.

Doing marginalized research through a critical orientation resulted in the publication of 1 book chapter and 11 peer-reviewed international journal articles. “We are all ships coming home to ourselves: An autoethnographic poem in two parts,” (Clark & Dennis, 2017c) is a chapter that explores the ways queer love can de-center oppressive forms of relationship. The substance, methodology, and writing of this chapter (including its unusual citational practices) are a rethinking of love and ethnography. “Consciousness of oppression is not only a reaction to (fight against) oppression. It is also the whole conceptual reevaluation of the social world, its whole reorganization with new concepts, from the point of view of oppression” (Wittig, 1993, p. 52).

Five of the 11 articles involve using qualitative inquiry to critique the status quo in a field by bringing the margins to the center and produce social justice arguments. For example, the paper titled “My ‘Fat Girl Complex’: An Exploratory Study of Sexual Health and Body Image in Women of Size” (Satinsky, Dennis, Reece, Sanders, & Bardzell, 2013) argues against the body policing “health” literature where fat reduction has an assumed correlation with positive health outcomes. Furthermore, this is a field where quantitative research predominates. Our paper was published in the journal *Culture, Health, and Sexuality: An International Journal for Research, Intervention, and Care* – a mainstream journal in the field of sexuality and public health.

Six of those 11 articles foreground marginalized methodologies in order to explore insights in critical theory and social justice. For example, in 2018 I co-authored a paper (Call-Cummings, Dennis, & Martinez) using a non-traditional, dialogic writing style to explore the role of the researcher in participatory inquiry. In the paper, we argued for the value of explicating reflexive modes of writing and situating the self as a challenge to the mainstream belief in a neutral, objective researcher. In 2015 I co-authored a paper with Ugandan scholars (Mayengo, Namusoke, & Dennis) on neoliberal contradictions in school choice as articulated through a critical ethnography of an unsanctioned private elementary school in poor, rural Uganda. It is unusual for sub-Saharan African scholars to conduct and publish education research that draws on indigenous knowledge. This research was included in a special issue on the effects of neoliberalism in the journal *Ethnography and Education*. In the 2009a paper “Acting up: Theatre of the Oppressed as Critical Qualitative Research,” I used callouts to signal researcher reflection, demonstrated a facilitative researcher role, and furthered my use of critical arts to engage in research with participants. This particular paper reports on the use of Theatre of the Oppressed to help teachers think about the racial bullying happening in their high school.

International recognition of my critical expertise is further evidenced by 2 international invitations to deliver plenary talks. I delivered a Plenary Talk on “Taking Intersectionality

Seriously” for a Comparative International Education Symposium on Research (2017). In this paper I argued for a new way of thinking about the role of mainstream researchers in producing marginalizing intersections. I also delivered a Plenary Talk on critical conceptions of truth at the young Sudanese organization of TESOL (Teachers of English as a Second Language) in Khartoum (2012) where quantitative research has been privileged.

In my **teaching**, critical tenets underlie my pedagogy, but also result in my developing and teaching particular courses. In “Feminist Theory and Methodology” (Y633), we consciously critique and displace mainstream pedagogies, histories, citations, and methods while also challenging “mainstream” feminism. In all of my courses, we resist taking knowledge as neutral or at face value. We are organized in a way that seeks equity in and out of the classroom. An outcome of this organization is that students establish course goals and negotiate their own learning objectives. My social justice critical orientation in teaching is routinely evidenced through student comments on my course evaluations. Here are two recent examples:

“It was evident that Barbara cared a lot about equalizing power relationships and providing diverse perspectives in the classroom. This was one aspect of this course that I particularly appreciated. Some of the main ways that the instructor promoted diversity was via the readings that were required each week and by providing course content examples which were representative of diverse identities/backgrounds. Barbara was also open to hearing about issues affecting marginalized communities among student research interests and provided a space for these voices to be heard in the classroom.” (Taken from Critical Qualitative Research, Part I, Fall 2017).

“Also, the students in the class were so dynamic and were able to really challenge each other and Barbara allowed for this exploration in a safe and accepting learning environment. She also allowed for student-driven learning, which allowed our class to lead the growth of the class and not push us beyond where we were ready. She allowed us to choose our course of learning while still teaching us what we were ready to learn. Doing the analyses was extremely helpful to learn what and how to do it and her comments back were incredibly insightful and helpful in thinking beyond my own work.” (Taken from Critical Qualitative Research, Part II, Spring 2017).

