Hello, and welcome. I am your host, Neil Ward, and I'm grateful that you are taking time out of your day to learn more about design educators' paths to tenure. I truly appreciate it.

On this episode of Tell It To Neil, we're chatting with Assistant Professor of Graphic Design, Gary Rozanc, from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, in Baltimore, Maryland. Let's listen in.

Neil: Hi Gary, and welcome to Tell it to Neil. How are ya?

Gary: I'm doing good, Neil. How are you doing?

Neil: Pretty good, pretty good. So, let's talk about our path into academia.

Gary: For sure!

Neil: But let's back up a little bit and tell us a little bit how you found your way into the field of Design.

Gary: OK, so: happenstance. It definitely wasn't a planned thing. I was working for a company that duplicated diskettes. This is before CDs, this is before…so, floppy disks, you know, the standard three-and-a-quarter, and they needed a pre-press technician and I'm the one who figured out how to do, you know, how to use InDesign…well, it wasn't even InDesign then. It was Illustrator and Quark and whatnot to get the artwork from the customers onto our equipment, you know, so…and then I started going to Community College for the software and then I just slowly built up. Next thing I know, I'm almost in an Associates Degree, so then I decided…so then I lost that job and when I was trying to apply for other jobs, I was like, half-way stuck between…I was over-qualified for pre-press but I wasn't quite qualified any more…I wasn't qualified for like, graphic design jobs, so that's when I decided to go back to school full time for graphic design, so that's how I got in there! Very, very backwards.

Neil: That's all right. Where were you living at the time? Were you in Baltimore or were you…elsewhere?

Gary: No. I was in Cleveland, Ohio.

Neil: Ah!

Gary: That's where I grew up, it's where I spent the bulk of my career, life if you will.

Neil: So, during that time, finding your way through, what did you love or dislike most about that, or those jobs? Was there anything?

Gary: With the pre-press stuff...the one thing and I was kind of like the thread, the thread regardless of whether I was doing pre-press, whether I'm doing freelance work or going to grad school or even to today, it's the ability to always learn something new. So, I get caught up more in the idea of learning something new, trying to execute it myself and design, it's an infinite; I mean, there's always something new to learn, I mean a case in point, even if you learn everything there is to know about the web now and about augmented reality and virtual reality, how we're going to be designing for that, so there's like never an end to that, so that's what excites me most, just learning something new. But I think what I hate most about that little personality trait is that I also am not really excited about finishing or polishing anything, so I learn how to do something, I get excited about it, and then I get bored with it! And so I never really master it. And I don't want to. That's the other part of it.

Neil: Interesting. So you kinda learn enough to get yourself through to the next challenge?

Gary: Exactly.

Neil: Hmm. Interesting; that's kinda one of my favorite things about design too. So, you went to school and I assume after you were...did you receive a Bachelor, a BFA Degree and then you went back out to work or did you go BFA into your MFA?

Gary: Kind of both!

Neil: OK!

Gary: It's goofy. Again, I had a ton of community college credits. I was literally over the course of I don't remember how many years, but over quite a few years I would just like, slowly build up, so it got me to the point where once I was canned from my job, I was...I decided to go back to school full time for

Design but I was able to get my BFA in...I mean, not my BFA; my BA in three semesters. Now, granted, those three semesters I was taking sixteen credits, twenty-some credits...

(5:10)

Neil: Woooow!

Gary: And then like nineteen credits to do it, but I didn't have a job so I was literally going to school full time. And so then once I graduated, I immediately kind of moved to Arizona and I knew at that point within maybe like three or four months of moving to Arizona that I was going to go to Grad School, so I ended up working with a pre-press...I ended up going to like a print shop and I was doing pre-press and graphic design there and...but I also like, that summer before I moved I was also kind of, you know, I would guess a contract Junior Designer for a design firm in Cleveland, so literally I had everything kind of going on at once during that little transition there!

Neil: So then, going to...getting your MFA, was there a point where you were thinking: ooh, you know what? Design education might be for me? Or was it more about learning more and then being an educator just kind of came out of that?

