

[00:00:00] Bonni Stachowiak: Today on episode number 434 of the Teaching in Higher Ed podcast, Leading Lines, a retrospective with Derek Bruff.

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Welcome to this episode of Teaching in Higher Ed. I'm Bonni Stachowiak and this is the space where we explore the art and science of being more effective at facilitating learning. We also share ways to improve our productivity approaches, so we can have more peace in our lives, and be even more present for our students. Today, I welcome back to the show Derek Bruff. He's an educator and author. He directed the Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching for more than a decade, where he helped faculty and other instructors develop foundational teaching skills and explore new ideas in teaching.

Derek has written two books, *Intentional Tech: Principles to Guide the Use of Educational Technology in College Teaching*, and *Teaching with Classroom Response Systems: Creating Active Learning Environments*. He was the producer and host for the Educational Technology podcast, *Leading Lines*. Derek Bruff, welcome back to Teaching in Higher Ed.

[00:01:26] Derek Bruff: Thank you, Bonnie. I'm excited to be back on the podcast.

[00:01:28] Bonni: It's one of those strange things where it feels like forever ago that we talked but yet since I listened to *Leading Lines*, which is the podcast that we'll be spotlighting a lot today, it feels like we get to have conversations more regularly than we actually have in real life. In my imagination, we have a lot of them.

[00:01:46] Derek: [laughs] That's right, yes. In reality, they tend to be one-sided. I listen to you, you listen to me.

[00:01:53] Bonni: Oh, I don't even think I knew you listen. That's great. Well, we have kind of depressing news to start out with. The first one is really my depressing news because when I mentioned this to you I had no idea what I was talking about but I missed a couple of celebrations. One that I missed is for anyone who knows about the band, Earth, Wind, and Fire. One of my favorite

songs is September by them. If anyone knows that song they start out with, do you remember the 21st night of September? As of this recording Derrick, that was yesterday, and I found out at about 9:30 at night. I usually go to bed at 8:30 so I was a little past parting time for me.

[laughter]

I missed celebrating that. Then as of this scheduling, I do like to celebrate International Podcasting Day, but this is not going to air until after that, but you and I are just going to celebrate. That's okay or maybe we're celebrating early. Happy International Podcasting Day to everyone. Derek has so graciously agreed to come and talk about what he's learned and highlight some of the key guests he's had that has really shaped him from the Leading Lines podcast. Thank you so much, Derek Bruff for being here today.

[00:03:09] Derek: Yes, I'm excited to be here.

[00:03:12] Bonni: Well, let's start out with just telling us a little bit about how did Leading Lines get started and perhaps win if you remember the year.

[00:03:19] Derek: Sure. It was six years ago, 2016. I was serving as director of the Center for Teaching at Vanderbilt University. In that capacity, I got to talk to faculty at Vanderbilt and elsewhere about their teaching. I had a healthy interest in educational technology, teaching with technology, and all its forms. I had actually been collaborating the Center for Teaching had been collaborating with a couple of other units around Vanderbilt at that time on educational technology projects.

We had an institute for digital learning. That was heading up our online open courses. We had some folks in the Vanderbilt libraries that were very interested in educational technology. I love our librarians they're awesome. We had just finished some project. I think we were doing this ed tech roadshow, where we were going around to different colleges and schools at Vanderbilt and letting them know about our services.

When we were sitting around thinking, we like collaborating on things, we should find something else to do together. I said, "Well, how about a podcast? I've been thinking and kind of toying with the idea for a while of interviewing some people I knew who were using technology in really creative and effective ways and I thought this would ... for fun podcast. We can interview five people of Vanderbilt and five people who aren't at Vanderbilt and just kind of put it out there and see who comes along."

One of the other folks in the room, he was an assistant provost for educational technology or something at the time. His name was John Sloop, and he said, "Well, I've been thinking about doing a podcast as well." He wanted to play with the media. He's a communication studies professor so he likes to play with the media that he's studying. We decided, well, let's just do it. There were six of us or so. Rhett McDaniel was our assistant director for digital media at the Center for Teaching. He had the technical skills to do the editing that we would need.

We decided to make Leading Lines an interview-based podcast. We would talk to people at Vanderbilt, we would talk to people elsewhere, faculty, grad student, instructors, researchers, educational technologists, people who are part of a tech companies. We cast a pretty wide net, and just decided let's just start interviewing people. We had some targets of opportunity. We had some guest speakers coming to campus that fall and so we're like, well, if they're here on campus, let's bring our microphone and talk to them.

