LOST IS FOUND: NAVIGATING NARRATIVES OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY ON THE TENURE TRACK

Dr. Samantha T. Nolte-Yupari
Nazareth College
snolte5@naz.edu

Dr. Joana Hyatt
Lamar University
jhyatt2@lamar.edu

Samantha Nolte-Yupari received her Ph.D. from The Pennsylvania State University. Her interests include embodied learning and teacher education which she considers using visual ethnographic and ABR methods. She received the Hoffa Dissertation Award, and the Arts and Learning SIG (AERA) Dissertation Award. She is currently Associate Professor and Program Director of Art Education, Nazareth College.
ORCID: 0000-0002-8691-6305

Joana Hyatt received her Ph.D. from the University of North Texas. She is currently Assistant Professor of Art Education at Lamar University and teaches online for the University of Florida. Joana has been a K-16 art educator for over twenty years. Her interests and teaching emphasize the affective domains of teacher development.
ORCID: 0000-0003-0442-0574

Abstract: The tenure track is a contentious space in which pre-tenure faculty are asked to navigate the corporatization of the university, and uncertainty with regards to the expectations of success to achieve tenure. In this article, we frame the period of pre-

tenure as a liminal space, not as a space of inadequacy but as a necessary shelter of respite. Living in a temporary autonomous zone, we find ourselves challenged to lose and find varying aspects of our professional identities as faculty. We use arts-based narratives in the form of micro-storymaking as well as Solnit's (2005) discussion of what it means to be lost to locate and (re)frame our stories of navigating the tenure track. We argue that the liminal space of pre-tenure, in the context of the "slow" movement is a time of openings that prepare us to embrace and engage in passionate artistic practices as we enter mid-career.

Keywords: tenure track; narrative inquiry; collocation; liminal space; visual methodology

Samantha: I was a little lost, tired of navigating the tension between my research passions and the peer pressure I was feeling to ditch my work for more "trendy" theoretical pastures. But I loved the theories I was reading, they fit my work. I told myself—as I took my mentor's laptop the doctoral candidates would present with—that I wasn't going to force something that didn't fit into my work. Surely there were others out there who were interested in what I was?

Joana: As I arrived at the conference room, there was a line of grad students waiting to load their presentation to the host's laptop. I fumbled around in my pocket and retrieved the flash drive that contained a presentation with two years of my best doctoral writing and research.

S: I loaded one presentation after another. This year, there would be no lost time (re)connecting and (dis)connecting 25 laptops. I asked for her flash drive. She watched me closely, I was having difficulty finding her presentation. She asked, "Is there a problem with my flash drive?"

J: Then, the realization hit me, in haste, I had grabbed the wrong flash drive before leaving home. I slid down the wall and collapsed into a puddle of despair on the floor.

S: As I saw panic set in, I began making suggestions about alternative ways to share her research. We would figure something out.

J: Under normal circumstances, I would be inconsolable. But the graduate assistant asked me about my research, which made me forget the dire urgency of the situation. She told me about her research. It both aligned and differed from my own. In the end, when it was my turn to present, I forgot about what was lost and instead, cherished what was found. A new friendship emerged. One built on mistakes, alternative pathways, and a shared passion for art and research.

In United States academic institutions, the pre-tenure period is the stretch of time between when a scholar has been hired by a college or university and when that same scholar receives tenure – the legal and academic right to job security and protected academic freedom. The pre-tenure period can be a time characterized by growth but also by vagueness. Variability about tenure expectations is common, with requirements varying between institutions (Greene et al., 2008; Hirschkorn, 2010; Magaldi-Dopman et al., 2015; Seltzer, 2015), year-to-year within institutions, and between individuals within institutions (Shapiro, 2006). Such variability generates

vulnerability for tenure track professors including concerns about pre-tenure job security, whether or not they will be sanctioned if they challenge authority, and pressure to achieve within a designated time frame (Hirschkorn, 2010). Further, tenure track professors report isolation and untenability in their struggle to develop a research agenda amidst service and teaching tasks (Savage, 2015). In this article, we frame the tenure tack as a liminal space, a temporary, separated space, which we discuss further below. This liminality is generated from the previously noted variabilities but also from the knowledge that the tenure track professor is asked to show commitment to the university in their teaching and service, but the university has not yet fully committed to them.

In this article, our purpose is to consider how combined stories and artwork both reflect upon and (re)construct our professional identities. Our aim is to (re)visit key moments of the last five years of our practices. Our stories explore how we, as two pre-tenured art education professors, formed a collaborative mentorship, and used storymaking as a compass to navigate our complex contexts in academia. As we visualize shifts in our professional identities, visual storymaking provided us with a key to illuminate our unique pathways through the tenure-track. The writing below presents our micro-storymaking side-by-side. We collocate an unfolding inquiry as a way of telling of our tales. Bodies of text can stand next to one another without explicit reference to one another, creating associations as well as convergence. (Hoffman, 2010; Mello, 2002). They can also seep across the divided space, as words read in our stories do below, blurring the path on our combined journeys to tenure-track. Collocation supports synthesis by creating "textual and cognitive bridges between the original tale and the resulting theory" (Mello, 2002, p. 235). We show how lost-is-found as we move through intersecting teaching, scholarship, and service in the pre-tenure period and we encourage our reader to also read both across and down to collocate their own meaning in our stories.