Gary: Everything but the last one. In my under-grad, my Professor, Jennifer Visocky O'Grady, she's amazing, but at the time she was doing...she and her husband and along with two other friends from Grad School had their own design firm but they were doing, like select work and then so that she had the teaching gig and that business model of...I'm gonna call a business model, like really appealed to me. I was like, OK: I can have the safety of the ivory tower, you know, paycheck, but I can also do the select freelance work that I found really interesting or you know, like low pressure kind of stuff and so seeing...so she inspired me to think of teaching as a profession and so to teach full-time, I knew I also needed an MFA. So, the MFA was kind of a response to that but also at the same time, you know, I only had three semesters of my BFA, I mean a BA. And I kinda knew that I was missing a lot. So I...going back to get my...going to get my MFA was kinda like dual purpose was I chose a school, not just because I was living in Arizona. I ended up going to the University of Arizona, so it wasn't just out of convenience. The school was...it's a good school and it gave me opportunities to be a teacher so I knew I was going to build my curriculum vitae in a way that I'd be able to, if I wanted to do a teaching job, so that was a

conscious decision and then once I got into the U of A, once I got to teaching my own courses, that's when it was like, yeah, this is me! This is what I do!

Neil: That's amazing! So...oh, go ahead.

Gary: Yeah, all this stuff is just like literally...there's never been a decision that I've had to painstakingly make; this is just the logical next step.

Neil: It just felt right?

Gary: Yeah.

Neil: When you were at U of A, in your Master MFA program, what type of work did you do there or and if you can talk a little bit about your thesis project?

Gary: OK, sure. The U of A has...their Masters program is really kind of...you could...it's inter-disciplinary because the cohort that I went into, we call ourselves ART 13 and but it was printmakers, it was photographers, it was sculptors, it was performance artists and yes, I did take design-specific courses but at the same time, I'm also coupled with all these other people so it was really, truly inter-disciplinary. Now, I don't know if that was by design or just like my cohort that I went through, so I did a lot of printmaking, like woodcuts, kind of using that as...kind of using like almost illustration as a design medium, I guess is one way to put it. I also at that point, you know, had access to a letter-press so I started doing a lot of letter-pressing, and mind you, before I started, I was actually really big on web, so I was a web designer before I went to...did my MFA but when I got to my MFA I didn't do any web until my thesis and I think that was partly because I truncated my BA experience so I felt like I wanted to learn about design history and I spent a lot of time doing that as well and then my thesis is...loosely...the best way I think to describe it is, my thesis was about everybody's attachment to a sense of place. So, mind you I had just spent thirty years living in Cleveland Ohio and now I'm here in the middle of the desert in Arizona and so I just started thinking about place and so designers and people in general have such a strong connection to place and so that's what my thesis became about was like, how do you communicate that sense of place to somebody so they have the same connection to it that you do but also like, how do you leverage other people's places...you know, in a form of communication, and so that's what it was but at the same time I think anybody who did their MFA, I

don't know if they came...if they selected their thesis project the same way that they approach research when they go into teaching and they're going up for tenure. I think they're two kind of different levels of research, if that makes sense?

(11:17)

Neil: Yeah, absolutely. I would think they are a little bit different just due to the demands when you're not in school full time and you're on the other end of things.

Gary: Yeah, it's just I think when, you know, and I can only speak for myself but I feel like with the MFA, you know you have to make a thesis when you walk in, right? So you're starting to come up with a thesis but you're not really discovering your research passion, so you're picking a thesis and then researching to make it, whereas when you go into academia, you're hired based on your research passion and it's cultivated and it manifests itself completely differently because the research informs the thesis instead of the thesis is the starting point and then you're trying to make the research to justify it.

Neil: I think you hit the nail on the head there! So, this is a nice segue. So, the research that you did and the thesis project about the attachment to a sense of place; how and/or did it apply to teaching courses when you started an academic position? Did that transfer to any courses or did it kinda lightly get incorporated? Tell me about it.

Gary: It really didn't. And I think the reason it didn't was more about the courses that I was teaching, so it wasn't applicable directly...it was a little bit but the courses I was teaching when I first got into the thing were web courses. The way I approached them in the beginning was like teaching HTML and CSS, so that was the focus. So it wasn't about sense of place where later on when I started teaching, you know, kinda like more UX or UI-centric courses or even guiding into like exhibition design: yeah, then that became totally applicable, so it depends on the course that I was teaching, I guess, it would be applicable but I just felt like at the very beginning, it really wasn't. Just because...but I think that was more a reflection of the courses that I was asked to teach.

Neil: Yeah, and unfortunately, when you're first starting out, you kinda have to go where you find a position and...well, let's talk about that. So, after you graduated with your MFA from U of A, how...how

did you go about finding your first academic position and where did you land? Or actually, you know what, tell me the time-line from graduating from U of A to where you are now.

