

PUBLIC SoTL

Amplifying the Purposes, Audiences, and Products
of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*Nancy L. Chick*

*A*mplifying is an act of expanding, enlarging, strengthening, boosting, elaborating, making louder, fleshing out, and other synonyms of increase. A few years ago, the term took on a conversational meaning when women working in the White House reported “having to elbow their way” in to avoid being ignored by the majority male staff: They began to assertively recognize a woman’s idea and its source through repetition, attribution, and acclamation, especially after being disregarded, misattributed, or usurped (Eilperin, 2016). They called this strategy “amplification,” and it worked. They were heard more, and President Obama’s staff grew from one third women to gender parity (Eilperin, 2016). Amplifying here is a collaborative act of strategically interrupting error. It is also a dialogic event, implying both an amplifier and a receiver for the electrical signal, the sound, the idea, or the statement, which then has a lasting effect.

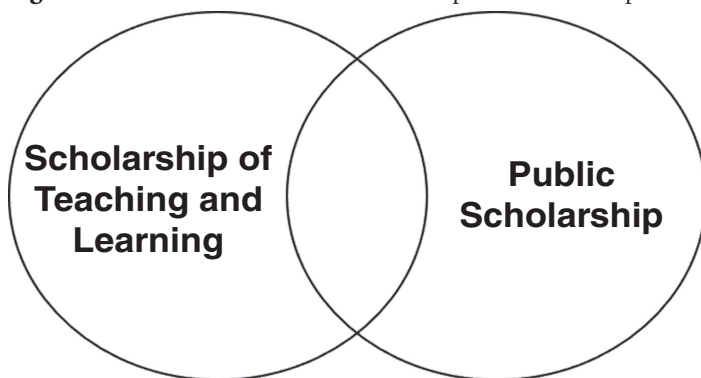
The scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) has always been about amplifying. Named in an effort to uplift the scholarly work of teaching (Boyer, 1990), SoTL also aims to interrupt ineffective teaching and learning practices by elevating demonstrably effective teaching, increasing our understanding about student learning, unpacking the complex relationship between teaching and learning, expanding what we know and do about all of these issues, and sharing this knowledge broadly to reach beyond our individual contexts. SoTL’s requirement of sharing—or “going public,” as it’s typically described—also implies an audience and an impact (i.e., a receiver and a lasting effect).

This chapter (originally the closing keynote at the 2019 conference of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning [ISSOTL]) challenges our assumptions about what SoTL has been amplifying, to whom, and for what purpose. As Gary Poole and I wrote in “The Necessary and Dual Conversations in a Vibrant SoTL,” questioning what we’re doing and why is part of the essential work of “theorizing SoTL,” “celebrat[ing] its ongoing sense of becoming and its confluence of diverse and serious inquiries from specific contexts” (Chick & Poole, 2014, p. 1). My goal here is to ride the centrifugal force of SoTL’s first 30 years of going public by exploring what it would look like to go even farther outward and imagine a public scholarship of teaching and learning, or a public SoTL.

SoTL and Public Scholarship

SoTL and public scholarship have common roots in Boyer’s expansion of recognized scholarships. His notion of “the scholarship of teaching” (Boyer, 1990) grew into the scholarship of teaching and learning, and his later description of “the scholarship of engagement” (Boyer, 1996) encompasses what we now call public scholarship, with the goal of developing spaces where “the academic and civic cultures communicate more continuously and more creatively with each other” in order to connect “the rich resources of the university to our most pressing social, civic, and ethical problems” (p. 27). Boyer’s term lives on in the use of “engaged scholarship” (e.g., Fitzgerald, Burack, & Seifer, 2010), but I prefer the term *public scholarship*; it’s more precise, it highlights its necessary audience awareness, and it doesn’t suggest that the other scholarships aren’t engaged. SoTL and public scholarship aren’t identical, but I’m interested here in exploring the overlaps and intersections between the two (Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1. The intersection of SoTL and public scholarship.



