

[00:00:00] Bonni Stachowiak: On today's episode of Teaching in Higher Ed Episode 398, Christopher Schaberg on *Pedagogy of the Depressed*.

[00:00:11] Production Credit: Produced by Innovate Learning, maximizing human potential.

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[00:00:20] Bonni: 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.

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Bonni Schaberg: Christopher Schaberg is Dorothy Harrell Brown Distinguished Professor of English at Loyola University New Orleans, and the author of seven books, ranging across literary studies, air travel, and the environmental humanities. Christopher Schaberg, welcome to Teaching in Higher Ed.

[00:01:10] Christopher: Thank you so much for having me.

[00:01:11] Bonni: You and I have a connection with what you call Satsuma mandarin, but I grew up calling Satsuma tangerines, so maybe they're even two different things. I'd love to hear you talk a little bit about your connection with this fruit and why it is important to your teaching.

[00:01:28] Christopher: Well, I first became familiar with satsumas when I lived in Davis, California. I remember a friend bringing them over to my house and recognizing them. They're smaller than oranges, but they weren't exactly what I would have known as tangerines growing up. The other thing, they were a peculiar color, they were more greenish. I was like, "Are these really ripe?" He said, "Just try them." We ate them, and they were delicious. Then I didn't realize that they grew so much down here in Louisiana.

When I moved here for my job in 2009, I was delighted to find big bags of satsumas when they were in season. One time just randomly, I took a bag to my class and passed it around in the morning and some of my students were just excited to have free fruit and other students were like, "Wait, what are these green things?" Because they are often ripe when they're still green, not orange.

At first, it was just a cute moment of familiarizing students in New Orleans who weren't familiar with a local fruit, but then it became something I started to do regularly just bringing satsumas in or sometimes other fruits or vegetables. This is all pre-pandemic, of course. They just became a way to start the conversation and give everyone a little treat before class.

[00:02:43] Bonni: The variety that I'm familiar with are kind of wrinkly. I don't know. I'm sure there must be different kinds, but very easy to peel. The peel almost just comes right off. I do find that at least, I live in Southern California, and they do tend to be pretty unique. I don't see them often in stores here and my family has trees.

We have a tree, it just doesn't produce any fruit. One of these days it might or will actually get another one and try again. The other thing that you talk about is how it acknowledges a reality for many of our students in a symbolic way. Would you talk a little bit about how you find that it does that?

[00:03:20] Christopher: It's both symbolic and very real material, which is just food scarcity, the fact that a lot of students are actually hungry. Either just because they didn't get to eat breakfast because they were running from a job to school, or because they've had to budget their funds, and they have to get one meal today. I found that just bringing some fruit was a way to acknowledge that reality that I think often just goes unacknowledged.

[00:03:50] Bonni: In an episode a couple of months ago, a group of colleagues shared with me what they started to call pandemic dirty words. I'm sure you've heard some of these, Christopher. You've got the resilience, you've got silver linings, you've got the new normal. As I have come across your stories, I think maybe it's not too much of an extension to say that you might have a set of or at least one really profound pandemic dirty moves as in like, things. Maybe the timing wasn't so great on. What is one move that you have seen happen that maybe the timing wasn't the best to try to do something like this during a pandemic?

[00:04:32] Christopher: Well, one move that continues to gull me was my university decided in the first summer of the pandemic 2020 to switch learning management systems. We switched from Blackboard to Canvas and this was something that had been in the works for a while, but choosing that summer

when everyone was was A, reeling from an interrupted semester and B, trying to recover, and then C, trying to figure out what class was even going to look like in the fall, using that summer as a chance to completely change how we delivered classes online or created a space for resources for classes, seemed completely bananas to me.

Then to do it and not even compensate people to do it. I recalled during that time when I worked for an airline many, many years ago and when we were trained to use the computer program to book people's tickets and make changes and check people in, they sent the new employees to a training facility in Seattle for two weeks and paid us to get trained and put us up in a nice hotel and fed us and then we would come back after two weeks, we were trained.