Yes, we just got going. I will say that having six of us do the podcast together, it definitely lighten the load. We each had different interests. I tended to focus on the use of technology to enhance classroom learning. Stacey Johnson, who was our assistant director for educational technology, she's a language teacher. She tended to focus on technology in the language teaching context. We had a librarian, Cliff Anderson, who was really interested in the digital humanities and so he focused on technology and humanities instruction, especially technology that would invite students into the research process.

We had other folks interested in digital literacy and free and open online courses. This was a few years after all the MOOCs, Massive Open Online Courses hit. Having a team meant not only was it a little easier, I wasn't having to do all the interviews myself, but we also had a pretty big tent approach to educational technology. It sometimes made the podcast a little diffuse in terms of you never quite knew what you were going to get from episode to episode but it also meant that you didn't know what you were going to get from episode to episode.

I learned a lot from my colleagues who were interviewing people I never would have thought to interview. I also learned a lot from the people I wanted to interview. Anyway, that's how it got started. We aim for about two episodes a month for 10 months a year. We tried to keep it manageable and then we just kept plugging away at it. Even during the pandemic, our schedule went right out the window but we kept making episodes. Late last year in 2021, we passed the 100 mark.

[00:07:18] Bonni: Oh, wonderful.

[00:07:19] Derek: Yes, we rather boldly labeled our first episode as episode 001 in the podcast feed, in the hopes that one day we would hit triple digits, and lo and behold, we finally did. That was quite the exciting moment.

[00:07:33] Bonni: I geek out a little bit, I love that you would have thought about that importance of digits when it comes to numbering things. I'm a little bit of a person who gets a bit persnickety about making sure when we have file naming conventions that our dates will sort properly in our file management system. I liked that you were bold and that you also knew. That's how these things work out, how these digits translate into sortable things, I love that.

[00:08:01] Derek: Yes, but we did not anticipate 1000 episodes. That was [crosstalk], that's okay, though.

[00:08:05] Bonni: Yes, I did not either. It's interesting.

[laughter]

I know that podcasting can be such an intimate medium. We're literally in people's ears and the kinds of conversations I know that you've had have been about such important and necessary themes and ideas and you want them to shape the way that teaching looks in higher education. I want to hear about for you, what's one of the earliest learnings that you remember happening, how you were shaped by the conversations?

[00:08:42] Derek: Well, one of our earliest guests was Kathryn Tomasek, who was in Episode 11, way back in January of 2017. This was our first academic year of podcasting. This was, again, one of the interviews conducted by my colleague, Cliff Anderson, who's librarian, a digital humanist and so it was about the digital humanities. One of the things I enjoy about working at a center for teaching is getting to explore what teaching and learning looks like in lots of different disciplines. You get to do this too, Bonnie, with your podcast.

One of the things that Kathryn did, she wanted her students to practice close reading. If you've talked to humanities folks, this is a common goal is to have students think very deeply about the text and the words that have been selected and what they mean, and how they connect to each other. She asked her students to do a text encoding project where they were taking documents from the Special Collections at her library and digitizing them. It was you'd have a text in digital form and then you could essentially mark up keywords with different tags.

She was using TEI Text Encoding initiative Language and the tag language itself was a little bit of a bear to learn, but the idea is that they were going to be

tagging keywords in the text and identifying this as a person, or this as a date, or this as a place. Her secret objective was to get them to practice close reading and to slow down and say, "Here's a paragraph. I really want to understand what's going on in this paragraph as a historical document."

She did it through this digital technology that actually was then fed into a larger digital scholarly project. Once these archival texts are digitized and tagged, then you can do a distant reading. If you have a big collection of these you can start to look for patterns and since across the documents once they've been tagged, and there's some meaning encoded into the tags.

I just thought that was a really, really clever way to do your discipline with your students, to invite them into the kinds of thinking that you want them to be practicing and to do it in a really legitimate way. They weren't all of the tasks were appropriate for the students who were doing them, but they were all feeding into a larger scholarly project. That's when I think I realized that there's a lot of really cool things that faculty are doing out there with technology that are maybe not getting the same news coverage as the latest free course that has 100,000 students in it.

This was 2017 again. There were news stories like that, but it was a really creative and intentional and effective use of technology that aligned really well with her discipline and her goals for her students. That's one that definitely stuck out from the early days.