Public scholarship, like SoTL, is a somewhat contested field in that it struggles for recognition and reward as the stepsiblings to the first-born son, the scholarship of discovery. Their status in higher education's research monarchy necessitates the explicit identity-building work of self-definition (Chick & Poole, 2014). One such definition comes from *Scholarship in Public: Knowledge Creation and Tenure Policy in the Engaged University*, a report written for “faculty members who want to do public scholarship and live to tell the tale” (Ellison & Eatman, 2008, p. iv). In this handbook for how to present public scholarship in a way that supports typical tenure and promotion policies, Ellison and Eatman (2008) define public scholarship as “publicly engaged academic work . . . [that] encompasses different forms of making knowledge about, for, and with diverse publics and communities, . . . [and that] contributes to the public good and yields artifacts of public and intellectual value” (p. iv). Another definition focuses on public scholarship in the arts, humanities, and design but is useful in its level of detail:

Engagement is initiated by artists, scholars, design professionals, and citizens, and encompasses multiple types of knowledge creation [that] . . . often . . . [are] jointly planned and carried out through campus and community partnerships [and] . . . can take a variety of forms including work . . . that contributes to public debates and to understanding pressing social issues. (Goettel & Haft, 2010, p. 363)

Important in both of these definitions are who does public scholarship, for what purpose, for whom, and what it looks like.

Public scholars include faculty and traditional scholars, members of “diverse publics and communities,” professionals and practitioners in the community, and “citizens,” any of whom, according to Goettel and Haft, can initiate the work. This list unsurprisingly reaches farther than SoTL. SoTL, however, has long been understood as inquiry into one's own teaching, so the practitioner in the classroom is the traditional SoTL scholar, but as the field has evolved, so have potential collaborators. Now, SoTL is “often jointly planned and carried out” in partnership with students, librarians, instructional designers, faculty developers, community engagement staff, and other teaching and learning colleagues. Less often is SoTL initiated by these partners, but it's not unheard of: The Students as Partners movement in SoTL has empowered students to approach other partners in the list, and centers for teaching and learning offer programming and incentives to encourage and guide SoTL projects around prescribed themes. What's most provocative

in the list of who engages in and even initiates public scholarship is “citizens,” individuals of a range of identities, narrower in the legal definition but synonymous with “inhabitant” in common vernacular. Citizens in SoTL? I’ll come back to citizens later, but plenty has been and continues to be written about who does SoTL, and I think the more difficult issues in SoTL amplified as public scholarship are its purpose, its audience, and its products.

Purpose: Why We Do SoTL

A fundamental thread in conversations about SoTL centers on its purpose. Contributors to this thread typically identify the aim of SoTL as having a positive impact on teaching and learning. Recognizing that they are distinct, however, the focus is often on *either* teaching *or* learning as SoTL’s ultimate goal. Some frame it as improving the teaching practice of those who conduct SoTL projects (Cerbin, 2011). Others describe increasing the sophistication in a SoTL practitioner’s underlying approach to teaching (Trigwell, 2013). Some also refer more broadly to the improvement of the generalized practice of postsecondary teaching, or the generalized knowledge about postsecondary teaching, alluding to the wider spread of the results of individual projects, thanks to the necessity of scholarship being made public (Lewis et al., 2006; Schwartz & Gurung, 2012). Here, SoTL builds a body of knowledge that supports teachers’ learning, suggesting that the “going public” mandate of SoTL is a way to increase the professionalization and position of teaching in higher education (Shulman, 1999).

Others situate SoTL’s essential mission in student learning, emphasizing the endpoint as the learner, not the teacher (Felten, 2013). They assert that the practice of SoTL improves student learning in the practitioner’s current and future classes (Hutchings, 2002; Trigwell, 2013). Others describe the “circuitous and messy path” by which student learning “deepen[s]” as their teachers learn directly or indirectly from existing SoTL (Chick, 2017, p. 11). Hutchings’s (2000) classic taxonomy of SoTL questions clearly identifies understanding (“What is?”), reimagining (“visions of the possible”), and theorizing (“theoretical frameworks”) student learning as valuable goals, even though improving student learning (“What works?”; pp. 4–5) often takes up the most space in this conversation. Here, SoTL builds a body of knowledge that helps teachers help students learn more effectively.