I thought, "Wow, we could have done that. College should have done that." Especially during a pandemic, okay, maybe it would have been hard to fly that summer, but you know what I mean, we could have done something in a more humanist vein. That was one move, but then there were a lot of other small moves like, this seemed like an act of generosity to give students the option to take a pass-fail instead of a letter grade, but it became this logistical nightmare and it just made everyone uncertain about what they should do and how to do it, instructors and students alike.

In my mind, it would have been easier to just do something even more generous, like, I don't know, message in a different way to faculty to just be more generous with grades that semester rather than create all these new obstacles and loopholes that instructors and students had to find their way through. Those are the two pandemic dirty moves that I saw.

[00:06:30] Bonni: Yes, I don't know if you are on, I shouldn't say I don't know, I just recently followed you on Twitter so, of course, you're there. I don't know how much you're there. I recently came across your work and so I recently started following you, but there's that lovely satirical account called ass deans as in associate deans abbreviated in a lovely way and some of the moves that they explained there so many of us are convinced like, "Wait, is this actually someone undercover at my particular institution?" Because this just seems past the point of parody in some cases. Yes.

[00:07:03] Christopher: I know, it's so hard. I've had some really wonderful colleagues get promoted to become the associate dean and it's always like, "Oh, I really hope you do a great job there," but then you're just always worried what's going to happen plus now they're out of the classroom, which is where they were so valued and so good, but for many professors, that's like, the only

way to promotion or, a salary increase. Yes, there's the whole parody of associate deans, which is often too close to the truth.

[00:07:35] Bonni: A person I've really admired her work, Robin DeRosa, I met her first at an open education conference and she's been on the podcast a few times now, and really admire her. I always like to ascribe it to her as to why I ever took on that dean title and I don't feel like one in the sense of-- but I'm the good kind that helps facilitate learning opportunities for our faculty and the library and students success.

Yes, I do appreciate her challenge, though, all those years back to if we want to be part of creating change in our organizations, she was encouraging us. It'd be interesting to ask her right now like if she still feel that way, after all that was so many years ago, where she was doing some writing about that idea.

[00:08:19] Christopher: Some of my colleagues and I have thought about what it would be like if all of our leaders and administrators taught just one class a year, just to keep a foot or even a toe in the classroom, because we have some really wonderful leaders who, unfortunately, haven't been in the classroom in so long and you start to feel that disconnect more and more.

We've proposed this over the years, and it's usually just rebuffed. I get it, I'm sure that the jobs of leadership are incredibly time-consuming, but it does feel like there should be a way to mitigate that disconnect that can occur between leadership and faculty. It's just that being in the classroom is such a profoundly different experience, especially during the last couple of years.

[00:09:05] Bonni: You gave that example of the pass-fail and those kinds of things and I know for myself, I've insisted that that's part of my contract ever since I agreed to serve in this capacity. Teaching, not one class per year, but one per semester, and just being in that same rhythm of the year and experiencing some of the challenges. I don't pretend that it's the same. One class is very different than-- In my institution, they had us teaching an extra class and that was not necessarily a decision that what was always, I think, appreciated in terms of what that actually meant during a pandemic to have that, although I know these are really challenging fiscal realities to try to navigate for sure, but I do think that really if this is the purpose and the mission of our institutions, what a difference that can make when we're just in it and we're a part of that.

[00:10:01] Christopher: Just talking to students once or twice a week, it's so important in that role as an instructor.

[00:10:09] Bonni: One of the things I recognize about my own identity in the way that I would socialize is that I know that it was very much on an individualistic

cultural thing. You've written about depression as something that happens to individuals, but also something that happens, as you say, a state of things or an atmosphere. Could you talk a little bit about that distinction between the individual experience of depression and the more collective way that you're trying to communicate about depression?

[00:10:40] Christopher: I think I've been trying to go about this from two directions in my own life. This is where the book came out of is, on the one hand, feeling it myself, just the various heavy, heavyweights that involve the job, and then going up to campus and running into my colleagues and students and feeling it in a different way, feeling it in a way where we were all sharing this experience, even if we were all experiencing it differently and uniquely on our own, but just the state of austerity and a state of constant new stresses and anxieties.