Liminal Spaces and the Power of Getting Lost

Liminal spaces are in-between, temporary spaces separated from the rest of the world (Turner, 1982). Liminal spaces present a realm of instability and yet contain possibility as they prompt public/private negotiations and combine action, theory, and activism (Finley, 2008). Liminal spaces thus provide opportunities to explore the contingencies of space and place by investigating both internal and external sites of conflict and struggle. While liminal spaces could generate increased anxiety, liminality can also serve as a shelter of respite, and a temporary autonomous zone of social reconstruction because there is room for generativity (Doron, 2006; Garoian, 1999).

The power of generativity in liminal spaces is the power to engage with the false dichotomy between theory and practice. Dichotomies are a manifestation of the stratification of knowledge into discrete areas (Britzman, 2003). Yet theory fuels, leads, and informs practice. "Theorizing is a form of engagement with and intervention in the world. Theory lives in the practical experiences of us all and yet must be interpreted as a source of intervention" (Britzman, 2003, p. 69). Here then, in liminal spaces, theory becomes a renewed avenue through which meaning can be made. We seek to engage in our liminality by unpacking, as Britzman (2003) calls it, the "implicit theory housed in the teacher's school biography" (p. 63). That is, the ways in which we as professors, as teachers, carry with us and enact theory even when it is not labeled as such (Britzman, 2003).

Engaging with our liminality on the tenure track has allowed us to reframe moments where we have felt lost. *Lost*, as we understand it, is not a geographic destination but a liminal, shifting, migratory relationship that we find ourselves moving in and out of as we navigate the "contradictory realities of learning to teach" (Britzman, 2003, p. 25) and work in new contexts in higher education. We can be lost in many ways–physically, geographically, historically, and spiritually–because "Losing things is about the familiar falling away…[but] *getting lost is about the unfamiliar appearing*" (emphasis added, Solnit, 2005, p. 22). It is this, the unfamiliar appearing, that creates generative thresholds within liminal spaces. When the unfamiliar appears, we have the opportunity to challenge previous conceptions, change our thinking, and shift our trajectory. In this way, Rebecca Solnit's (2005) *Field Guide to Getting Lost,* provides a linguistic map that encourages us to interpret the liminality that generates the sensations of getting lost. Relying upon our intuition, bodily sensations, and as Solnit notes, a sense of optimism, we search for our unique paths towards tenure and mid-career in the moments where we feel lost.

Methodology

After many years of informal conversation, support, and relationship, in this writing we formalize those interactions and storytelling in order to engage with our shifting personal landscapes of the tenure track. Looking back at our many notes, co-writing, stories, and interactions, in "interviewing" each other, we identified recurring themes in each other's stories that needed to be told. Prior to this, these stories have been primarily *secret stories*, the stories of teaching that happen hidden from the public eye (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996). We distill them into micro-storymaking – the form of which we discuss below. In this space our micro-stories are informal reflection that allows us to understand our "lived relationship" (Britzman, 2003, p. 62) with *theory* – the liminal and getting lost, and *practice* – our lived lives in academia. This

distillation is important to us both because we seek to honor our vulnerability. Admitting uncertainty should no longer be a private dilemma, the domain of secret stories, that one must wrestle with in isolation. Instead, creative interventions through artmaking and micro-storymaking can illustrate hidden feelings of vulnerability. Such a stance shifts the negative position of vulnerability as an emotional burden to a creative and pedagogical resource that can reveal how boundaries in academia are permeable and open to potentialities.

Accessing Feelings of Lost in Liminal Spaces Through Narrative

We employ both verbal (i.e., narrative inquiry) and visual forms (i.e., image making) to illuminate liminal spaces by bringing forth fragmented experiences at sites of contention (Finley, 2008). Working in written and visual arts-based modes provokes us into inquiry, sensing through the body, mind, and emotions, to recall our tenure-track journeys. In arts-based research, narrative inquiry is story used as intentional reflective practice (Lyons & Laboskey, 2002) to uncover the ways storytellers depict the world and make meaning (Webster & Mertova, 2007). Contextually situated, story thus interrogates and (re)frames practice (Lyons & Laboskey, 2002). More than a mere retelling of stories, the strength of narratives lay in their ability to (re)create our experiences and identities within particular social contexts and to speak to the other, creating a new conversation "as women who are academics, but not as academic women" (Crimmins et al., 2018, A Line is Drawn section).

The story is not the original experience, nor yet an artifact; it is a recollection, a "selective and imaginative rending of the present meaning(s) of past experience" (Freeman, 2018, p. 129). As an "artifact of narrative imagination" (Freeman, 2018, p. 131), stories present the self in a liminal space even as they help us uncover the lived experience of liminal spaces. Professional identities thus unfold as we unpack the partial meanings that surface and recede as the teller tells-retells or "re-members" it (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). We understand that even as well tell our stories what they reveal about our professional identity is mutable. In that shifting mutability lies poetic knowledge (Freeman, 2018) and epiphany (Polkinghorne, 2010).