Gary: Sure. It started not when I graduated but the semester, my final semester, because and actually it started the fall of my third year because my U of A is a three year program. Or you can do it in two but they recommend three and I did it in three, so in the fall of that year, of my last year, I started sending out applications and I sent out...I'm not kidding, over sixty applications. I literally applied to everywhere that I met the minimum qualifications for and so then come, you know, like January, February, I started doing all the interviews and stuff while I was also working on my thesis and I was literally, by March, April, I'm going to on-campus interviews while I'm working on my thesis and so I think I actually had an offer letter from Truman State University maybe even before I graduated. I mean, we're talking about like, you know, within a matter of weeks, those two things coincided

(15:47)

Neil: Wow!

Gary: And so I graduated in May of 2008 and in fall, you know, like September of 2008 I'm, you know, teaching full-time in a tenure track position at Truman State University.

Neil: So, do you think that that is a normal occurrence in MFA grads that they're looking for jobs in the fall or have you...do you think that they kind of wait until spring-time to start looking or...

Gary: You know, I don't know. I don't know. I was the only designer who kinda was seeking teaching position and so my cohort, like I said, sculptors, I don't know what their intent was. But I know externally, some other people, designers, they were going for MFA that also wanted to teach, yeah, they started the process around the same time I did. If you look at the academic cycle, the call for applications goes out, you know, the Dean's office usually notifies the Department by September or October at the latest that, you know, your position has been approved, a search has been approved, then that immediately goes out and then you start collecting applications, you start reviewing applications in early January and start doing the on-campus interviews then in, you know, like doing the Skypes and the phone interviews and the on-campus, you know, February, March and April it's almost kinda too late.

Neil: A little bit! Now, did you ever experience a CAA conference where you were interviewing there or did you…

Gary: Oh yeah! Yep, I did that. Yeah, I've…and this is going to come up later but you asked about mentoring. I had really good people all along, so I had somebody was a print-maker who graduated a year ahead of me, he's like hey, you know, CAA: there's a lot of interviews there, you should maybe go the year before you actually have to apply just to check it out, get a feel for it, experience what you're going to go through and so I did and then so when I went the next year, I had all kinds of interviews set up and I knew what to expect and I knew what people were looking for.

Neil: It is definitely quite an experience there!

Gary: And I don't know how effective it is, because it's a glorified Skype interview.

Neil: A little bit!

Gary: I mean, not to knock CAA…

Neil: No, not at all, not at all.

Gary: I just feel like that interview process, the way that everybody interviewed me at CAA was it skipped the phone interview essentially, and so now at this point, you know, you can do a Skype and you can see the person so you can read their body language and things like that, that you would get form an in-person conversation that you may not get from a phone, you know.

Neil: Very true. Yeah, from my experience, we…when I interviewed there it was more of a…let's get as many interviews as we can while we're there.

Gary: Yeah.

Neil: And for an MFA graduate, it is great experience in interviewing!

Gary: Yes, that is true.

Neil: Now, we're at fall of 2008 and you're at Truman State University so you're at the University of Maryland Baltimore County now.

Gary: Yup.

Neil: What happened between those ten years?

(19:25)

Gary: Quite a bit! The first one with Truman State, and I truly adore the University, so me leaving them was like no reflection on them. It was kind of two-fold. It was 2008 and if anybody remembers the financial crisis that happened in the fall of 2008, so I literally got an...there's an email from the President at Truman that there's potentially a twenty five per cent budget cut and I was a new line. I wasn't even...my position was a new line, it wasn't even like filling a retirement. It was literally a new line that the Chair had just fought for and I was like hey, I know you can't guarantee me that I'm safe as an...you know, but is this line safe? And the Chair could not get assurances from the Dean, from Probus, from anybody that that position, that the new line was going to be safe from the budget cuts. It was like, I gotta apply to jobs! And so I did. I applied and I...just a few, I didn't want to...I just looked...I didn't want to like, move half way across the country again, so I, like maybe like an eight hour radius around and one of them was Columbia College, Chicago and I ended up getting offered that position in Columbia College and while I loved Truman State, I didn't love Kirksville, Missouri and, who's going to pass up living in Chicago and so I moved to Chicago, and I loved living in Chicago but Columbia wasn't a good fit for me, it was...I mean I went from a Department that had a hundred and twenty graphic design majors and three Faculty to eleven full-time Faculty but twelve hundred students. I mean, I was advising students that I didn't even...I never had on the course and so just...and they were going through some, like, identity crisis growing, I don't know, identity crisis I think because when I started there they had just switched to a tenure track from a teaching college and so they like kind of tenured all the lecturers that where there, and so nobody really knew how to go, how do we evaluate this tenure thing, because it was new to them. And so that was going on. But then I had met my wife in Chicago and her family was in Northern Virginia and they had a bunch of health...her father, her mother and her brother, they all had different kinds of varying health issues, so it became obvious that