Again, this is even before the pandemic, but I was really tuning into this. Then, also seeing it how it plays out for my students, again, both individually, what they would bring into class, were going to office hours, but then also when I'd have them as a group and to see them sharing that experience. What I've been interested in is thinking about depression as this simultaneously individualized and shared phenomenon that's also taking place in these different sites around the university.

[00:11:44] Bonni: I'd like to read a little bit from your book, the *Pedagogy of the Depressed*. "The depression is not so much an individual experience not located, at least not solely, in the depressed subject. It's a state of things. It's a depressed atmosphere, a dispersed feeling of dread and weariness, that has as much to do with cultural forces and planetary circumstances, as it has to do with the intense feeling of solitary helplessness." I shared with a number of friends and colleagues about reading your book. It's pretty much the perfect title for it. How quick did you come across that title, or was this something that took a while to find a name for what you wanted to write in collecting your thoughts?

[00:12:32] Christopher: I stumbled on the title one night when I was thinking about different things I was writing about. I remember just emailing my editor and saying, "Hey, hasn't someone proposed a book called *Pedagogy of the Depressed*?" My publisher, just by coincidence, is the publisher of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, which is a quite famous book of educational philosophy. My editor said, "No." I sketched out what I was thinking, and he said, "Well, let's do it."

I poked around. There've been some very, very smart articles and essays that have used that title, but usually, it's about a fairly narrow set of concerns. I wanted to use it more atmospherically to talk about something that I think a lot of people at different institutions, at different levels were feeling and just give a

snapshot of how I felt it. Once the title was there, it really motivated the writing and the assembling of the different chapters.

[00:13:27] Bonni: You show such great regard for learners that you join in community together. One of the things you don't do is call students kids. I'd like to read a paragraph and then invite you to respond more. This is quoting you. "One of my biggest pet peeves is hearing colleagues refer to our students as kids. They're not.

They're younger than us, sure, but they still are adults who can go to war, operate giant metal boxes on wheels, make all sorts of weighty decisions, acquire disciplinary knowledge and expertise for work, and work for pay." I want to talk a little bit about why you avoid calling students kids, and some of the reasons that you really resist that, and what you see coming out of why other colleagues may make that choice.

[00:14:20] Christopher: I probably should have added to that list, "They can also accumulate debt," because that's another important point that I think establishes this. It's always a battle I wonder if I should even pick or fight. I was in a committee meeting recently, where we're trying to revamp and reimagine our first-year experience at my university, which is something I really believe in the holistic first-year experience at a liberal arts institution.

I noticed in that meeting, a lot of people were calling the first-year students kids, and I just had to bite my tongue because I was like, "In this context, I'm not going to fight this," but I just noted it again and again, and I thought about how the rhetoric of calling our students, our first-year students kids, was working at cross purposes with what we were trying to do, which was trying to figure out how to initiate them and invite them and support them into this experience of college learning.

What we really needed to do was be meeting them as adults, as adult learners, even if they were 18, or not yet 18 in some cases. To refer to them as kids and if we have that mindset, we were immediately doing them a disservice, which is that we weren't seeing their potential as adult learners from the get-go.

That was one specific case where I just felt like the rhetoric of kids was doing us a disservice. I didn't say anything about it there, but this was just the first of five meetings. I most certainly will bring it up at some point because I feel like it's a correction that we need to make linguistically or discursively that will also change the way we think about the structures that we're imagining for our first-year students.

[00:16:04] Bonni: I was talking with our kids. Our kids, as of this moment, are seven and nine. I say as of this moment because my goodness, did they grow fast. [chuckles] We were talking the other day about-- I said a word and I didn't love the word. I can't even recall what it was. I was explaining to them that when I was growing up, this is what we called this thing. Oh, actually, I know exactly what it was. I'm embarrassed to admit it, but I've admitted a lot on this podcast. I can do this.

I was making a joke with them, and I said, "Ladies and gentlemen." Then I said, "Oh gosh, I've been really trying to retrain my brain. Do you know why I would try to retrain my brain to use a different word?" It didn't quite get it at first, and then I said, "Some people might get left out and that was enough of a clue for them to talk about that, but they started to say other words that they recognize--" I don't know where they got it from. I know in our household, we're trying to rename certain rooms in our house because we didn't realize the historic nature of some of those things that we just grew up with and hadn't thought about.