Further impacts on teaching are evidence through 2 publications (Ross et al., 2017 and Li et al., 2017) and a book contract (Sage) with co-authors and former students Peiwei Li, Karen Ross, and Pengfei Zhao. Together we studied the teaching and learning in a graduate course introducing research in education. This work dialogues with the substantive cannon on conducting educational research and results in a shift FROM the mainstream orientation in teaching educational research introduction courses from a focus on reproducing the cannon TO a focus on students’ and practitioners’ conceptions. Such a shift undermines the traditional locus of expertise and situates the potential for research in the ordinary lives of practitioners and students. An example of many reviewers’ comments is this one: “I think that this text introduces a new way of teaching research methods that is comprehensive and tries to form the person of the researcher, instead of simply transmitting specific tools that are often used uncritically.”

I am involved in **service** efforts that orient through the margins as well. At Indiana University, I tend to serve on committees that have social justice purposes. For example, from before 2009 until 2015 (when the teams were reorganized) I was the only faculty member on the campus-level LGBT Anti-Harassment Team—a team responsible for turning incidents of harassment into opportunities for learning and support. The team met weekly to forge institutional level responses to each reported incident. During my years of service on this team, we addressed over 40 reports of incidents each year. Our incident team was involved in helping the university move to a system of formal recognition of preferred gender pronouns and name. I have also served as board member for the LGBTQ+ Culture Center at IU from 2015. I serve as a founding board member (2006) for the international research organization Queering Educational Research Institute (QuERI). This organization has impacted New York state anti-bullying school legislation, and contributed numerous publications and presentations that examine mainstream schooling through queer research. I also serve as an adult volunteer with the Prism youth community (since its inception in 2014). This organization has won a coveted local award for volunteerism (the “Be More” award, 2016) and has delivered education training to more than a thousand youth working professionals, including teachers. The organization de-stabilizes the typical adult-child binary and promotes affirming and inclusive education spaces for queer-identifying kids. I write more on this below. My expertise in methodologies associated with the margins resulted in invitations, through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to build research power in the communities of educators and parents. The 2012, 2013 workshops provided participants with opportunities to take participatory methodologies and fashion them into culturally-informed practices through equalized knowledge sharing and engaged dialogue on their own terms.

As an Associate Professor, my work with the margins impacted my service leadership in international research organizations. I was elected program chair for the Peace Education Sig of the American Educational Research Association for the 2018 Annual Meeting (2016-17, I was Secretary/Treasurer for that Sig). The members of this Sig consider social equity to be a matter of peace, and peace work is often marginalized.

(2) Long-term, Engaged Collaborations

I am a scholar who engages, in active, participatory, (critical) long term projects through which research, teaching, and service are integrated. This orientation has resulted in 3 long-term collaborations affecting my scholarship in rank. Two of these collaborations were started as an Associate Professor while one was a continuation of a project started before tenure. The Unityville (pseudonym) collaboration began before I received tenure, but the results in rank as Associate include: a book contract for a single authored methodology text titled *Walking with Strangers: Critical Ethnographic Practice and Theory in Education* with Peter Lang, 4 peer-reviewed journal articles, 1 invited workshop at an international conference, and 1 presentation at an international conference. However, in this section, I refer only to the two collaborations started in rank: (a) Uganda Peace collaboration and (b) Prism Youth Community Education and Training collaboration. They provide evidence of thoughtful integration of my research, teaching, and service as well as their impacts.

(a) Uganda Peace Collaboration

In 2002 Dr. Chalmer Thompson began working with Uganda colleagues in the Department of Psychology at Kyambogo University on a project to root peace in the country through social justice liberatory psychology that would draw directly on the wisdom and experiences of Ugandans. Their collaborations led to a desire for research experiences and capacity building in relation to the potential for a Ph.D. in Social Justice and Peace Counseling. With these needs in mind, Dr. Thompson invited me to join the team in 2010. From within the larger project,

[a]s a research team, we have established a commitment to an ongoing program of research that would be meaningful to Ugandans and inform curricular changes at the university level. Our focus is to integrate research, university teaching, and community-level praxis that takes into account, rather than excludes colonialism and its effects on the well-being of Ugandans. (Mayengo et al., accepted 2018).

A summary of the accomplishments of this collaboration include 2 publications in peer-reviewed special issues of international journals (see Kagaari et al., 2018 and Mayengo, Namusoke, & Dennis, 2015 mentioned above), 1 accepted for publication, 1 book chapter (in press), 3 international conference presentations, 1 small internal grant (Start Over grant), and a Fulbright Senior Specialist Award.