Micro-Storymaking

We call the narrative form we engage with micro-storymaking, and we draw from the tenets of flash fiction and flash nonfiction. We chose flash non/fiction as a guide because we feel it facilitates our search for poetic knowledge by creating an opportunity for distillation. Distilling is described as a process of extracting the essential meaning of something. Short stories "'say less, but speak more truth' (in

contrast to autoethnography wherein longer stories 'speak for themselves'" (Freeman, 2018, p. 134). Consequently, our distillations embrace "short" by working within the 100-500 word count boundaries of "micro" non/fiction (Masih, 2009; Moore, 2012).

Distillation, at the heart of the flash category, are "work[s] of art carved on a grain of rice" (Masih, 2009, p. xi). Brevity thus is a strength because of its ability to experience a moment in the same way that moments affect us in life – as embodied flashes and sensory clarity (Masih 2009) – of epiphany. In this way their "plotless-ness" is useful because "isn't day-to-day life kind of plotless?" (Leslie, 2009, p. 10). Human understanding has a "burst-like" quality bound in "decisive moments" (Borich, 2012, p. 9). The liminality of this burst like quality is an embodied act, for though the results we make are visual, as artists we create with our bodies – our hands, our eyes, our emotions. Such distillation embodies meaning making. In this way we connect with other women like Black, Crimmins, and Henderson (2019) who, in telling their personal stories, honor and make visible women in academia who collaborate to create new spaces of production while also resisting traditional definitions of knowledge.

As working visual artists, we elaborate on the visual implications of these decisive moments with making practices that help us to stop and lean into these embodied moments of impact. Though "irrevocably partial" (Freeman, 2018, p. 136) micro-storymaking still seeks phenomenological integrity by staying mindful of a story in all of its dimensions, while at the same time crafting words (aesthetic integrity) that unpack the teller's world (anthropological integrity) in ways that avoid othering the teller (ethical integrity) (Freeman, 2018). The power of distilling moments into micro-storymaking is the way in which our stories swell with potential to embody the weight of getting lost. They hold the intensity of our feelings of getting lost, but being lost is a letting go of control and of mistakes made, and in doing so we access our liminality, allowing the individual narratives to seep into each other, creating a new way of seeing experience as something poetic and transformative.

Jackson and Mazzei (2012) remind us that such data is neither normative nor containable, instead it is in fact incomplete, and generative. Reduction of data potentially limits the multiple ways in which data might be experienced, read, and understood (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Instead, our stories are multiples that we have (re)told each other as we sought peer mentorship. They have changed over time in the contexts in which we have collaged these stories with others at varying times. We do not seek with this method to close off our understandings of these decisive moments but to open ourselves back up to them. We also understand that the reader will simultaneously collage our experiences with their own experiences as they read.

Samantha's Storymaking

Samantha works in a sketchbook – drawing lines and painting washes. Such work evokes the tactile experience and power of the drawn line. An embodied act of thinking, drawing is cognition which manifests in the hand (Bishop, 2014; Ingold, 2007). The pen/cil tip becomes the contact point between mind and paper, each mark a sculptural shape (Bishop, 2014). We simultaneously compose, transmediate, edit, and synthesize as we draw (Bishop, 2014; Mueller & Oppenheimer, 2014).

Terra Incognita

Setting the scene: Maps are often used in navigation. Yet maps can be incomplete. Cartographers used to draw monsters at the edges of a map where their knowledge of the landscape dropped away into the unknown (Thrower, 2008). Our knowledge ends where the landscape ends and we become lost as we cross into new geographic and cultural regions (Solnit, 2005). In this form of lost, we lose something of our identity as we encounter the unfamiliar, but then (re)discover shifting identities as we move forward, collaging and juxtaposing ourselves in a new landscape (Solnit, 2005). As a newly

Joana's Storymaking

Walking the streets with a camera in tow, Joana employs street photography, which evokes the poet within us to search for resonance and contrasts through a series of fleeting moments. Early street style photographers Helen Levitt and Henri Cartier-Bresson were known for their moment-driven photography, documenting the daily lives of people and places. Street photographers Robert Frank and Gary Winogrand went beyond the parameters of documentation and spontaneity, to capture the in-between moments of disequilibrium (Blumenkrantz, 2009).

A Chosen Surrender

Setting the scene: To push against the ideas of tenure-track as a frantic, predetermined, timed race, I meander through the city streets of Paris, comparing the disorienting spaces of tenure, to surrendering oneself to the immediacy of a moment and place. As I travel to a conference in France, I seek out alternative routings as an attempt to gradually ascend in the academic world.

hired Assistant Professor and Program Director of Art Education, I was thrilled, and terrified, at moving into such an un/familiar landscape. Though many things seemed like they should be familiar or already resolved, I found myself encountering circumstances entirely unfamiliar to me.

S Story 1: Abandoned

When I first joined my current University, I found myself taking over the art education program in a vacuum. A number of factors had significantly affected program enrollment and the program had collapsed from 200 students to about 60 and from 2.5 full-time professors to 1 (me, newly-hired). The result was that I found myself walking into an abandoned ruin of a program. There were traces of greatness: the bones of a solid curriculum and an amazing local reputation were visible, but they were obscured in a way that significantly affected student experience. I have asked three students from each of my three initial certification programs to sit and share with me their current understanding of their course sequence as my first passes through the catalogs weren't making sense.