The reason I bring that story up is just when you enter into a space where anyone could, at any moment, surprise you with what they bring in that-- I'm thinking, "You're seven and nine. How are you already recognizing about socialization and word choice and why that matters?" It's remarkable. If you don't show up respecting the people that are engaging in those conversations, then you're not really going to be able to experience what I find to be the greatest thing about teaching.

[00:17:39] Christopher: You're so right. It also makes me think that the other reason I don't like referring to college students as kids is because it also does a disservice to kids. Kids are their own amazing, brilliant little vessels, right? When we use that term sloppily and with this kind of reckless elasticity, we're not really doing justice to either children or the adults that they're becoming when they go to college.

One of my colleagues and I have joked that, "If we're going to call them kids, our students kids, let's be kids with them. Let's be playful with them. Let's learn with them." That would be another approach that I'd be okay with, but a lot of faculty would not take that very seriously or like that thought because it would disrupt the hierarchy. Either way, I think it's about disrupting the hierarchy between kids and adults or the people in authority and the people who are subjects. That's I think another reason why kids remains problematic to me for college.

[00:18:43] Bonni: Another attention that you have written so eloquently about is what happens when our students or when we click and who benefits from those clicks. You're right. On the computer, the reality is we're producing value with

each click, each keystroke, and every swipe of the thumb. Many have felt the time warp of internet browsing, that sudden awareness, which I have done, so I'd know, of, "How did I end up watching YouTube videos of cats and sitting through GEICO ads between clips?"

In other words, what passes as saving time or creating more flexible work or learning space is really about wasting time while producing value but value that goes somewhere else. What would you share with us about tech companies' profits and how they relate to us pushing buttons?

[00:19:42] Christopher: Well, one of the ways I saw this creeping in again over that first pandemic summer was when we were switching from Blackboard to Canvas and the faculty and students were encouraged to just download the app. I mean you can do it all on your phone. I found myself thinking, "On the one hand, this is just increasing

accessibility and making everything more convenient. On the other hand, it's just further naturalizing habits of clicking and just that fantasy of feeling like we can do everything on our phones," which I don't think is true about learning and I don't think is true, but a lot of things in life.

One of the other texts that we read which is Jenny Odell's book, *How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy*. We read that this semester and at one point I had my students leave their phones in our class space, and then we all walked a little ways away, just sat for 20 minutes, and just observed and thought. It sounds so simple, but just being away from that clicking device for 20 minutes and tuning into the world, or even just tuning into their thoughts was so profound for my students.

I think it helped them just that 20-minute break from the incessant clicking was an epiphany moment for a lot of students that, wow, how much time I'm spending on my device and that time is always monetized, that time is feeding the technology companies and the service providers and it is going elsewhere. It is generally not just resulting in your own value.

[00:21:17] Bonni: Yes, I can recall the I shall say hubbub I think is the technical word for it when Instructure, the company that makes the Canvas Learning Management System was going to wrap around their profits to be able to sell aggregated data about student clicks. That becoming part of their financial wealth as a company didn't go over really well. I believe that they have backed away from that significantly, but not without breaking a lot of trust for, "Wait a second, what is this tool for?" [laughs] To, "Who is it designed to benefit?"

[00:21:50] Christopher: Yes. I even thought about it in a really pragmatic sense with my students that when we're asking them to download the Canvas app and use their phones to access their school materials, our school is not paying for those phones or the bandwidth or any of the service for that. That falls on the student. That's material for a lot of our students. Not everyone has infinite resources for constant new upgrades to their phones or for more bandwidth. Even in that sense, I feel like it's just important to note that these are not value-neutral objects or technologies.

[00:22:32] Bonni: One of the ways you have found despite these, of course, complexities but you have found ways to connect is through collaborative writing. Would you describe how you have used a shared document to create some shared conversations in your class?

[00:22:48] Christopher: Let's see, several years before the pandemic I realized I was tired of updating my syllabi and printing out new ones and bringing them to class or even uploading them to Blackboard or whatever. I said, "I'm just going to start a Google Doc and we'll just have a living syllabus. I would have a place where the students could all go and they can see it as we change throughout the semester."