We believe that at the heart of a liberatory framework is to depart from typical ways of doing things while simultaneously working to transform contexts into sites of action. I play an important role in fostering the methodological playdough necessary for social justice work in the country. Thinking with our colleagues, we have developed curriculum, research, and action-based service. Because our colleagues live in the context of significant poverty, meta-colonialism, and limited access to academic materials, such mentoring is necessary. With, for example, limited access to current literature, it is difficult for colleagues to contribute to the scholarship. For many of our colleagues, these publications were their firsts in international journals. The mentoring required many hours of on the group training and conversations alongside the conduct of research. Additionally, many technical feats were accomplished. For example, I was able to obtain Visiting Scholar status for our colleagues (though they did not physically visit) in order to provide internet access to our library materials. One major outcome of our collaboration is a study of children's conceptions of peace in two areas of Uganda with violent histories. We designed the study from start to finish, including conducting a pilot study at 2 primary schools, and analyzing the data. Kagaari et al. (2014), published in a special issue on peace education (*Research in Comparative and International Education*), reports on the findings of this study. I mentored this paper to completion. Dr. Thompson has taken the lead on mentoring another paper from this research accepted for publication in *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* (see Mayengo et al., 2018). These publications follow a presentation at the annual conference at AERA (Dennis et al., 2015).

Another outcome of our collaboration involves the development of K-12 curricular materials. Through our research on children's conceptions of peace, we created an opportunity to produce children's readers drawing on the research to narrate stories of peace and hope as told and illustrated by the children. In 2015 the Uganda Ministry of Education began articulating its desire to have a peace curriculum for schools. Producing children's readers will give Ugandan educators curricular materials that were developed in country. Most K-12 curriculum materials in

Uganda come from outside the national context. We expect these readers to be ready for distribution in 2018.

In the context of the larger collaboration, I was awarded a Fulbright Senior Specialist grant (<https://fulbrightspecialist.worldlearning.org/the-fulbright-specialist-program/>) (2014). “The Fulbright Specialist Program aims to provide a short-term, on-demand resource to international host institutions, giving them greater flexibility in how they participate with Fulbright” (see above website, accessed March 17, 2018). Competitively selected Specialists are paired “with host institutions abroad to share their expertise, strengthen institutional linkages, hone their skills, gain international experience, and learn about other cultures while building capacity at their overseas host institutions” (also from the same website). As a result of the Fulbright, the Department of Psychology at Kymbogo University produced a review of its post-graduate programs (unpublished), wrote a grant proposal (not funded), analyzed data, and wrote a successful proposal for AERA’s annual conference (2015). As a result of the Fulbright, I presented a paper drawing on the blog I kept for Fulbright accountability at the Oxford Ethnography and Education 2014 international conference, and delivered a Keynote address at an annual fundraiser for Building Tomorrow, a non-profit organization (Dennis, 2016).

Teaching outcomes obtained within the project include a series of workshops and lectures given for Uganda colleagues over time for an average of 4 a year. These are not listed in my CV because they are specific to this collaboration and they emerge organically within that context. For example, I conducted over 8 workshops on data analysis associated with the study on children’s conceptions of peace. Other workshop topics included: “Conducting critical interviews,” “Using qualitative data analysis software,” “Collaborative interpretations,” and “Using indigenous knowledge as methodology.” I organized a Women In Research group to support the interests and research opportunities of women academics. With financial support from Indiana University Purdue University, Dr. Thompson and I consulted with experts from the Public Science Project on our research efforts with this project and we created a special opportunity for the Women in Research group to Skype in for these consultations. In addition to working with the collective whole, I mentor individual scholars. For example, in addition to currently supervising Nathaniel Mayengo’s dissertation I serve as a mentor to 3 other colleagues earning advanced degrees at Ugandan Institutions.

As a result of this collaboration, I was offered Affiliate status with the African studies program at IU, Honorary Lecturer with MBarara University, and Research Fellow with the University of South Africa.

(a) Prism Youth Community Collaboration

The Prism Youth Community is an affirming, youth-led organization intended to foster safe inclusive social spaces for LGBTQAI+ youth ages 12–20 (see <https://bloomingtonpride.org/prism>). In total, this collaboration has resulted in 1 international conference presentation for me (the youth have made many more presentations), professional participation in the Public Science Project’s Critical Participatory Action Research Institute (2016), and 2 grants, including an AERA grant for community-based research. We have a research team that includes youth members of Prism and we have started several research projects.