"Wait, you took this class when?" I'm pointing to the list of courses as I stare confusedly at one of my students. I had been trying to
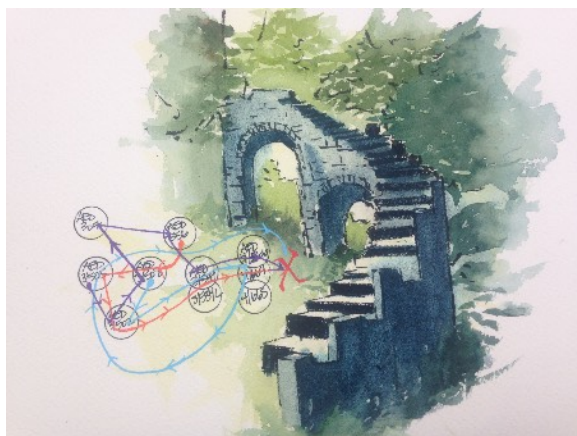
J Figure 1

Les Deux Plateaux

My research embraces the idea that we are responsible as researchers/ teachers/artists to create spaces of vulnerability with others, and to dwell within those spaces. As a newly appointed assistant professor working at a university located in a geographically remote area of the United States, I began to experience feelings of isolation as the lone art education professor at my university. Searching for auxiliary spaces, I began to seek out a global audience. My desire was to grow as a scholar and improve my research by engaging with scholars interested in social theory. As I read the international call from the Universities de Paris seeking presentations, I realized that my research might fit within the broad field of the social sciences. Living and traveling with my research to unknown international academic corridors, my hope was that there would be opportunities to engage with practitioners from around the world who were interested in Foucault's (1986) theories of heterotopia. Feeling empowered, I purchased my ticket to Paris, France where my proposal was accepted.

familiarize myself with the course codes and titles and the corresponding differences between my Bachelors, 5-year, and Graduate Initial Certification program for days. I had a headache. It didn't seem like it should be this complicated. The 5-year student had just said she took the Concepts course FIRST. But the Bachelor's student didn't have to take it at all, and the Graduate student was taking it last. They were all working towards the same certification, why did their sequences seem this dissimilar? Huh...this was something I could organize. This was something I could **visualize***. "Let's draw it. Here are the courses," as I doodled some circles and jotted in the names. "Here's a marker, connect the courses in the order that you took them." And then I was going to re-visualize it.*

S Figure 1

Abandoned

I arrived in Paris on a Sunday afternoon. Many restaurants in the area of South Pigalle were closed. The streets seemed almost abandoned.

J Figure 2

View and Trinkets

The front clerk at the hotel was helpful in suggesting cafes that might be open on Sunday, and tried to hand me a map. I turned down the offer of the map and instead took Solnit's advice, "one does not get lost but loses oneself, with the implication that it is a conscious choice, a chosen surrender, a psychic state achievable through geography" (Solnit, 2005, p. 6).

The clerk looked at me with a puzzled expression because I wouldn't take the map from his extended hand. I noticed before I walked up, he was reading a book about Chomsky. Reluctantly, I took the map, crammed it into my pocket, and headed out the door.

Relying on my instinct and situational awareness, and what

The map that I had—an understanding of how to build curriculum around an individual course and syllabus in no way prepared me for building overlapping curriculum across three overlapping degree programs. The edges of the map, of the unknown had folded in on themselves with terra incognita reclaiming known territory. The recently collapsed size of my program was an opportunity to reorganize the curriculum in a way that built on the best part of the ruins around me while simultaneously disassembling other unrecoverable pieces. The "beginning of finding your way or finding another way" (Solnit, 2005, p. 13) often lies in being lost.

S Story 2: Solo Art Educator

One of the things that drew me from public school back into academia was the community of other art/educator scholars, and the interplay that came with it. Yet here I was, after years of graduate school, once again a solo art educator, just as I had been at my middle school.

No one could find my office, though several tried. Usually by the time they found my office – off my classroom with its circle of tables and skylights –they had wandered the art department several times missing the corner within this corner of campus. "Wow you're really hidden back

*little French I knew, I explored the neighboring 9th arrondissement of Paris with abandonment.*

It was raining and I thought, this is perfect. As I watched a stream of pedestrians carrying umbrellas navigate the puddles on the sidewalks, I realized my umbrella and dark trench coat might camouflage my appearance as a novice seeker whose eyes were soaking in new and marvelous things and places for the first time. Or, disguise the expression of a tourist who wears the panicked expression of actually being lost.

While lost, the senses become heightened. The sense of smell that identifies fresh baked bread at a local boulangerie, the sense of sight that notice small flickers of light emanating from spaces of warmth inside of churches and cafes.

Families congregated in the archways of churches for mass, and I attended one (although, I am not Catholic, it seemed like an inviting space...and it was). Forced to use what little French I knew, I eventually found my way back

J Figure 3

Cathedrale Notre-Dame
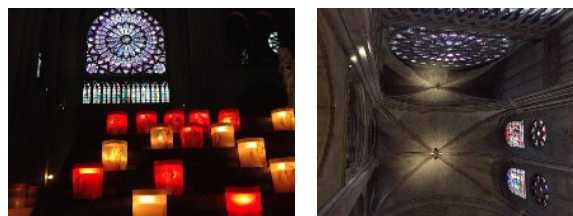
here aren't you?" Solitude or ostracization, they seemed to wonder. My first classroom was off in a corner. It had walls, separate in both position and set up from the "pods" of the 1970's open classroom design that dictated the layout of the rest of that middle school. I was told, the original idea was that if a child tuned out of their teacher's instruction, they might tune into another's. Mostly it was just loud. Moveable dividers had been rolled in to create a semblance of walls, but there were no doors. My classroom was a luxury in a wall-less building but it reinforced my otherness too. The false separateness of what I did as compared to the "core subject" teachers – mirrored in my location and set up, I was the solo art educator doing something others didn't quite understand, nor did they make an effort to. I called it my art hole.