Then a year or two later I said, "Wait, what if I just invite all my students to be editors, and then we can all make it together?" Then after that, I started realizing, "Wait, why aren't we just writing together on here when we would have a prompt? We don't have to go somewhere else and do a very clunky discussion board, we can just do it right here on this amazing, simple tool, the Google Doc." Gradually, Google Docs has just become this go-to collaborative writing space for me and my students.

If we have an idea together that we want to work on, we do a Google Doc. The practical goal is that by the end of the semester, students will be really good at using Google Docs collaboratively not just as a replacement for Microsoft Word, but as a collaborative space for thinking out loud, editing, working with each other's ideas, and it's been really thrilling to see some of the pieces we've written together be revised and edited and published in places.

It's been a way for me to help students experience a full circle of brainstorming and free writing and revising and editing and publishing and it's a simple form too which I like.

[00:24:20] Bonni: You cautioned us though that this experience, we're not going to go into it and like, [laughs] "Okay, here we are. Everything's working perfectly." You used the word messy, could you talk a little bit about this messiness? Because I think it's important if we're ever going to try to start to

adopt some of these practices to recognize not only might you, but I think it wouldn't go so far as to say you absolutely will encounter messiness. Would you talk about maybe on a practical standpoint what that messiness has looked like specifically for you so we might know what we might encounter?

[00:24:53] Christopher: Yes. Often when I start my students writing on a Google Doc together, sometimes we'll do this live. We'll have it in a classroom and projected on the screen, and we'll be all writing together. That's probably the most potentially awkward. Even if we're learning remotely like we were doing at the beginning of the pandemic, there would often be a moment where we would all meet there on the Google doc at our class time so it was synchronous.

I would write a couple of questions for the day to get to see the discussion. Then there's that initial hesitation, who's going to write first? Then people are going to see me putting letters and words down and creating sentences and they might sound really dumb. It happens very slowly, and then fits and starts **[unintelligible 00:25:39]** see a student try to type out a whole sentence and then delete it all. Then within a few days or weeks, you'll see how students start to urge each other or say, "Oh, I really like that point. That relates to what I wanted to say."

You're having this unraveling, but cumulative conversation about whatever you've read for that day or sometimes I'll even just use an image or a short text and I'll paste it there first, and then we're talking about it together. It's really about giving the space and time for all the initial awkwardness and finding the class's unique chemistry, and really being patient because the temptation is to be like, "Oh, let's just move to something else. Let's try something that'll be more productive, more easy to just see that we've done something."

This is why I love 75-minute classes because to see how you can go from total whitespace and then chaos to something coherent and organized in 75 minutes is incredible and really fun to see as an instructor but also, I think really gratifying for the students to see what you can do together in a class of even up to 25 students. By the end, everyone will have said one thing or two things and built on each other's points.

[00:26:54] Bonni: I love hearing about the practical ways in which our values get to get lived out in our teaching and learning. You talked about that you would put a couple of questions there as prompts or you might put an image. Then you talked about what you described sort of sound like creating some norms as a class but you're not establishing them. You said they're coming out, emerging from this initial awkwardness of who's going to go.

You're reminding me about junior high dancing of who's going to ask you to dance kind of thing. I find this a lot with colleagues too. In fact, I would say I

don't know that I've really had a tremendous amount of success if someone is not accustomed to writing in more social ways, more collaborative ways. There tends to be not willing to go through the messy part, the awkward part and so it creates this divide that I wish wasn't there versus other colleagues completely comfortable.

Just go right in and everybody we've been doing some experimentation. We did this great, Two Truths and a Lie which is not necessarily my favorite activity to do, but they had a template in this mind map-making software that we wanted to test out to see so I was like, rather than make something myself I was like, okay. It really turned out to be such a fun activity, we learned so many random things about each other, it was delightful.

There were some of us that that was very comfortable. Go in, put your things in and then add your votes to others, and then there were others that really this was not a comfortable way of engaging. I think it's worth pressing on the messiness so I guess what would be what I would say. When it's over, the class ends in your book you mentioned having I think sometimes up to 50,000 words that's been produced. Has anything happened with that?