we would need to help with them some way, shape or form, so when you couple that with you're not really super-enthralled with your job and she taught in Chicago public schools and it's not like they're the best public school system either so we were like...eh, let's move! So we started looking for jobs in the mid-west that were...not mid-west; I'm sorry, mid-Atlantic that are close to her family and a couple of positions opened up in Baltimore and I was offered both of them and I ended up taking the one at UMBC, so that's how I got to Baltimore.

Neil: So, what made you choose the UMBC position over the other one? Was there anything that kinda...

Gary: Yes. One was more teaching-focused and the other one was more...and UMBC's more research-focused and they were both, I would've taken either or if I only had one option. It wasn't like one was a bad option. They were just different options and one of them was a research institution so UMBC's Research Two, so I don't know the difference between Research One and Research Two, but I know that Research Two is a lot different than a teaching university and so there's more resources for...they take research here at UMBC very seriously and they fund it!

Neil: Oh, that is nice!

Gary: Yep. So you get start-up funds that you can use for equipment, you can use for travel, you can use it for whatever you want as long as you can justify it that improves your scholarship/research. So that's why I chose UMBC. And so I guess the follow-up, I'm going to anticipate your question: why would I prefer research over teaching?

Neil: Of course!

Gary: I can't...I'm trying to like...why did that appeal to me more than teaching because that's what I want to be, I want to be a teacher. I don't know, I don't know it was just at the time that just made most sense to me. I really can't...I can't quantify it.

Neil: No, sometimes it's good to go with your gut.

Gary: It was literally that; it was literally that. I just felt UMBC was going to be a better fit for me.

Neil: Let's talk about your research and scholarship. So, back in your MFA thesis, you were researching attachment to sense of place and you've been teaching at some institutions and then now you're at UMBC. Did your research morph when you landed there or how did it change?

(24:58)

Gary: That's interesting and I'd love to know what other people have done. So, I had four years under my belt at Columbia College, Chicago and so my research there was pedagogy; how do we teach design. Because I was, when I started there, I was working with a colleague, there was like a...we were brought in at the same time and there was alike a pie-in -the-sky, the Department Chair walks in and says...blue sky: come up with a new BFA. And so my colleague and I, we ran with it and this was 2009 and what we did, in hindsight, was kind of a very visual design-heavy user experience design program. So, there was a ton of research but on the front end, so the idea was learning about usability research at the Freshman and Sophomore level so you can apply it to your design practice in the Junior and Senior year. So, my research was literally...design pedagogy: how do you implement that? So, when I went to UMBC I didn't fight for or try to, you know, have any of those four years count. Because I quickly identified UMBC took their research vastly differently than Columbia College did and I didn't...I felt like I can try to fight to get a couple of years towards tenure or I could just go there, see how things shake out and apply for tenure early if things, you now, so that was my rationale and so when I started there, I actually, I kinda dropped the whole user experience design research into user experience design: how are we teaching it, and I focused more on just the design pedagogy of web design, responsive web design, because this is 2013, Media Queries have been out for two years, so that seemed like a really fruitful endeavor and so that's where I kinda started and it slowly morphed over the course of my time from being about pedagogy to actually I think more about design, you know, responsive web design best practices throughout, for professionals, not just students, because it is such a new industry, if you will. So I decided to start over on purpose. But I'm curious if other people would try to transfer what they've already done.

Neil: You'll have to keep listening to the podcast! For design educators that are in the first maybe year or two of their tenure track position, you just mentioned that when you switched positions, you really didn't fight for years towards tenure. Can you describe that idea to listeners who may not be familiar with that process, when you switch...when you switch tenure track jobs half way to tenure?