S Figure 2

Art Education Room

For a city that never sleeps, I found Paris to be a city that knows when to slow its pace. Music from an accordion player wafted in the air, and conversations lingered on the balconies of homes. The frantic pace of my academic life seemed like a distant memory. Surrendering to the sounds of street music and the hushed tones of conversations nearby, I scribbled notes in my journal before I fell asleep. "If the place where you find yourself isn't working, you must initiate change and search elsewhere. Seek out new spaces, and make room in your career for the unforeseen. Find the unmarked trail."

J Story 2: Day 2

The day began with cheerful banter as the same hotel clerk, Andre, noticed that I was carrying a paperback by Foucault. He insisted Chomsky was the better philosopher and of course, I disagreed.

Exploring Paris on foot, I began to feel the tempo of the city, the timing of the lights and traffic, the rhythm of the people ebbing and flowing in the streets. It was in that moment that I noticed Parisian children all over the streets of Paris. Sometimes the children were with an adult ... sometimes unescorted. I was impressed with their independence.

The term "solo art educator" often connotes isolation and carries with it a long history of being alone where no one really "gets" what you are doing. That part was familiar, but having that resurface in a space I never expected it felt immensely unfamiliar. How would I encounter this renewed solo role – solitude or ostracization? "The dissolution of identity is familiar to travelers" (Solnit, 2005, p. 16). Would this softening of the solidity of my identity provide opportunities to build new community if I embraced the solitude?

S Story 3: Artist, Teacher, Artist/ Teacher

I am an art teacher. That means that I have a degree in art as well as education. I took the same studio courses as my studio major peers, showed work in the same exhibitions, was expected to work at the same level as my studio peers, yet strangely I have often found that the word teacher somehow negates the word art in my job title.

"Well, you know, … you're an art teacher, I don't think that entirely qualifies you for this program." I stared at the MFA program director in shock, and then replied, "you're an art teacher too, so I guess that makes you equally unqualified." Or at least, that is what I wished I had said. Instead, I think I blinked dumbfounded, and

Solnit (2005) mentions that childhood roaming developed her sense of self-reliance. She wonders, "what will come of placing this generation under house arrest" (p. 7).

J Figure 4

Parisian Children and Locks
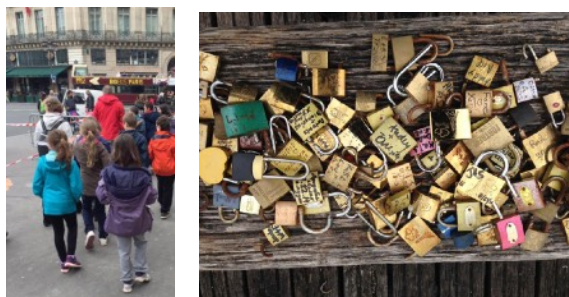
Watching two young Parisian girls trying to cross a busy street, I almost went to their aid. As I watched the girls' expressions, they were not afraid but alert and watchful. They made eye contact with the drivers, locked hands and crossed to the other side, laughing and continuing their conversation as they wandered down the street. Maybe tenure-track isn't a predetermined track or a timed race. Instead, could it simply be a matter of trusting your instincts by finding your own tempo, locking eyes with those around you to see when it is time to cross over, and holding the hand of a trustworthy friend?

J Story 3: Day 3

In contrast to the other mornings, today I was on a specific timetable. I

stumbled out of her office and through the tour of the MFA students' private studios trying not to cry, trying to find the source of the wound that had just been inflicted upon me...how was I NOT an artist when what I taught was art? How did my choice to develop my pedagogical skills negate my artistic skills? So, I got a Master's degree in art education instead, and a Ph.D. after that and I stopped making for a while, for that wound had been surprisingly deep. Deep enough to nick my confidence about my art making…Six years later, my first act as new faculty was to put work in my first faculty art show. I submitted because I was surprised that it seemed to be an expectation, an assumption that, of course, I had work to show. One professor said she loved the tiny worlds I made with paper... I still wonder if she was just being kind.

S Figure 3

Gallery

asked Andre for advice on how to arrive at the Universities de Paris in time for the conference. He warned me there was a taxi strike, and to avoid the streets of Paris. "Take the RER," he suggested. He wished me luck and said, "You will need it because you aren't discussing Chomsky's work."

Taking the RER subway through the tunnels in Gare du Nord, I noticed a playful mixture of the old and new, the profane and holy, and the absurd and stoic, all swirled together. Paris is a city of contradictions. A paradox of positions, systems, and ideas.

As I returned to the hotel, I was happy to see Andre. He asked, how was the conference? I shared my Best Session award, and exclaimed, "This time, Foucault triumphed."