[00:28:44] Christopher: Well, often there's at least one or two pieces that we do something with. There will be okay, I'll give an example. For instance, we read Ross Gay's book called *The Book of Delights* which is a year catalog of different things that delighted him. He's writing as an observing poet, but these are pro-- he calls them essays. We read these, and then the students were like, "Let's try it, let's all do 100-word delight," and we do that.

Actually, we'd also been reading a book by Lauren Berlant and Kathleen Stewart called *The Hundreds* which came out around the same time. That book is a book written in little chunks of 100 words, and they were very, very rigorous about that. We jammed these two things together and we said, "Let's write the lights in a hundred." We did that live together on the Google Doc and then we really liked how it turned out. We spent the next couple of class times honing and revising and tightening and then reorganizing, and then we pitched it to a website called *The SA Daily* and I showed them the whole process of pitching it. The editor there said, "Yes, we love this. Let's do it." My students were like, "Wow, we're going to get published," and then later we got published. That was a great experience where we started with just

having read something, responding to it from our own experiences together. I think that's the really important part. It was collaborative from the get go. Then to see it get polished and published was, again, it's just showing this like this full circle of all the different things we do as humanities, thinkers, and writers, and scholars.

[00:30:24] Bonni: How does that work in terms of when you try to get it published and it's such a large amount of people that were part of the writing? Do you have a process you go through of whose names get used or is it one of those things that just is too many names to list or how has that worked practically?

[00:30:42] Christopher: Well, I often remind my students that if you do a science paper with one of my science colleagues, you will be listed right there. The professor will often be the first author and then there'll be a list of students or student assistants, and this isn't all that different. That's helpful for them to see that, "Oh, this is actually not a completely crazy way of publishing or writing, but it's in fact somewhat similar to what other disciplines do."

I always insist that my students are listed and everyone gets equal credit for it. People do different kinds of work, different styles of work. For some students, it might be about going in and doing that fine-tuning editing because that student's really good at that. Maybe they didn't produce as many words as some other students, but they're really good at going in and making precision changes. That's fine.

That's I guess another lesson for them is we all have different roles and we all find our different skills and things we're good at with respect to writing. That's also why I stayed away from, or really just hard swerved away from assigning really standardized papers because I really want my students instead of all writing the same thing and getting graded on the same thing, I want them to find their different skills and what they're good at in terms of writing and editing.

[00:31:58] Bonni: This is the time in the show where we each get to share our recommendations. I don't do this very often, but I actually would like to recommend an episode of Dave my husband's podcast which is called *Coaching for Leaders*. Specifically, it's an interview he did with someone named Jodi-Ann Burey.

The episode title is called *End Imposter Syndrome in Your Organization*. This is such a common thing for so many of us to feel imposter syndrome. It reminds me of a conversation I had way back about grit. That if you would just buck up and get yourself some grit, then you could break through all these systemic things [laughs] that have been actually designed to hold you back.

It's the same idea in terms of imposter syndrome, by the way, I'm not going to do her words justice, please forgive me for not being able to encapsulate this very well. I do hope people will go and listen, but it's the idea of rather than putting all the weight on ourselves, if we could just stop feeling this way, [laughs] then everything would be fine.

I'm just going to read a couple of the points that came out of that conversation Dave had with her that we tend to address the symptoms of imposter syndrome, but not the source, which again, it's more those systemic challenges. Those who experience imposter syndrome often feel like it's a death by a thousand paper cuts. I thought that was a really telling analogy. Then she talks a little bit about the ways in which leaders can help to address the issue of imposter syndrome instead of putting it back on the people that are experiencing these feelings.

It's a really good episode, lot's to think about, and again, I do think it actually goes back to earlier when we were talking about this Chris, is that thinking about things in individualistic terms, this is somehow the person's fault [laughs] how they're experiencing it versus more of a systemic challenge. That's my recommendation for today, and I know you have a couple of things to recommend as well.

[00:33:59] Christopher: Yes. It sounds like I should listen to that podcast. I have definitely told my students in probably every class that I've had imposter syndrome every day of my career, but I think even in admitting that it's I hope doing some of that work that you're talking about where you're demystifying that feeling so that then you can actually just, well, let's do the work.