[00:11:35] Bonni: That sounds amazing. I was wondering in my mind what the opposite of close reading was. You already answered that question in your answer. I was inspired by Mike Wesch. I don't know if you have seen his work where he will literally read aloud the text, the reading for students, and then they can listen to the MP3 or what have you. It's really pretty remarkable. I'll put a link in the show notes for anyone who wants to explore his anthropology text. It's one of those things where you recognize not all students come in enjoying reading, and not all students have necessarily been taught how to read beyond how to read, you know?

I wasn't quite sure how I felt about some of the copyright implications, so I didn't quite go all the way because Mike Wesch has his own textbook for that course. I think that he probably is able to be a little bit more liberal with how he approaches that. What I do is I have these things called after parties where I will literally read allowed to them. What we do in advance is open up the quiz and the quiz it just has a file attachment.

I have a certain type of notes structure. They're expected to use five topics or themes or things that stood out to them. Four quotes from the text, three ways

they could apply the text in their lives, two questions they would want to talk to someone else about who had read the text, and then one specific commitment they make for the coming week that they want to do.

Then the other ones they are a little bit more factual. How did you actually understand what you read? We'll go and we'll look before I read to them, we'll go and we'll look, well, what questions are we going to be expected to answer? I've started to discover in recent weeks that it's almost like they feel I'm cheating. It's some scandalous thing that I'm doing that is just going to be between us. I'm thinking that's disappointing that it feels scandalous to want to know in advance the purpose for one's reading.

Anyway, so you were just reminding me of that a little bit because sometimes I skipped some pages, by the way, the book that one of the books we're reading is Stephen Covey's *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. It's a wonderful book. None of the people in my class have children. Stephen Covey told a lot of stories about people with kids and executives who didn't spend enough time with their kids.

I'll fast forward as in arrow through those pages to a story that maybe they might relate to. Again, that feels scandalous to them. I love this idea of the close reading. Then in contrast to that distant reading that you learned from her so early on in your conversations, I know that you and I are going to be exploring some lessons that you drew from other guests. Let's have a look at Mike Caulfield, who I've also had the opportunity to talk with. My gosh, I don't want to sound like I am exaggerating here, but I have never been the same. What do you remember taking away from Mike?

[00:14:41] Derek: Well, I had the same reaction. I thought I'm not going to think about web and information literacy the same ever again. Mike is brilliant in many ways, but what I remember from the interview with him was the realization that the ways that were recommended to me years ago to teach web literacy were just no longer valid.

I remember seeing, depending on how ... your librarians were, it was either the carp test or the crap test. I don't remember what it stood for, but there were these methods of trying to look at a source and see if you can do a deep dive on the source itself and see if it's credible or not. Some of those strategies are useful, certainly, but some of them are like way out of date. Is the website dot org domain or is it a.com.

Those things don't mean anything anymore. It was also what Mike said was there's this like I don't know, Sherlock in approach. We're going to look at this source and analyze every bit of it to see if it's credible or not. He said, "Look, we



have the whole internet. You don't have to do all that work yourself. You can lean on what other people have done." He has this SIFT method when you're dealing with and he's really thinking about a claim. You read about a claim from a source and you want to know is this claim true or not? First, stop, think about what you're looking at and plan a little bit. That's the S. The I is investigate the source. What is this source?

What if you Google it, does it have a Wikipedia page? What do you find on the Wikipedia page? What do all the people who contribute to Wikipedia have to say about the source. If it's dramatically biased or has been really controversial in the past. This news outlet, it'll be in the Wikipedia page. That's really useful information, and you don't have to go figure that out yourself. You can just lean on the wisdom of the crowds. The F is fine trusted coverage, and I do this all the time now, thanks to Mike.

Oh, I see a headline on Twitter and there's some claim, and whether it's political or not. Do I believe this or not? Well, I'm going to go to Google News and I'm going to type in a few keywords and I'm going to try to get a lot of coverage on the same topic and see are other news outlets reporting this. If no one is, then it may be a little suspect. How are different news outlets reporting on the same subject? Sometimes you need to get some contrasting perspectives and you'll have news outlets and trust and you know what perspective they're going to give you.