Gary: Yeah, literally! It was literally half way. I guess the only way that I could, to give an applicable life-lesson, I think you would have to kind of sit back and assess where your own personal research was at. So, when I was at Columbia College, my research was about understanding the user experience design kind of this marriage with, you know, visual design and you know what? Let me back up. My colleague who I taught with at Columbia College, she was, her Under-grad was in Architecture. So, we were kind of marrying the, I call it…it does mirror what modern user experience is but we were utilizing that principal of how they go about their research before starting a project. We were just using that and applying it to graphic design, so we were researching something new but it was in service to Columbia to create a program there. So, when I went to UMBC, I wasn't asked to create a new program, so my research…so I basically had a chance now either continue research but the original prompt for that research was not my own initial interest; it was in service to Columbia College whereas when I went to UMBC, it was very important that it was my research interests. Not the college's or not the university's. It was my own. So that's kind of why I shifted it to my own so for other people that are kind of weighing that decision, they gotta look at the quality of their research and the long-term viability of it and if they see it's kind of a dead-end, I would recommend starting over, but if you see something that you've already got a book out of it that's in the works and for whatever reason, you do go to a new institution: yeah, you're definitely going to want to get some years towards tenure there because your research interests aren't going to change. So I looked at it as a chance to start over as opposed to something I was heavily invested in that I really wanted to transfer over. So everybody's going to have…be able to find where they fit on that spectrum.

(31:06)

Neil: Very well said, and a really good…some really good advice there.

Gary: Well hey, you know, that's the other thing, that's why I'm super-excited that you're actually doing this, because I think all of us together as a, you know, as a profession: I can ask anybody this stuff and anybody'll give me an answer. But you have to go seek it out. So the fact that you're actually putting all of this junk, this tribal knowledge that we have, into a common repository, that's going to…it's going to save somebody a lot of time and save all of us a lot of pestering down the road.

Neil: Oh my gosh, that is the hope!

Gary: So no, it will do it. Simple as that. I love it!

Neil: Well thank you. So, I hear that you are putting your tenure packet together.

Gary: Yes I am.

Neil: That is fantastic. So, can you walk us through the steps or the breakdown of the tenure process at UMBC that you've gone through?

Gary: Sure. And it is different from what it was at Columbia, which was different than it was at Truman. So everybody take this with, you know, you've got to put this into your own context, but UMBC since I started from scratch you have a ninety-day, like at the end of your first semester they do a review which I like because...at UMBC it's about identifying problems or like...so you have your ninety-day review. Then you have your three year review at the beginning of...at the beginning of your third year, so you are already starting to like, put paperwork and stuff together at the end of your second year. The reasoning behind that, it gives you a lot of time to course-correct if, you know, there's problems whereas at Columbia College, your third year review happened at the end of your third year, so now you're already into your fourth year, the middle of your fourth year and so now you've got very little time to course correct and so then at the end of...so then you have your three-year review and then you're kinda at Columbia College...not Columbia College, I'm sorry, UMBC. Then you're kind of like left alone to go about it until you sit and make your tenure application in the fall of your sixth year. So...and there's periodical...there's like annual check-ins with the Chair but nothing real formal between that three year review and your tenure review.

Neil: Wow!

Gary: So that's the overall process.

Neil: OK.

Gary: Now, do you want to know about the support systems in place or am I jumping the gun on that?

Neil: I would love to hear about the support systems and I would love to hear about how you are compiling your packet.

(34:25)

Gary: OK. So, support system first and then we'll talk about my packet. So the support systems in place, so UMBC, when you get there, they assign you a mentor, from your Department. So I have an official mentor from my Department; mine is Peggy Rae and she's fantastic. She's the kind of person who has, you know, the handbook memorized, and so like there's always like this T, dot this, cross that T, you know, all that kind of stuff. So that...so I had an internal mentor and then it wasn't policy when I started but I got grandfathered into it because the second year there at UMBC, they then started a, called Emerging Scholar Program and where they...you get to pick an external mentor, so you look for another tenured faculty in another institution somewhere to be your mentor and you...they get a small stipend from UMBC and UMBC ponies up the money to send them to your institution and then send you to theirs so then they set this up so you have somebody else to kinda give feedback and bounce things off as you go along and then like, literally every summer, at the end of every academic year, and every...they have different workshops for tenure promotion, so there is like...you are not surprised by their process in any way, shape or form. If you're surprised by the process, it's your own ignorance and it's your own fault.

Neil: That's a really great support system.

Gary: Yeah, well I mean, and it makes sense because UMBC, they invest money in you via start-up funds and there's like a lot of internal grant money and all this kind of stuff. They really invest money in you and they don't want to, you know, they want that to bear fruit and not get lost in a technicality because you didn't know that you had to do this or do that. So they're very diligent in that. And other places like I said, weren't as on it like UMBC was so I think that's because of the whole research R2 institution is that they have their support systems in place. So, as far as my packet goes, I think I'm in a...UMBC's like, they're transitioning out. I'm like...it's all digital now...