Teaching and learning are of course interlocking acts, so talking about them separately in this way may seem overly theoretical. However,

if we recognize the difference between the benefits of something and its purpose, this apparent splitting of hairs is important. Benefits are bestowed at any point along the way, even inadvertently, but purpose is the goal, or the outer edge of the benefits, envisioned by design from the beginning. Once that purpose is fulfilled or that goal is achieved, it's rare to continue further. Of course, as Trigwell (2013) indicates in "Evidence of the Impact of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Purposes," SoTL can have multiple goals, but if we hold teaching but not student learning as the purpose, we risk not only leading the proverbial horse to water with no guarantee that it'll drink, but also walking away before hearing a slurp.

Questions about student learning as the outer edge of SoTL's benefits are worth consideration. What do we miss if we think of students as SoTL's final beneficiaries? What's beyond student learning? To what extent is focusing on learning objectives, assessments, and even evidence of learning short-sighted? Does this purpose blind us to the greater potential of SoTL? Some will note that, as educators, we don't need to intentionally plan for an effect beyond the academy because our work inherently ripples outward off campus, so SoTL need not push beyond inquiry into student learning. Just as we bristle at the distinction between the classroom and "the real world" because, we argue, the classroom *is* part of the real world, and our students bring what they learn into the rest of their lives. Certainly, in many ways, they do. But to what extent? How far, how long, and how deeply do we reach? And to what realms of the public do our SoTL-generated knowledges contribute, and again how deeply?

Leibowitz (2010) critiques SoTL for "the extent to which this work occurs at a very micro level, and with little reference to [their] socio-political contexts" (p. 1), as if learning is limited to the classroom and the classroom exists in a vacuum. She later suggests that this micro level work is "a form of 'surface learning'" in SoTL, in contrast to SoTL that "engage[s] with the world in which teaching and learning occurs" (p. 4). She illustrates the latter with a multi-institutional project that brings together "a mainly black, working class and/or rural student grouping" with "a mainly white and middle class student grouping" to deepen students' understanding of "self and identity in contexts of difference" (p. 3). By bringing students together across difference, the project engages in the larger socioeconomic context. Even further, the goals of the longitudinal project also look farther down the road beyond the current teaching and learning moment by aiming to equip students to later "respond creatively" in their professional lives (p. 3).

A potential consequence of viewing student learning as SoTL's end point is that we risk the myopic thinking of students as just students. As Leibowitz's project illustrates, they will also be professionals. Even further, they are also and will remain citizens, members of communities, parents, grandparents, mentors, writers, activists, and politicians, so the goal of having a profound impact on their thinking is significant. In "Transformative Potential of the Scholarship of Teaching," Kreber (2013) encourages SoTL practitioners to think beyond student in the classroom. Invoking "the larger social purposes of university teaching," she asks us to focus on who the students will become and conduct SoTL that links "the students' *academic learning* in the disciplines and *the ways of being* that we hope they will develop" (p. 13). Drawing on Stephen Brookfield's notion of academia's "common purpose of 'helping students shape the world they inhabit'" (as quoted in Kreber, 2013, p. 10), she extends SoTL's purpose to include "implications not just for students' academic learning and personal flourishing but also for creating greater social justice in the world" (p. 11). Kreber's vision reaches toward SoTL as public scholarship, a SoTL that "contributes to the public good" (Ellison & Eatman, 2008, p. iv) and "to public debates and to understanding pressing social issues" (Goettel & Haft, 2010, p. 363). This vision has not yet been fully realized and is the impetus for this book.

Akin to Kreber, Booth and Woollacott share this vision as what they describe as "the transformative potential" of SoTL. It's complex but worth unpacking here. In the concluding chapter of *The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: On Its Constitution and Transformative Potential* (2015) and in greater detail in "On the Constitution of SoTL: Its Domains and Contexts" (2018), they map the topical foci and contexts of published SoTL projects to form a "conceptual framework for understanding the essence of SoTL in all its breadth and diversity" (Booth & Woollacott, 2018, p. 538). The five areas of focus, or domains, of SoTL projects are didactic (aims to improve or affect teaching and learning), epistemic (contributes to a body of knowledge about teaching and learning), interpersonal (focuses on the relationships and interactions in teaching and learning), moral/ethical (addresses power, values, quality, and accountability in teaching and learning), and societal (focuses on teaching and learning issues that are important to the broader society). Most relevant here is the societal domain that explicitly names SoTL's focus on "higher education as driver of national well-being" and its concern with "the demands and needs of society" such as "social justice and equality," "social transformation," "cultural change," and students' "development as significant change agents in society" (pp. 543–544). This domain clearly overlaps with public scholarship's goals of "contribut[ing]