I love that idea of saying I'm not just going to look at this source, but what is the claim being made and can I find more sources on that? You can do that pretty quickly. Then the T insist stands for trace to the original. I find myself doing this too, as well. Here's an image, let me do a reverse image search really quickly and see where this image came from. Or here's a quote or a link to a study. Follow the link, see what the study is actually, where does the quote come from?

Was it taken out of context? What I love about Mike is his goal is to help students put these in their daily practice so that it's not a lot of extra work, but you see this thing and you're going to sift, you're going to do a couple of quick things to find out more information about this claim that's being made. Because if it's going to take 20 minutes of Sherlock Holmes's deduction about this source, you're not going to do it. It needs to be fast and pretty easy. I've just been itching to teach of information literacy in one of my classes just so I can break this out and use it with some students. I know it's been helpful for me and it makes a lot of sense for helping students.

[00:18:24] Bonni: I mentioned just being completely transformed by his work, and I was also quite intimidated by it. It felt like just speaking with him, I'll never be that smart, I'll never know that much and everything. It felt then weird to then

pass that my complete inadequacy inadequacies onto other people. I wanted to mention a couple things that I learned just from going through this with students.

This is so emblematic of just really what I've learned from so many people across all these years, is you don't just teach it to students, and then you're done. You actually have to have a lot of repetition in different context in which they test their knowledge. I learned that you would need to test just their ability to even question what is the claim that's being made here?

Then he talks a lot about what is the reason why you're looking into this in the first place. One reason might just be I don't want to pass on garbage out into the world, so I'm going to think a little bit before I retweet this as an example. Or it might be this is an issue that's really important to you and you'd like to have some more valid answers as you seek to learn more about it.

I wanted to mention that what I had these assignments I did called Sift in the Wild, and sometimes they would go and find a story and that would help them then start to test a claim that was of more interest to them than maybe what I might have picked out for them. One that I really have started to get such a kick out of is doing one based on the Onion because most of them don't know that The Onion is a satirical website. I don't tell them that they have to prepare in advance when they create these screencasts of themselves. I use a tool called Loom and they record themselves.

I don't say you have to prepare, most of them do prepare because there's a little bit of nerves of, gosh, I better have this together. There's some people who have a little bit of hood spa that say, I'm going to just go for this. It is hysterical to watch the expressions on their face as they discover that it is satire because, again, not one that all of them have heard of. Anyway, just I wanted to mention that to you, so fun to think back on his work. Another person, Derek, who completely transformed my thinking and I know you joined me that is Chris Gilliard. Tell me about your learning from him.

[00:20:52] Derek: Yes. Chris may be better known to some listeners by his Twitter handle, which is hyper-visible. I remember it took me quite a bit of sleuthing just to figure out what his actual name was and where he works. That's intentional in his part. He keeps his internet presence fairly under control as prolific a tweeter as he is. He does put up some firewalls there because he studies things like privacy and has a lot of very strong opinions about privacy concerns and equity concerns in how we, in all kinds of technologies.

I really wanted to talk to him about educational technology and one of the things that I remember learning from him and this is where one good story can



really help you rethink, lots of things. He talks about this term digital redlining. I knew what redlining was. This was the practice in the middle of the 20th century where particularly banks would draw red lines around particular parts of town where African Americans lived. They would make up reasons not to give loans to those individuals.

It was a terrible racist practice. Chris talks about digital redlining, which is the ways that digital technologies are used that can be exclusionary. Sometimes that's intentional, but often it's unintentional. I remember him telling me the story of an admissions office that would send out emails to prospective students and one of the things they could do with their emailing tool is track how long it took a student to respond to an email to open it and to click on something. They would take a quick response as a sign of interest from that student, right?

I got the email, I open it up, and I click a link, right? I must be excited about this college. He said there's a lot of prospective students who have jobs and don't have their phones available while they're working. They may not respond for 12 or 24 hours and that doesn't mean they're not interested. They just don't have the same access to technology that some other students might have. What you end up with is a disproportionate view of who your most interested students are, right? It's not actually reflective of who the students are and you end up with more privileged students getting that extra layer of attention because they're seen as more interested.

That's a technology that, how long does it take you to open an email that seems neutral on its surface, but in practice can be very not neutral. That was the story that stuck with me that Chris shared. To take that same thinking, when we are using technology with our students, whether it's provided by the university or not, what are some of the unintended consequences that may affect some of our students disproportionately than others? That's just a lens that I think once you have that lens, you can get better at using it, but it's hard to put it away.