J Figure 5

JM Othoniel Underground with Gare du Nord Subway Art
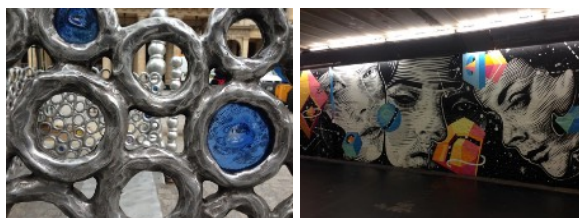
Rebecca Solnit (2005) points out that most people who are lost do not realize that they have gotten lost. When they look up, confronted with an unfamiliar landscape, they have lost the way back to familiarity. I once found myself lost in a world that disassociated me from artmaking, so I remade myself as a scholar. Then suddenly I was back in a place that assumed that connection and the landscape prompted another shift in my stance, gait, and pace. I wondered if I could find my balance again in a space that offered both scholarship and artmaking.

As a chosen form of surrender, vulnerability is about coming to terms with one's limitations. Sometimes you must rely upon experienced guides and natives to help you navigate the undercurrents of complex systems.

Collocation of Professional Identity: Lost-is-Found

Above we noted that liminality during the tenure track can cause professors to feel lost in multiple ways, yet we also noted that getting lost in liminal spaces is generative. We had a conscious choice in how we responded when the unfamiliar appeared. In this section, we consider the possibilities generated by the unfamiliar appearing when we got lost. As we surrender to those possibilities, we seek the ways in which lost-is-found.

In Joana's traversing of the Parisian streets she discovers a space that asks her to confront her preconceived notions of tenure. Joana's travels drew forth the notion that scholarship is not bound in the academy or the conference. Instead insightful scholarly conversations can occur spontaneously in hotels, streets, and cafes. Solnit (2005) reminds us there is a limit to calculation, and predictability. It is the job of artists to calculate for the unforeseen. In submitting to being lost, Joana found her unmarked trail, which can simply be a shift in one's awareness and acceptance of being lost as a stranger in a city, or as the lone art education professor at her university. Like the children she witnessed in the Parisian streets, Joana learned to trust her instinctual awareness as she embodied the tempo of her surroundings.

In Samantha's inheritance of an abandoned art program she found room to discover and embrace her strengths in administration. Abandoned cities, once a mirror of the mind's organizational system, bear now mere traces of the original, leaving a memory of what is now lost to the wild (Solnit, 2005). Such a liminal space was open to interpretation, making room for Samantha to re(invent) the program to allow her own landscape to emerge hosting both classroom places and administrative spaces. This challenged her to embrace the notion of the solo art educator and reframe her past experiences and the misnomer "those who can't do, teach." Instead, to be able to teach something is to know something (Boyer, 1990) and to be welcomed in a community that accepts her as a working artist. There is potential in abandoned spaces to collage qualities of the old with the potential of the new. Her resulting program has at its heart, the notion that art teachers are working artists as well as researchers and a culture of community that seeks connection beyond the boundaries of the school walls that sometimes isolate art educators.

As we think about what arose in the moments we felt lost, we found ourselves returning to the language with which we often hear our colleagues speaking about the ways we "navigate the tenure track." The words bound to tenure here – navigate and track – are in direct tension with our experiences of getting lost. Navigation signifies a planned route from point A to point B and a navigation system, like a map, directing a traveler's movement in an efficient and timely manner while also avoiding obstacles. But navigation assumes a mutual understanding between traveler and navigation system about destination, route, and strategy for obstacle navigation. Instead we have found that the navigation systems we were attempting to use broke down as the unfamiliar arose. Our doctoral training, our past teaching, and artistic experiences were insufficient navigation systems. Instead we had to find new ways of navigating. Further, getting lost prompted a direct re-examination the word "track." Tenure-track can feel as if you are on a precision, timed, race track, or entrenched in a groove carved in the road. Such a meaning implies that we navigate the route most successfully by following the impressions left behind by others who have passed the same way with the same destination. But as we discovered, the tenure track has not been a rut, prescribed and predetermined, but a trace line. A better definition of our encounter with "track" is the Tibetan word *shul,* a trace line left remaining that reveals that something has passed by (Solnit, 2005). When we reframed track as a trace line, our micro-storymaking here is a shul of our discovery of alternative pathways to professional identity during pre-tenure. Lost became found. From across the divide our words seep into each other's' to yield new narrative, found poetry across both our stories:

The blurring of narratives, reading between the divided space:
Work evokes the tactile experience and power evokes the poet within
We simultaneously compose people and places.
Maps are often used in moments of disequilibrium:
The landscape ends and we become lost as we compare disorienting
spaces.
Identities as we move forward, collaging alternative routings as an
attempt Juxtaposing ourselves in a new landscape, ascend in the
academic world
It didn't seem like we would be this abandoned
Deep enough to nick my confidence, developed her sense of self-reliance
Program in a vacuum, feelings of isolation as the lone art educator
Share current understandings, opportunities to engage with practitioners.
The beginning of oneself, with the implication that it is finding your way or
finding another way.