to the public good” (Ellison & Eatman, 2008, p. iv) and “to public debates and to understanding pressing social issues” (Goettel & Haft, 2010, p. 363) “to support an equitable, diverse democracy and to promote social justice” (Kezar et al., 2018b, p. 4).

Booth and Woollacott (2018) also describe four contexts for SoTL. These aren't the more familiar SoTL contexts of institution type, student demographics, location, and the like, but instead are much broader spheres that influence and are influenced by SoTL work. The discipline, the profession of teaching, the culture of an institution, and the politics of higher education are comfortable ground for thinking about SoTL influences, but Booth and Woollacott extend the cultural context to acknowledge—like Leibowitz—the relationship between SoTL and “the culture of a nation,” with its “particular history and set of values, priorities, practices and circumstances” as “influences [on] what might be considered as being interesting and important for SoTL to focus on and prioritize” (p. 545).

Booth and Woollacott validated their framework with 98 articles published between 2000 and 2016, and with some frequently cited descriptions of SoTL (i.e., Gilpin, 2009; Felten, 2013; Potter & Kustra, 2011). Their resulting analysis unsurprisingly concludes that the dominant concern of SoTL, according to the articles and the descriptions, are didactic, epistemic, and interpersonal, while the moral/ethical and societal “are less explicit,” or implied as unintentional consequences of SoTL's general interest in “effecting change” (p. 547). In other words, while present enough to appear in their map, SoTL's intersections with public scholarship—the societal domain in SoTL and its cultural contexts—are minimal. Booth and Woollacott end with the hope that their framework “raises awareness of what SoTL work *can* or *should* extend to” (p. 549). Kreber's call for SoTL projects that transform (and are transformed by) the world outside of academia is still mostly potential rather than reality, at least in published articles as of 2016.

This relative gap may soon change. The theme of the 2019 ISSOTL conference was “SoTL Without Borders: Engaged Practices for Social Change.” This theme set the stage for conversations that have been largely backstage, popping up in a few individual sessions, committee and interest group meetings, and hallway exchanges at previous conferences. This theme and the accompanying keynote events—Kasturi Behari-Leak's opening plenary entitled “‘I Am Because You Are’: Opening Up Borders for Inclusion of Self and Other,” *The Coming Out Monologues Project* performance and talkback by Karen Robinson and the Kennesaw State University student actors, and my closing plenary, “SoTL as Public Scholarship”—brought this potential into the spotlight.¹