[00:23:44] Bonni: That reminds me a little bit of, when I talked to Cathy O'Neil, who's the author of *Weapons of Math Destruction*, and talking about both Chris emphasizes this as do many others, that there is no such thing as neutral. These algorithms, they're designed. We can bake in, as you said, those disproportional outcomes in ways that we'd like to think aren't intended but often are at least unconsciously intended.

Another conversation which I'm ashamed to admit because I would love to have a conversation with Betsey Barre and Karen Costa at the same time. I'm behind on my listening. I guess I'm not that behind because Episode 90, but I got to go back because this is one that I'm very excited to listen to. Tell me a little bit about this conversation with Betsey and Karen.

[00:24:36] Derek: Yes. One of the things that I started observing at Vanderbilt because. This was fall of 2020, so at Vanderbilt about half of our classes were online and half were in person. The ones that were in person, we had physical distancing and masking. It was a very unusual semester and I started noticing that we did well. We did focus groups with some students to figure out what's it like to be learning in these two different contexts.

What's working, what's not working, what could we recommend to faculty in the spring now that we've done this for a few months and there was this refrain from students about being overwhelmed with things to do and not having enough time to do them all. There was Zoom fatigue and general fatigue and the world is ending fatigue, but there was a lot about the assignments and how much time it took to do all these assignments and it just felt like a lot of busy work.

I thought this was interesting because I'd been working with faculty all summer designing these courses and so many faculty were intentionally ratcheting back in terms of what they were asking students to do because they knew it was such a hard time. They were providing alternative assignments. They were scaffolding better so that students wouldn't have to do everything all at once. They would break things apart into smaller assignments. They were lowering the number of things that were being done. There was this weird paradox where the faculty felt like they were simplifying and scaling back the work of the course and students felt just the opposite.

Like they'd never worked as hard. I tweeted about this. I was not the first to tweet about it though. I think Jodi Green tweeted about it and got some attention. Anyway, all of us teaching center people were reporting the same things, right? We were hearing the same things on our campus and I was like, okay, we got to dive into this and try to understand this better. I reached out to Betsey Barre who's at Wake Forest University at the teaching center there, and Karen Costa, who is someone everyone should follow on Twitter to talk about this busy work dilemma.

This was a different leading lines interview in some respects because we weren't necessarily sharing some cool thing that someone had done. It was three colleagues who were putting our heads together and trying to figure out what was happening. One of the hypotheses that I remember from that conversation was that faculty were being more intentional about breaking assignments down into smaller parts, which makes sense except if you're a student and you're taking five courses and all of your instructors are doing that now instead of having three assignments due next week, you've got 12 assignments due this week and another 12 next week.

Maybe they're all small, but there's a lot of cognitive load in juggling all those different assignments. That seemed to be our best hypothesis. One other thing I remember Karen Costa Spain, in particular, that is blindingly obvious in hindsight, but she had a little wordplay she talks about with her students giving them due dates when things are due D-U-E. Due dates when they should be doing these things, DO.

Betsey Barre is, she helped build the course workload estimator tool when she was at Rice University. To help faculty think through how much time am I actually asking students to spend on my course with different kinds of readings and different kinds of assignments. I just came away from that conversation thinking very intentionally about not just how can I scaffold things, but what is going to be required of my students and when and how can I communicate that better to them so they can plan their time and I can be realistic about how much time this is going to take. It was really great and it was mid-pandemic and we were all figuring this out together. I was glad to be able to host that conversation.

[00:28:17] Bonni: I have really enjoyed knowing about that course workload estimator and use it every single semester now. I'm thinking about it, our daughter is now eight years old and they're expected to read 20 minutes a night and they have them do a reading log and all of that. I've been thinking a lot about the course workload estimator because when she reads a book out loud, she goes slower than I do. There's just that fact of your knowledge. We've been reading Nancy Drew, which I wouldn't have thought we were going to go there, but yes, we have gone there.

[00:28:52] Derek: The original Nancy Drew?

[00:28:53] Bonni: The original Nancy Drew.

[00:28:55] Derek: They are very dated.

[00:28:57] Bonni: Oh, my gosh. I keep trying to tell her cause I got like a paragraph in and thought the second sentence is commenting on her appearance. There is a lot of very ableist and a lot of very how attractive someone is correlates with how good they are as a person. I tried to talk to.