I first introduced myself to the group in the Spring 2014 when I was facilitating “Project Homecoming” through Indiana University’s LGBTQ+ Culture Center (I received funding from the School of Education to study “Project Homecoming”). Project Homecoming was an effort that supported LGBTQAI+ students returning to their high schools to share their experiences with teachers and administrators in order to foster safer and more inclusive schools. I came to a Prism meeting to ask the youth what kinds of things they thought would be helpful for teachers and administrators to know. In the months that followed, youth members of Prism approached the local School Board to ask for cultural competency training for their teachers. This resulted in an invitation to provide cultural competency training focused on the needs of LGBTQAI+ kids at a fall 2014 teacher development workday. They trained over 600 educators, including their own teachers on that day. I was well-involved by this point and had accompanied Prism’s director to a meeting with the Superintendent that preceded the invitation. The students asked me to record, take notes, and begin researching their training sessions in order to document and learn from the process. This study is ongoing, focused on what is now formulated as the Education and Training Committee of the Prism Youth Community. As a researcher, I obtained IRB approval and began collecting data. The youth created a feedback survey, I conducted observations of the plannings, deliveries, and de-briefings of the trainings. I also began interviewing participants who volunteered. To facilitate my research work with Prism I completed the Public Science Project’s Critical Participatory Action Research Institute, summer 2016. I was awarded a research grant from Indiana University’s Institute on Advanced Studies to cover the cost.

As an adult leader, I co-facilitate the Education and Training Committee—a committee that meets bi-weekly, and prepares, delivers, organizes, researches, educational events for the community and for professional development. Members of this committee have trained well over 2000 adults across over 30 different training sessions (complete with handouts and powerpoints). Feedback surveys indicate that over 90% of those trained left the sessions changed in ways that they anticipate will benefit LGBTQIA+ youth. The study thus far indicates that the trainings are well-received and that having youth educators speaking from their own experiences is very powerful for the teachers. Though the trainings began locally, Prism has delivered trainings around the state of Indiana, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, and Washington, DC. They created over 7 different core training sessions (for examples “Basic Cultural Competencies” and “Things We Wish Our Teachers Knew”) thus far, over 7 community-wide educational events (including a panel session with the Indiana State School Superintendent Glenda Ritz (September 2015), 2 presentations at national conferences (the 2017 Philly Health Conference and 2017 Human Rights Campaign “Time to Thrive” conference in Washington DC), 4 children’s reading circles at the local library, 3 research projects (2 of them have been mentioned), several grants (2 of which I was directly involved in obtaining), and 1 local service award. The Education and Training committee is comprised of a volunteer subset of 6–8 Prism members. In future years we will have co-published articles, opinion pieces for news outlets, and curriculum materials. I serve the community as an adult volunteer for their Education and Training committee programming. To facilitate this I, myself, successfully completed training on working with queer youth and allyship (Summer 2015).

As mentioned above, one result of this collaboration was the award of an AERA grant (2017) specifically intended for academic-community collaborations. Our research project involves hearing experiences of LGBTQIA+ youth who have been minoritized through multiple,

intersectional social categories. Youth participating in the Prism community have predominantly come from white middle class families and the Education and Training committee has largely shared from its own repertoire of experiences. Recognizing that these experiences leave gaps in the kinds of conversations that can happen to foster more safe and inclusive social spaces (particularly schools), the youth are seeking to learn from those with different experiences of marginalization. This study is being conducted with 2 youth researchers.

Summary of the Case

This personal statement provides context for my CV and presents evidence relevant to Indiana University School of Education criteria for promotion to Full Professor on a Balanced Case.

Those criteria are:

- At least Very Good/Highly Satisfactory Performance in each of the three assessed categories (research, teaching and service) which defines Very Good/Highly Satisfactory as “appreciably better than satisfactory but less than excellent performance.”
- “[T]houghtful and purposeful integration among the candidate’s teaching, research, and service activities” (p. 6).

I presented evidence (further documented in my CV) that my research, teaching, service is at least very good/highly satisfactory performance (Part I) and I demonstrated thoughtful and purposeful integration of research, teaching, and service through critical perspectives and long-term collaborations. Additional materials can be accessed from my website BarbaraDennis.org where I will have posted course evaluations, syllabi, and additional evidence related to my service.

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