Neil: Oh, that's great.

Gary: So before, you know…OK, so when I went up for my three year review I literally had to print everything out and put it into one of those old legal expanding folders.

Neil: Oh no!

Gary: And there was a section for like…there was a section for tenure, there was…I mean, there was a section for…oh gosh, why am I blanking…research…I always call it research but scholarship, same thing, so pardon the two different terms: they're the same exact thing. scholarship, teaching and then service. And I just had to dump everything…I had to print everything out and put it into that but me being the designer, I put all that into a pdf and I think that's…I swear to God, I think that sparked a bug, you know, an idea in somebody. So now we submit it digitally, so for tenure it's now all digital. Quite frankly, it's so new that the system isn't open yet so I can't start building out my digital packet internally for UMBC yet because it's not, the portal isn't open yet.

Neil: Oh, that's amazing!

Gary: Yeah! So, there's that portion of it and then there's also the, you know, sending out the research scholarship portion of it to the external reviewers and I haven't done that yet: I'm actually starting to think about that, literally, that was one of the things I was like…huh, what is that going to look like? What do I want to do for that? I was literally thinking about that today, because I can send something physical; I mean, at UMBC it could be whatever you wanted, so I could literally make a website; I could literally print a book. I could throw everything in a folder. So I don't really have any kind of history to go on, so I'm kind of inventing it.

Neil: Mmm. You get to set the benchmark!

Gary: In a way I do, and I don't know, and so right now I'm trying to gather some other people's and like, hey, what have you done? And I'm finding most everybody's I that pre-, you know, digital age where they're sending hard copies of stuff.

Neil: Oh!

Gary: So I'm like...anyway, so that's what I'm wrestling with right now. And you know, that involves...I'm also, I just got done with writing, I think I've got a tight first draft of my self-assessment and my CV's always updated, that's just part of UMBC policy. I mean, every April you have to submit your annual activity report, which includes updating your CV so my CV's always up to date.

Neil: That's convenient to have that updated!

Gary: Yeah! So...

Neil: So, with the...with your packet, you said that you kinda put everything in there.

(40:00)

Gary: Mm-hmm.

Neil: What is everything? So...

Gary: That's a good question!

Neil: For when you are trying to document scholarship, teaching and service, what do those...what does that look like?

Gary: OK. I went through my three year review and I do think that three year review versus tenure, while they're different, I do think they're also the mechanisms are similar, so my three year review at Columbia, I got hammered because I put too much stuff in, because I basically put in...I put in physical evidence of every scholarly activity that I ever did, so at UMBC, knee-jerk reaction, I probably in my three year review here at UMBC, I probably didn't put in enough. So what I've kind of come to is, your dossier, and forgive me if this sounds dumb because this is...I mean it's probably pretty straightforward and we should all know this, but your dossier, if you want to think about it in legal proceedings, is the evidence. It's Exhibit A. So, you need proof that your scholarly work is peer-reviewed. So, if you...so, anything that wasn't peer reviewed, I pretty much automatically don't put in. So even if I created a website, but if it wasn't peer reviewed, I didn't put it in during my three year review which kind of burnt me because they were like, well hey, where was the making?

Neil: Oh no!

Gary: Yeah, and it's like...and again, it wasn't...it was kinda like my fault. So for me, and my problem was that some of the things that were peer reviewed didn't necessarily have a physical manifestation. So in an Art Department, Visual Arts, what do you do with the stuff that you made that wasn't peer reviewed? So, this time around, it's like I had to get creative about where to include that and so some of the stuff that I was making was actually from my teaching, so I've included it in that section because I made a LMS for my students; who's going to peer review that? But it's major work because it involved programming, it involved UI, UX testing. AB testing. All the stuff that I did that I didn't give myself credit for because I didn't have the context...well, in hindsight I did have the context to put it in so I put it in teaching. For the listeners: I have my own podcast, it's called DesignEduToday, where I'm trying to figure out the balance of what should we be teaching, you know, contemporary designers, and so evidence of...so it needs to be peer reviewed, right, for it to be evidence, so the website I made for it kind of doesn't have...so that doesn't really demonstrate my making but the fact that it got the design incubation, it got the inaugural service award, UCDA, peer reviewing body invited me to conduct the podcast so that's a peer review. I was selected for a conference in the Fall and my presentation is actually going to be on using podcasting and DesignEduToday for furthering your research, so that becomes content in my packet. So, the visual manifestation of it yet I still don't quite know what to do with it yet but I'll get there! Did that answer the question?