[00:29:15] Derek: Oh, so, because I read Nancy Drew to my daughters several years ago.

[00:29:20] Bonni: You know?

[00:29:21] Derek: In the first one there is a character whose parents died in a boat explosion and that is mentioned in passing and never referenced again. I

want to know, was there something about boat explosions in the '50s? I do not understand that reference.

[laughter]

[00:29:36] Bonni: You're cracking me up right now. Generally speaking, we can get through a chapter. They're pretty predictable if I'm reading about 16, 17 minutes. Last night, it took us 16 or 17 minutes to get through just four pages because I go on this whole thing because they start talking about collars. She thought she had solved the mystery. She thought someone was lying because they were talking about calling. Well, they just said they don't have a phone, they must be lying.

I was like, "Well actually we used to say when you were calling on someone that you were visiting their house," and then I got into this whole thing of gentlemen callers and then I'm realizing there's so much gender things to unpack. I'm like, I'm already trying to unpack the appearance thing, so yes, the course workload estimator, [laugh] is one of those things where-- I mean, because how fun is that though?

I do feel like I kind of wish I could talk her out of Nancy Drew, but at the same time, we do have opportunities to talk about things and what happens when we make assumptions about people based on the way that they look. [laughs] Do you find that people-- All of this gives us opportunities to talk about. We would want students to be curious in maybe looking things up and seeing the different meanings of a word and all of that, but yes, if we're assigning so much reading that it's impossible and we're not scaffolding those things along the way, yes, it's difficult.

Well, I know we could keep talking about Leading Lines episodes for so long. I want to let people know that in the show notes there's a post that you wrote, which was really what inspired me to see if you'd have this conversation to begin, with looks back at even more episodes than we've had an opportunity to talk about today. I also thank some of your colleagues, you mentioned John Sloop earlier and Stacey Johnson, but you by name talk about each person that came together and really was such a part of Leading Lines. Would you talk a little bit about what is next for Leading Lines?

[00:31:41] Derek: Sure. Well, [laughs] so you started our conversation with some sad news about mistakes. I have a little sad news, our provost office decided to discontinue Leading Lines. Running a podcast does take some resources. Mostly, someone has to edit the episodes and that's time-consuming and so that is someone's time. I wasn't entirely happy with that decision, but provosts get to make the decisions they want to make. We are winding down Leading Lines.

The good news is we have a few more episodes coming, interviews we had already recorded that will be edited and posted to the feed in the coming weeks.

One of them-- well, yes, I won't see so good, we've got some really fun ones left in the queue. For now, I know the entire hundred-plus episode run is available on our SoundCloud page on our website. We also worked with-- One of the advantages of having librarians on your team is that they know stuff and they can do really interesting stuff, so we have the entire series archived in Vanderbilt's Institutional Repository, so we know it's got some stability and people can go back and listen to these episodes.

One of our podcast producers, Stacey Johnson, is very interested in making these episodes as well as other materials and resources that the Vanderbilt Center for Teaching has created over the years more accessible, more findable, more searchable so that faculty who are looking for inspiration or practical advice can more easily find that.

You may know we have about 70 teaching guides on our Center for Teaching website that are just really fantastic written text resources. During the pandemic, we were just cranking out blog posts and guides and such all the time and so Stacey has a real passion for trying to make sure that we can leverage those resources going forward and that instructors can find the stuff that's useful, so I'm excited to see what she does with that.

[00:33:32] Bonni: Well, you are right, of course, it is sad news and I'm disappointed as a regular listener, but as you said, people make [laughs] their own decisions and I am so excited. I love librarians too and I'm just so excited just to have those things. We regularly at my institution visit those guides that you were mentioning and regular listeners. I celebrate that work while I mourn with you that these continuing stories won't be told, at least not in this venue. Although [laughs] knowing you, I have a feeling there's more to come, it'll be--

[00:34:07] Derek: I am not done podcasting, not by a long shot.

[00:34:11] Bonni: [laughter] I just have that feeling that you are not. This is that time in the show where we each get to share our recommendations and I have three of them. The first thing I want to recommend is all the way back to the start of the episode, I talked about Earth, Wind & Fire, the song September and I looked, Derek, and I have not recommended that song before. It surprises me because it really puts a step in my toes every time I listen.