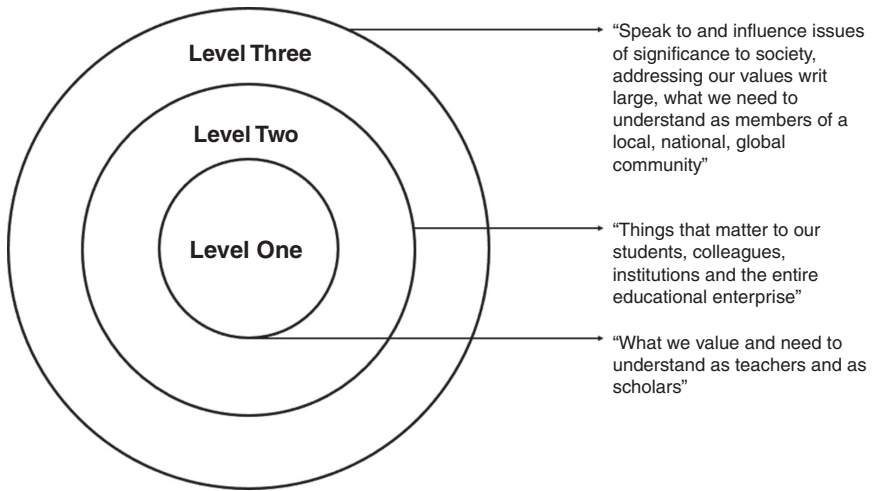
Audience: To and For Whom We Do SoTL

Beginning with Shulman's 1993 challenge to "change the status of teaching from private to community property" (p. 6), SoTL has championed conversations about teaching with audiences outside one's own classroom. This shift—a paradigm shift for many—is SoTL's original act of amplifying: It placed what had been the solitary work of teaching in the spotlight as "an object of critical review and evaluation by members of one's community" (Shulman, 1999, p. 15). SoTL has maintained Shulman's vision of this community as the institution, the disciplines, and even the broader academy. This move is arguably the cornerstone of SoTL. Pages and pages have been devoted to the value of systematic inquiry into individual teaching situations to all members of the academic community: disciplinary peers, peers in other disciplines, students near and far, librarians, administrators, peers at similar institutions, peers at very different institutions, peers in other countries, and so on.

Ashwin and Trigwell's (2004) model for the scholarship of educational development has been used to articulate SoTL's mandate to go public. They usefully identify three "levels of investigations" defined by their purpose, who verifies their processes, and the scope of the resulting knowledge. Level 1 investigations are conducted "to inform oneself" in a manner that is "verified by the self" to result in "personal knowledge"; level 2 investigations "inform a group within a shared context" and are "verified by those within the same context" to result in "local knowledge"; and level 3 projects are intended "to inform a wider audience," so they are "verified by those outside of that context" and result in "public knowledge" (p. 122).² But contributing to "public knowledge" here is publishing in "research journals in higher education" (p. 124), a specialized readership in the academy.

For all its attention to "going public," SoTL seems to have hit a wall in its understanding of "public,"³ envisioning it as going through peer review and contributing to a larger body of academic knowledge. Even the "micro-meso-macro-mega framework" for SoTL impact describes the outermost sphere of SoTL's effects as the "disciplinary and interdisciplinary impact" (Simmons, 2020, p. 77; see our introduction to this book). The academy seems to be the outer edge of the common vision of SoTL. Gale's (2009) "Asking Questions that Matter . . . Asking Questions of Value" offers a farther horizon. Unlike the 4M framework (Friberg, 2016) that looks at the levels of impact from the practitioner's perspective, Gale (2009) describes three levels of impact from the relevant audience's perspective. He challenges us to work from the fundamental premise that "the research questions we can ask can and should

Figure 1.2. Gale's (2009) three levels of SoTL questions.



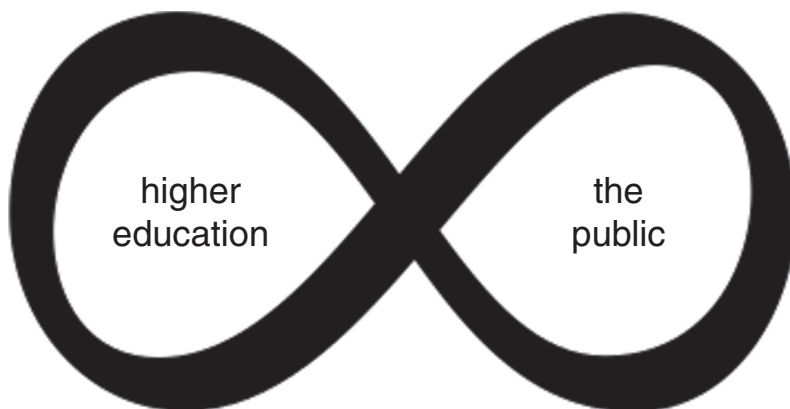
always be about questions that matter, questions of value—to us and to our context and to our larger community” (p. 1). As illustrated in Figure 1.2, his three “levels” are like concentric circles with “questions about student learning” at the heart of them all (p. 7). “Level One Scholarship” questions, he says, focus “on pedagogical observations” to address “what we value and need to understand as teachers and as scholars” (p. 7) Projects grounded in these questions will inform our individual understanding, practice, and development as teacher-scholars. “Level Two Scholarship” questions speak to an audience beyond individual professors, now “addressing things that matter to our students, colleagues, institutions and the entire educational enterprise” (p. 3). Projects grounded in these questions focus on the “shared concerns” of “specific contexts,” such as departments, institutions, and disciplinary societies. So far, aside from his shift in emphasis to “what matters” to the impacted, Gale’s framework seems familiar.