In this way, Solnit (2005) observes that our movement and life stories are like such shul. That is, we can imagine "[our] whole life that way, as though each step was a stitch, as though [we were] a needle leaving a trail of thread that sewed together the world as [we] went by, crisscrossing with others paths…" (Solnit, 2013, p. 131). Our stories were no longer separate, but shared. A shul is meant to be an impression, not a demarcation on a navigational map that one must follow. Instead, shul represents a trace line to emptiness, a shocking absence of the known leading to unfamiliar histories, which is much too broad and indeterminate to be followed with precision. Shul then reveal our traveled paths without creating ruts for others to be caught in.

On Being Lost Together

For pre-tenure female faculty, self-selected support groups provide opportunities to share resources in both planned and emergent ways and to build trusting relationships where pre-tenure can become a safe place to take risks and be vulnerable (Magaldi-Dopman et al., 2015). Arts-based work is perfect for this because, as artists and researchers, our everyday lives are suffused with imagining. Such work together allowed us to see what was not visible or not fully developed, and allowed our academic identities to unfold in spaces where stories live to interact with other stories. Our stories could be each other's. Both of us challenged foregone trajectories of the tenure track as we encountered the liminality of abandoned spaces and found ourselves positioned within geographies of isolation. Our micro-storymaking became intertwined with history and with the social production that

comes from sharing the spaces we inhabit through story. In essence, we constructed and reconfigured our professional identities through shared micro-storymaking and peer co-mentorship. We have layered our individual experiences to show how storymaking can overlap, conflict, and present multiple realities. Micro stories are like fireworks: "A burst of stars, shimmering, falling in a fountain against the sky…. Then it is over. You blink. But no—it is not over. Imprinted on your retina is a fountain of fire" (Gebbie, 2009, p. 54). Such lasting resonance for our stories comes from the fact that we sought to articulate authentic experiences through stories told and retold (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008) together.

Lost-is-Found Moving Forward

As our stories linger on our retinae and we have a better sense of the shul tracing behind us, we each move forward in our application for tenure and wonder what lingering effects the liminal space of pre-tenure might provide us as we encounter new aspects of our identities. Perhaps as a result of our lost-is-found encounters we will continue using them as engaging points of work and passion. Collective biographies are transformative because they produce knowledge, emotional relations, and illuminate collective pathways of thinking and writing, as stories themselves "leave a visible public trace through publication, and consider emotions as both reflecting and shaping wider social structures" (Gannon et al., 2015, p. 210).

In a study of 40 professors recently tenured and entering mid-career, Neumann (2006) explores the intimate connection between passion and productivity in academia. Passion, signified by emotion, absorption, sensation, and intensified awareness is complex, "a compound of multiple experiences, grow[ing] on a border between realization and loss, requiring, of scholars, a willingness to risk disappointment and failure in pursuit of peak experiences" (Neumann, 2006, p. 412). Peak experiences come from passion, generating momentum that carries scholars forward and fosters periods of "flow" or timelessness (Neumann, 2006). Similarly, Berg, and Seeber (2016) of the *Slow Professor*, encourage professors to seek this flow by adopting qualities of the "Slow Movement." In an environment characterized by the increased corporatization of the university, this increase in speed and urgency are evidenced by the corresponding increases in standardization and quantification of teaching and scholarship practices (Berg & Seeber, 2016). In response, the "slow movement," with its focus on contextual and embodied practices, draws attention to affect and engagement. And it was moments of affect and engagement that directly generated our lost-is-found experiences in pre-tenure. Rather than positioning academics' identities as commodities in a knowledge

economy, the slow movement, redirects professional identity back towards that of a scholar whose goal is "nurturing, animating, revising, and extending our understanding" (Berg & Seeber, 2016, p. 56). Berg and Seeber (2016) conceive of the "Slow Professor" as a challenge to the stereotype of the frantic, stressed out, beleaguered professor. This is an experience we noted above that commonly affects pre-tenure professors. Slow practices foster satisfaction and engagement (Berg & Seeber, 2016; Neumann, 2006). The liminal space of pre-tenure and the moments that have catalyzed our professional identities have in turn created opportunities for us to find the slow, or the seeds of it, that will propel our mid-career work.

Crafting stories as forms of artistic resistance and identity illuminated the processes of the tenure-track, but also helped us to visualize spaces of possibility to (re)imagine alternative ways of being scholars, teachers, and administrators. When micro-storymaking is coupled with collocation, it creates a juncture in which we embrace the ways we feel lost, and the hybrid ways we navigated the tenure track. A sense of lost may in fact reveal that there is no predetermined way to be on the tenure track. Berg and Seeber (2016) and the slow professor encourage us to be confident in our individual ways of being as we move forward into our first years as tenured professors. Our micro-storymaking marked the places we have been and helped us decide what and how to carry our histories into the future.

REFERENCES

Berg, M. & Seeber, B. K. (2016). *The slow professor: Challenging the culture of speed in the academy*. University of Toronto Press.

Bishop, T. (2014). *The social life of ink: Culture, wonder, and our relationship with the written word*, Viking.

Black, A. L., Crimmins, G., & Henderson, L. (2019). Positioning ourselves in our academic lives: Exploring personal/professional identities, voice and agency. *Discourse: Studies in Cultural Politics of Education, 40(*4), 530-544, https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2017.1398135

Blumenkrantz, D. (2009). Street photography: A bridge between documentary and art. *Visual Communication Quarterly, 16*(1), 108-116.