I want to recommend an alternative version of it. You kind of get mixed results sometimes, a lot of people want to go back to the original. There is really a

spectacular version of September that came out of one of the Trolls movies. What I like about it is it has a part where it says break it down but the Earth, Wind & fire musicians are also playing on that track too, so I'm going to recommend both versions of September.

I do think we should be true to the original, it reminds me of my childhood, and then yet the more modern version is really fun as well. The third thing has nothing to do with September, it is a Hidden Brain Episode and it's entitled How to Really Know Another person. The podcast host spoke with a researcher who looks at how well do people really interpret what is going on in other people's heads.

I am here to tell you really, really terribly, we're really bad at it, I put myself very much in this realization, we so much assume we're way better at it than we actually are and it just reminded me of your work really, Derek, as I was thinking about having today's conversation with you where we have to do something to interrupt that that where we could just look at a group of people and think, "Oh, they're getting this, you're all with me, oh, of course, you're with me because you're nodding your head and smiling at me and seeming like you understand, that's a really bad indicator of how much understanding is actually going on because sometimes people could even think that they're understanding and getting it, they don't even know that they're not."

I just celebrate your work and your book, which I've revisited so many times in conversations with you where in a way reminded me a little bit of you and I was thinking, "Hmm, I bet you were going to have some conversations where we might how to actually know what that other person may be thinking beyond just visual clues that actually we're going to be wrong about." Anyway, those are my recommendations. Derek, I pass it over to you for yours.

[00:36:45] Derek: Well great, I'm excited to hear. We watched the Second Trolls movie several months ago with my family and it far exceeded my expectations, which were admittedly pretty low, but it was a good movie, I enjoyed that.

[00:36:59] Bonni: They're really fun.

[00:37:00] Derek: The music was amazing. I think last time I was on, I recommended a podcast about Board Games. I'm going to actually recommend a Board Game.

[00:37:09] Bonni: About podcast?

[00:37:10] Derek: No, not about podcasts, about one of my other hobbies, which is Bird Watching. During the pandemic, my wife and I were working at home a lot. We were blessed with a fairly forest-life backyard. We'd started noticing the



birds in our backyard. We were also playing this game called Wingspan, it's designed by Elizabeth Hargrave, she is a birder, she's a bird watcher, and we were learning about birds as we were playing this game, and we were keeping an eye on the birds in our backyard and it just became our new hobby, Bird Watching.

Now when we go to State Parks or National parks, I bring my zoom lens and she brings her binoculars and we keep an eye out for birds we've never seen before. The game is delightful, it's not super competitive so if that's not your style, if you're not into really competitive games, it's a nice relaxing game. There's all these beautifully illustrated cards, each one has a different species of bird on it, and you're kind of building your habitat and adding bird species and gathering some food and laying some eggs and trying to score points in various ways.

The thing that we like about it is that each card represents a bird and each card has a little effect or power within the game and those reflect the actual birds and their behavior and their ecology. One of the birds we have around here is a Brown-headed Cowbird, I just think they're terrible because they lay their eggs in other birds' nests and then they run away, they're just bad parents.

In the game, the cowbird card doesn't have a nest, you can't lay eggs on it, but it can be triggered to put an egg in some other bird's nest, and there's other birds that flock a lot and so in the game, you can tuck cards under them to score extra points to represent a flock of birds together and it's just a delightful game. It's very relaxing, but still kind of thinking and challenging. My wife and I played all the time at two players, and so that's my recommendation. If you haven't heard of Wingspan or tried Wingspan it's a nice board game to get into the hobby.

[00:39:07] Bonni: Well, I'm feeling like you're helping me be early on something because this would be a lovely gift for some family members who love bird watching, so this could be a good thing. Thank you so much for the recommendation and thank you for coming and sharing these stories with us. I'm glad to have been a part of your current and past podcasting adventures, and I'm signed on for whatever comes next. Thanks so much, Derek.

[00:39:32] Derek: Thank you, Bonni. It's been a joy to be here.

[00:39:36] Bonni: Thanks once again to Derek Bruff for being a guest on today's Teaching in Higher Ed episode. Today's episode was produced by me, Bonni Stachowiak, and was edited by the ever-talented Andrew Kroger. Podcast production support was provided by the wonderful Sierra Smith. These episodes are just one of the teaching in Higher Ed Resources. If you'd like to subscribe to the weekly email updates, you can subscribe at [teachinginhighered.com/](https://teachinginhighered.com/)

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[music]

[00:40:39] [END OF AUDIO]

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