However, his “Level Three Scholarship” questions are those that invoke Leibowitz’s deep learning, Kreber’s transformative potential, and Booth and Woollacott’s cultural domain and societal context: They ask “questions about student learning that speak to and influence issues of significance to society, addressing our values writ large, what we need to understand as members of a local, national, global community” (p. 7). He challenges us to look to “our core values as human beings” and uses language such as “justice, equity, and civic values,” “empathy and tolerance,” “social justice,” “activism, empowerment, and cosmopolitanism” (p. 6). Significantly, his third level aligns with

Kezar et al.'s (2018b) claim that the titular *Envisioning Public Scholarship for Our Time* “moves beyond informing policymakers, faculty, and administrators” and “includes populations such as students and parents, media, the general public, and particularly groups that may have had little or no access to our research” (p. 5).

This reconceptualization of audience in SoTL isn't just about who reads, hears, or benefits from SoTL, as in the ongoing interest in SoTL's impact. It's also a reexamination of the relationship with that audience. In order to be aware of and responsive to “what matters” to the people in those areas beyond our own, we need to listen, to hear, to empathize, and to be influenced by areas beyond ourselves. The linear flow of impact becomes a circuit of influence. Observation and measurement become listening and dialogue. Ellison and Eatman's (2008) visual metaphor of a sideways figure eight for public scholarship illustrates this approach (Figure 1.3): One loop “represents a scholarly community of practice—the academic field,” and the other loop is the public community (p. x). The inertia of the academy—“the reward system, the incentive system, our communication practices” (p. x), and even our own scholarly imaginations—keeps many of us circling within that loop on the left. In contrast, public scholarship—including Gale's “Level Three” SoTL—moves from one loop to the other and back again as “what matters” within one loop is informed and influenced by the other. In this framework, SoTL work is heard by and influential to the public, and the public is heard by and influential to the work of SoTL. A vision that aims too low and leaves SoTL situated only in the contexts of higher education interrupts the potential reach and responsiveness of SoTL.

Figure 1.3. “The whole figure eight” (Ellison & Eatman, 2008).



Products: How We Share SoTL

We already have well-established venues for sharing the results of SoTL within academic spheres. Journal articles, books and book chapters, and conference presentations and posters are the most common formal genres for going public within our academic community, and presentations within our own institutions, telling students about this work, revising how we teach, and even having SoTL-informed conversations within “significant networks” are less formal but still valuable ways of sharing (Roxå & Mårtensson, 2009). Social media has increasingly joined the list as a megaphone for work that’s been published or presented. Genres like academic blog posts have become “space[s] to experiment with form rather than content, to find ways to make an academic concept accessible to a broader [though still academic] public” (Perry, 2015). Most of this social media amplification, however, has still remained within the realm of higher education audiences, as discussed in the introduction and chapters 6 and 7 of this book.

However, the expanded purposes and audiences in public SoTL require us to think more broadly and—if we draw from Kathleen Fitzpatrick’s *Generous Thinking: A Radical Approach to Saving the University* (2019)—more generously. In a chapter entitled “Working in Public,” she describes the “sense of ‘giving it away,’ of paying forward knowledge,” as “the best ethical practices of scholars and educators” (p. 152). From this perspective, she encourages academics to “engage readers where they are, rather than always forcing them to come find us, in our venues and on our terms” (p. 138). Her helpful challenge, grounded in the value of generosity rather than simply the mechanics of writing or the measurement of impact, invokes the responsiveness of listening and dialogue implied by Ellison and Eatman’s (2008) figure eight metaphor. Other chapters in this book explore the nuances of language (e.g., chapters 8 and 9) and delve into some of the key venues for SoTL as public scholarship (e.g., chapters 6, 7, and 8), so here I’ll end with some examples that extend beyond those elsewhere in the book by looking to existing public scholarship. Typical venues include speakers’ bureaus, panels and public forums, community dialogues, projects with community groups, and public-facing events on campus like exhibitions, public lectures, or performances (Goettel & Haft, 2010; Hall, 2007). Common genres include whitepapers, practitioner articles, opinion pieces, policy briefs, memos, grant applications, fact sheets, infographics, diagrams, charts, pictures, stories, videos, blogs and other social media, and books written for mainstream audiences (Goettel & Haft, 2010; Kezar et al., 2018).