Neil: It did, it did, yes definitely.

Gary: And then just like, you know, other evidence. It's all evidence. Service: if the things you did, how do you prove that you did it? How do you prove the value of the service that you did? So, metrics, things that are measurable, that's the kind of information that needs to go in there.

Neil: Would that be like emails inviting you onto a certain committee or...

Gary: Yeah, yeah.

Neil: You mean, that's part of it.

Gary: I don't want to get off-topic or not answer your question the right way but I think that everything centers around the self-assessment because the self-assessment as a document is you making the argument for why what you did is nationally recognized or internally recognized, peer reviewed research, service and teaching, so that a self-assessment that's like, my Under-grad professor, Jennifer Visocky O'Grady, she said kind of think of it like the opening or closing arguments of a trial: they're making the...it's making the point. Then you just need the evidence then to back up those arguments that you made why what you did is research, tenure-worthy research and so Exhibit A, Exhibit B, then that just goes into whatever mechanism that your institution has, so at UMBC it's literally going to be a digital portal where I upload pdfs of emails that I was invited to a conference or an email...you know, just like whatever kind of paper-trail that you have that whatever you, awards you won, whatever you got was legitimate. And so at Columbia, that was literally, I print it out and punch it and put it into a three-ring binder. So the point is that all that's the actual evidence that is referenced in the self-assessment, and if you do your self-assessment right, you're making an argument to colleagues that may not be in your design field. We have like twenty Faculty in Visual Arts. Only five of us are design. We got animation, photo and yada-yada-yada so that self-assessment needs to convince them, make them understand like, OK great: I got an AIGA Design Educator's grant. They don't know what that is! So, even if I get them evidence that I won a grant that was peer reviewed, they don't know the significance of that so you need that self-assessment, that evidence has to be metrics. How many people did apply? So this wow, what was the review process for all these different things, so all that's the kind of information that goes in the package at UMBC is, how do you make something that's totally abstract for somebody who's not a designer to know the value of the work you did and it's your job to make them understand it via that document.

(46:57)

Neil: So, save everything and start early, is that what I'm hearing you say?

Gary: Oh God yeah! Yeah, yeah. I have...I don't remember who I got...it was from somebody else, it was...I was reading about some other woman who went up for tenure; she got it but she's...and it was like a totally disparate profession, I don't have...I can't remember what it was any more but she had like, she was like, in my email folders I had one that was like feel good, warm, fuzzy stuff and that warm fuzzy stuff is you got accepted to a conference; your work was in a publication; you just put all those emails into that folder so you can just go back and dig that evidence up later! But you gotta check with

your institution because talking to some other people at other institutions, they want literally the name badge from the conference that you went to or the conference proceedings, a print-out of that, they want that, as opposed to just the email that you were accepted. They want to see your name on a document somewhere. They actually want a real letter so you just gotta check with your institution to make sure that what collection mechanism they want.

Neil: We get paperwork every year stating clearly what the tenure and promotion standards are, so hopefully each institution has that, that process is pretty transparent to everyone.

Gary: I hope so.

Neil: I know. Tell me about it! Well, it looks like we're almost at the end of our hour here, so is there...do you have any other thoughts or upcoming projects or any other advice that you would like to share with our listeners?

Gary: All the above but I gotta respect your time, but the one piece of advice, I have to give this piece of advice because again, we're all designers and I'm assuming the audience for this is mostly designers. But they're all in Visual Arts Departments and so you can't expect your colleagues to understand what your research is. Even by reading the self-assessment you can't understand and expect them to understand that, so it's kind of your job, at least I perceive it that way, very early on, just have casual, like, water-cooler conversations making sure you're talking with everybody so they know what you're doing. So they know how to put it in context. So, when it comes time for them to sit down as a body, they can kind of like, if one colleague doesn't understand it, another colleague can kinda like be your cheerleader and say, hey, you know, this is where this is coming from, because if you just expect that because you won an award, well here, let's just say you expect all your colleagues to understand that you won an award. Well, if they're not in your profession, they don't understand the value of that award. That award is meaningless to them unless they have the proper context for it. And same thing with grants, you know: they don't know how competitive it is and these things could be spit out like it's nothing so you need to do these things both in that document in your dossier but also just one-on-one conversations...