Boyer, E. L. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. Princeton University Press.

Borich, B. J. (2012). Writing into the flash: On finding short nonfiction's decisive oment. In D. Moore (Ed.) *The Rose Metal Press: Field guide to writing flash nonfiction: Advice and essential exercises from respected writers, editors, and teachers (pp.* 8-14). Rose Metal Press.

Britzman, D. (2003). *Practice makes practice: A critical study of learning to teach*. State University of New York Press.

Clandinin, D., & Connelly, F. (1996). Teachers' professional knowledge landscapes: Teacher stories – stories of teachers – school stories – stories of schools. *Educational Researcher, 25*(3), 24-30.

Crimmins, G., Black, A., Jones, J. K., Loch, S., & Impiccini, J. (2018). Collaborative writing 'betwixt and between' sits jaggedly again traditional regimes of authorship. *Text, 22*(1), np.

Denzin, Norman K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2008). *The landscape of qualitative research* (vol. 1). Sage.

Doron, G. (2006). Dead zones, outdoor rooms and the possibility of transgressive urban space. In K. Franck & Q. Stevens (Eds.) *Loose space* (pp. 213-330). Routledge.

Finley, S. (2008). Arts-based research. In J. G. Knowles & A. L. Cole (Eds.) *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research* (pp. 71-82). Sage.

Foucault, M. (1986). Of other spaces. (J. Miskowiec, Trans.). *Diacritics, 16*(1), 22–27.

Freeman, M. (2018). Narrative inquiry. In P. Leavy (Ed.) *Handbook of arts based research* (pp. 123-140). Guilford Press.

Gannon, S., Kligyte, G., Perrier, M., Swan, E., Vanni, I., van Rijswijk, H. (2015). Uneven relationalities, collective biography, and sisterly affect in neoliberal universities. *Feminist Formations, 27*(3), 189-216.

Garoian, C.. R. (1999). *Performing pedagogy: Toward an art of politics*. State University of New York Press.

Gebbie, V. (2009). Fireworks and burnt toast: The process of opening up your writing. In T. Masih (Ed.) *The Rose Metal Press field guide to writing flash fiction* (pp. 54-64). Rose Metal Press.

Greene, H. C., O'Connor, K. A., Good, A. J., Ledford, C. C., Peel, B. B., & Zhange, G. (2008). Building a support system toward tenure: Challenges and needs of tenure-track faculty in colleges of education. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, 16*(4), 429-447.

Hirschkorn, M. M. (2010). How vulnerable am I? An experiential discussion of tenure rhetoric for new faculty. *Journal of Educational Thought, 44*(1), 41-54.

Hoffman, C. R. (2010). Introduction: Narrative revisited: Telling a story in the age of new media. In W. Bublitz & C. R. Hoffman (Eds.) *Narrative revisited: Telling a story in the age of new media* (pp. 1-18). John Benjamins Publishing.

Ingold, T. (2007). *Lines: A brief history*. Routledge.

Jackson, A. Y. & Mazzei, L. A. (2012). *Thinking with theory in qualitative research*. Routledge.

Leslie, N. (2009). That "V" word. In T. Masih (Ed.) *The Rose Metal Press field guide to writing flash fiction* (pp. 7-14). Rose Metal Press.

Lyons, N. & LaBoskey, V. K. (2002). *Narrative inquiry in practice: Advancing the knowledge of teaching*. Teachers College Press.

Magaldi-Dopman, D., Marshall, A., Rivera-McCutchen, R. L., & Roberts, L. A. (2015). AcaDames: Living and working towards tenure. *Journal of Faculty Development*, *29*(3), 37-42.

Masih, T. (2009), *The Rose Metal Press: Field guide to writing flash fiction*. Rose Metal Press.

Mello, R. A. (2002). Collocation analysis: A method for conceptualizing and understanding narrative data. *Qualitative Research, 2*(2), 231-243.

Moore, Dinty. (Ed). (2012). *The Rose metal press: Field guide to writing flash nonfiction: Advice and essential exercises from respected writers, editors, and teachers*. Rose Metal Press.

Mueller, P. & Oppenheimer, D. (2014). The pen is mightier than the keyboard: advantages of longhand over laptop note taking. *Psychological Science, 25*(6), 1159-1168.

Neumann, A. (2006). Professing passion: Emotion in the scholarship of professors at research universities. *American Education Research Journal, 43*(3), 381-424.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (2010). The practice of narrative. *Narrative Inquiry*, *20*(2), 392-396.

Savage, S. L. (2015). Mapping tenureland: A research stalled. *Studies in Art Education*, *57*(1), 76-87.

Seltzer, R. (2015). *The coach's guide for women professors: Who want a successful career and well-balanced life*. Stylus Publishing.

Shapiro, H. (2006). Promotion & tenure & the scholarship of teaching and learning. *Change, 38*(2), 38-43.

Solnit, R. (2005). *The field guide to getting lost*. Penguin Books.

Thrower, N. (2008). *Maps and civilization: Cartography of culture and society* (3rd ed.). University of Chicago Press.

Turner, V. (1982). *From ritual to theatre: The human seriousness of play.* PAJ Publications.

Webster, L. & Mertova, P. 2007. *Using narrative inquiry as a research Method*. Routledge.