A few detailed examples are helpful. In “The Many Faces of Public Scholarship,” Kezar describes “writing a practitioner article for every journal

article I wrote, a compendium piece that I could ensure would be read by the publics I was conducting the research for,” and she publishes them in the magazines, newsletters, and blogs or other social media read by her targeted audience (Kezar et al., 2018b, p. 22).

In the concluding chapter of *Envisioning Public Scholarship for Our Time: Models for Higher Education Researchers*, Kezar et al. (2018a) describe the products resulting from an “emergency town hall” (p. 220) of a group of faculty, staff, and graduate students who combined their relevant knowledge to respond to the nation’s political actions against undocumented immigrants and religious minorities, as well as campus attacks on Black Lives Matter posters. A few months after this meeting, the group had disseminated two whitepapers, sent two memos to relevant national politicians, created a blog site to share relevant stories with “policymakers, postsecondary administrators, and the general public . . . to inform practice and policy” (p. 221), and secured a successful grant to support a series of campus dialogues with relevant audiences.

In “Black Data Matter: Connecting Education Research to the Movement for Black Lives,” Davis, Harper, and Christian (2018) describe using an infographic to communicate the data on the disproportionate effect of closing the schools in Ferguson, Missouri, on Black children after the social unrest in the area following the police killing of an unarmed black teenager. Not only did they email the infographic to 20,000 members of the local educational community; they also included it “with a descriptive summary” in a press release that was picked up by the national news (p. 69). They included another infographic in a longer report documenting their research on the disproportionately higher rates of suspension of Black students in the South to call attention to the “educational mistreatment of Black youth” (pp. 69–72). They distributed the report through campus media contacts, through the email database of the university’s relevant research program, through the personal connections and social media from the program’s staff with community groups. The report ended up in the hands of key community organizations that used the report in their work to curb the school-to-prison pipeline.

Powell (2010) describes a nursing lecturer’s development of *Contraception, The Board Game* to share knowledge in a way that would reach “previously vulnerable young citizens” (p. 471). The board game subsequently became a computer game and has been translated into French and Spanish “and is being used worldwide.” Its success in translating this scholarly knowledge outside of academia led this lecturer to codevelop *SaferSex*, a game to help prevent AIDS in South Africa. (This example from the health professions is a good illustration of how “knowledge translation”

is a useful framework for thinking about extending SoTL knowledge to wider audiences. See chapter 5 for more.)

In exploring how academics can “not just bring the university to the world, but also involve the world in the university” (p. 135), Fitzpatrick (2019) looks to the model of “citizen science,” such as scientists crowd-sourcing the work of classifying, discovering, and publishing about galaxies. She then asks, “What might citizen humanities or social sciences look like?” (p. 174) and illustrates with a museum exhibit cocreated with the local communities “that are featured speaking for themselves,” and a digital archive that showcases the people affected by 9/11 through “photos, emails, and other archival materials from more than 150,000 participants” (p. 174). She also describes a project that invites people “to help transcribe, review, and geotag” a library’s major collection of historic menus to “make them accessible for research” and for “new kinds of discoveries,” and a newspaper project partnering with “community organizers, educators, and nonprofit organizations . . . to help frame and contextualize narratives of race in American cities” (p. 174).

Also possible are public statements about pressing matters. The American Anthropological Association, for example, issued clear, simply written statements such as “Five Things You Should Know About the ‘Migrant Caravan’” and “AAA Rejects Separating Immigrant Children From Their Parents as Mean-Spirited Political Ploy” to combat misinformation and stereotypes resulting from the 2018 immigration policies under the Trump administration (146 Anthropologists, 2018; American Anthropological Association, 2018). When the same administration engaged in “overriding of evidence and advice from public health officials and derision of government scientists,” the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Medicine posted “NAS and NAM Presidents Alarmed By Political Interference in Science Amid Pandemic” (McNutt & Dzau, 2020) on the National Academies website and emailed it to their subscribers with links to “Resources from the National Academies Responding to Coronavirus,” including free PDFs of their book, policy recommendations, and guides related to COVID-19.