Let's move through the imposter syndrome and actually just do the work together and then we'll, maybe not feel like that quite as bad. Thank you for that. I have two. I was really wrestling with this decision. The one quick thing I want to recommend is the newest Marvel show called *Hawkeye* which pairs Jeremy Runners, Clint Barton with Hailey Steinfeld, Kate Bishop, who's a college-age Archer who looks up to Clint Barton's Hawkeye, an Avenger, but the dynamic between them has been so much fun for me to watch. **[inaudible]**

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It's a very amusing show and it ties into all the other Marvel shows and movies. Although I think you could watch it without having seen any of it and it would be entertaining, but specifically because the dynamic between the college-age Kate Bishop and the very weary Gen Xer *Hawkeye* is fascinating to see as I feel myself playing out a similar dynamic in the classroom so much where my students are so smart and they amaze me and surprise me and impress me and yet they're also dealing with stuff that is exhausting for me to even think about dealing with as a college student.

The back and forth between the two main characters in *Hawkeye* has been weirdly illuminating for me as I think about the dynamic between me and a lot of my students these days. That's one recommendation *Hawkeye*. Then the other recommendation is I mentioned it earlier, Jenny Odell's book *How to Do*

Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy which I taught in my ecological thought honors seminar this past semester.

I didn't know if it was maybe too much, it's written by an artist and it's really about how to use this notion of doing nothing as a form of resistance. It's not really a self-help book, but it has a lot of strong takeaways that can be activated, and to see my students latch onto that book was really exciting and inspiring. I wanted to mention that book. It's a couple of years old now, but came out right before the pandemic and so I think it missed some people's radar.

[00:36:43] Bonni: Yes. That timing was fascinating [laughs] on that book for sure. Absolutely. I'm glad that you actually already answered the question I was going to ask about *Hawkeye*. I've been intrigued by some of the Marvel shows, but I always get this sense that I can't just step in any old place. It's nice to know that someone like me who hasn't engaged too much with that universe of characters and pots that I'd still be okay and be able to hang on.

[00:37:09] Christopher: I hadn't seen any of them in fact except maybe the first *Iron Man* ages ago, but I hadn't seen any of them. One time last winter my children, we were bored one afternoon, everyone home in quarantine and *WandaVision* had just come out. We were like, "Well, let's try this," and we started watching it. We had no idea what we were watching it, but we loved it.

We watched every episode and then by the end we were like, "Hey, I think there's this whole other thing we need to go back and watch." Then we spent the next couple months catching up on the whole Marvel comic universe and it was really fun to do together, so I had that experience with *WandaVision* and now I'm watching *Hawkeye* having seen everything else. I recommend.

[00:37:50] Bonni: Oh, I'm glad to know that because *WandaVision* is one of those I heard from so many people that it was confusing at first. I thought, "Well, my brain, just these days, it doesn't need any more confusion than it already has. [laughs] I don't think I'm going to be able to keep up with this, but that's good to know about that show as well that you could step into it as well.

I remember there was being something about whatever the premise was that the first thing was a shock to people who were really familiar with the Marvel universe. Well, thank you so much both for the gift that is your book. Thank you for the gift of your work. I have just been delighted getting to know you through your writing in this past, I guess it's been a month or so, and I'm just grateful to be connected with you. Thank you for coming on *Teaching In Higher Ed*.

[00:38:34] Christopher: Thank you so much for having me. I'm really delighted to about the podcast and thank you for reading the book.

[music]

[00:38:42] Bonni: Thanks once again to Christopher Schaberg for joining me for today's episode of *Teaching In Higher Ed*. If you'd like to see the show notes, you can check them out @teachinginhighered.com/398. You also can head on over to teachinginhighered.com/subscribe if you'd like to receive those show notes in your email box every week, the most recent episode, as well as some other recommendations that don't get shared on the podcast episodes, some quotable words, and other resources. Head on over to teachinginhighered.com/subscribe and thanks so much for listening and being a part of the *Teaching In Higher Ed* community. I'll see you next time.

[music]

[00:39:44] [END OF AUDIO]

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