(50:14)

...and the other thing too is you need to make sure that they're all on the same page with you with regards to research. Like, I'm going to throw out a hypothetical situation that somebody and I were just randomly talking about...let's say you're an animator and you're making...you made this book on this amazing animation process. Well, your colleagues could totally trip you up, even though you've published a book because they could say well, yeah, you're an animator: you need to animate, you need to make animations, not write about it. And the same, you know, vice-versa, they could say OK, great, you won this animation award but you didn't really kinda do any scholarship: you just made an animation. You didn't write about it or put it in any journals, so unless you do both of those things, you know, you kinda leave it open for somebody else to say...mis-evaluate your scholarship so I think you kinda like need to flush that stuff out beforehand because if you don't, you could be blind-sided during your third year review or hopefully once you make that mistake during your third year review, you course-correct for tenure. So, that was the only advice that I think is just talk to your colleagues more; unfortunately, it's political. If you don't talk to them, they don't feel like they're...they're not as invested in you, so why should they go to bat for you? I mean, they should just obviously base it all on your scholarship but if they don't know how to evaluate your scholarship, because they're in a different discipline and you haven't taken the time to make them want to invest in you, why would they? So that's my biggest, advice is, figure that out the minute you step into a tenure track position! As far as plugs for myself, I want to plug the DesignEduToday podcast. I still got a ton of episodes that I recorded at the UCDA conference that I need to edit and get up on the website. I also, it's been going on for three years now and I have no idea who my audience truly is, so I'm going to be doing a listener survey that I'm almost...I've actually got it written. I just made the mistake of like, I want to design it myself in forms or a bear to make look nice but also be accessible. So that's going to be coming up soon so I want to plug that. Please fill out the survey, if you've been listening to my podcast. And the last thing, I'm going to officially announce it now, even though I don't know if I'm supposed to or whatnot, but I don't care any more. I've actually written a book; I've already submitted the final manuscript to the publisher and we're now going through the editing and in design phase and that book's on the responsive web design process. Right now, students and designers, they're...how do they evaluate to know if their design decisions are going to look good on all the different devices that are out there? You're either going to design a thousand different screens on your prototyping software du jour or you're going to be...you have to code it from scratch, so the book actually kind of is a hybrid. It says, this is the minimum that you need to design; this is the minimum HTML and CSS you need to get the critical design decisions made as a wire-frame, before you start actually designing in your layout program and if you do that

you'll have bullet-proof web layouts. So, that's what I'm...and so that's the other thing, so look for that, the end of 2018.

Neil: Oh, how exciting. We got a sneak peak!

Gary: Yep! Yeah, the publisher, it's CRC Press but they...because of marketing you can't really do too much yet. So, but talking about...that's not a problem.

Neil: Awesome; very exciting. I cannot wait to read it.

Gary: I hope so! I hope it's a good resource for anybody who has to try to teach responsive...it also could be used for some of the principles are the same for interactive...for app design but it's primarily for web; responsive design.

Neil: Great. All right, well thank you for your time and being on here and I wish you the best...

Gary: Thanks for thinking of me!

Neil: Yeah, absolutely, I wish you the best of luck going through the tenure process too.

Gary: Oh, you know what? You asked one of your questions that you pre-sent...

Neil: Sure.

Gary: ...I don't have an answer for, but I do want to talk to you about. You said, anyone I want to nominate, and while I don't have anyone that I can think to nominate, I am fascinated by people who are already tenured but who transfer positions. So, do they transfer their full Professor or Associate Professor over to a new institution, do they have to start over, what does that whole process look like? So I don't know if that's something that's interesting to you or not or fits within the grand scheme of your podcast but that's a question I'd like to know the answer to.

Neil: Well, I think as time goes along and I myself get through the tenure process, that might be applicable!

Gary: Well, you know, regardless of...don't look at it as jumping ship because that's not the intent of it, but it's like, how do you build your career post-tenure, to make yourself ready for the next step? What is the next step? If you want a next step and so I mean, I'm going through that now because I'm like at the end of the six year marathon so I'm now starting to contemplate what the next step is, so that's why it's...what is...what happens after you become Associate? So, anyway, that's just how my mind works.

Neil: No, no and it's been a question on my mind as well. What is the next step?

Gary: Um-hmm. I don't know!

Neil: It's too early to be at the end!

Gary: Yep. Exactly.

Neil: All right, well anyway, thank you again for your time.

Gary: Appreciate it.

Neil: And look forward to seeing you at the next conference.