The AAA and NAS/NAM examples may seem too easy because these groups clearly have relevant expertise about these very public issues. But the American Educational Research Association has a public statement on education as part of the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights, posted in 2013 but timeless. They also have a cluster of fact sheets on how “people learn in today’s information and technology-rich world.” And right in the middle of the March 2020 pivot to remote learning, Jen Friberg, Lee Skallerup Bessette, and I (2020a; 2020b) wrote and circulated two public documents (one a statement directly for the public, one to support colleagues

in reaching out to the public) about higher education's shift to remote instruction. Surely, SoTL has something to contribute to public concerns about anything that threatens access to education, how to navigate an onslaught of misinformation, the uncertainties about the year-long mass migration to remote environments, and more recently, the Trump administration's attack on critical pedagogy and resulting public misconceptions about antiracist education—and more.

As I noted earlier, if we draw the outer edge of SoTL as teaching and learning situated within higher education, our imaginations have failed us. By limiting the relevance and reach of education *to education*, we reinforce the hackle-raising distinctions between campus and “the real world,” and we ignore the many instances of teaching and learning (and the potential for each) that happen beyond the classroom, the campus, and the degree.

Conclusion

I'll end by returning to Ashwin and Trigwell's (2004) framework for types of investigations defined, as they say, by “the purpose, process and outcomes of that investigation” (p. 122), all of which are bound up in their intended audiences. Recall that level 1 investigations are focused on “one-self,” level 2 on a “group within a shared [and local] context,” and level 3 on a “public” audience “wider” than the local context, specifically readers of higher ed research journals (p. 124). Let's add a level 4 investigation to their framework (Table 1.1). We'll expand the focus of these investigations to reach the people, communities, and professions that have nothing to do with education.

TABLE 1.1
Public SoTL Investigations as the Fourth Level

<i>Level</i>	<i>Purpose of investigation</i>	<i>Evidence-gathering methods and conclusions will be</i>	<i>Investigations result in</i>
4	is to inform, affect, influence, and transform audiences that extend beyond academia	valued by, understood by, relevant to, contributed by, verified by, and used by those outside of that context	public knowledge, action, mobilization, or transformation

Even further, we'll expand the verbs Ashwin and Trigwell (2004) use for the purpose of these investigations: They write that the goal is "to inform" that wider audience, but let's say that level 4 investigations are intended "to inform, affect, influence, and transform" that public. And they describe the "process" of these investigations as "evidence gathering methods and conclusions" being "verified by those" beyond the local context, but our level 4 methods and conclusions are "valued by, understood by, relevant to, contributed by, verified by, and used by" that public. Finally, these investigations would result not only in "public knowledge" but also in "public action, mobilization, or transformation."

My point here, like our extension of the 4M framework in our introduction, is that public SoTL isn't a radical departure from SoTL as we know it. Instead, it's an expansion that's part of the healthy evolution of the field. This idea of public SoTL is also just an amplification of the vision of SoTL that's been with us all along, as chronicled in the preface of this book about the early days of the ISSOTL Advocacy and Outreach Committee and as illustrated in this chapter's passages from Kreber, Gale, Booth and Woollacott, Leibowitz, and even Boyer.

Notes

1. Unfortunately, the outbreak of COVID-19 and the subsequent cancellation of the 2020 ISSOTL conference has probably slowed this momentum. There is evidence that it has affected publication in other areas, and it certainly slowed the writing of this book.

2. Again, this model was developed to describe the practice and scholarship of educational development, not scholarly teaching and SoTL, but Trigwell explicitly transplanted it into a SoTL context when he featured these levels in his collaborative keynote with Peter Felten at the 2011 ISSOTL conference.

3. As we have worked on this book since the 2019 ISSOTL conference, coeditor Jennifer Friberg and I have wondered if indeed the notion of "public" is indeed a—or *the*—threshold concept of this book. See our introduction for more.

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