

[00:00:00] Bonni Stachowiak: Today, on episode number 312 of the Teaching in Higher Ed podcast, David White joins me to discuss Digital Visitors and Residents.

[music]

[00:00:10] Production Credit: Produced by Innovate Learning, maximizing human potential.

[music]

[00:00:19] Bonni: Hello and 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.

[music]

David White is the Head of Digital Learning at the University of the Arts London. He researches online learning practices in both informal and formal contexts. David has led and been an expert consultant on numerous studies around the use of technology for learning in the UK higher education sector, and is the originator of the Visitors and Residents Paradigm, which describes how individuals engage with the web. Dave, welcome to Teaching in Higher Ed.

[00:01:16] David White: Thank you. It's good to be here.

[00:01:18] Bonni: It is rather surreal to be speaking with you. I've seen your wonderful videos, which I'll be linking to in the show notes today. I'd actually like to share about my experience showing your videos in one of my classes.

[00:01:33] David: Yes, excellent.

[00:01:35] Bonni: For people are not familiar, there is a video where Dave introduces the model of Visitors and Residents, which we'll be exploring today. Since you can't see it, you have the picture. It's really, really well produced and at various times he's swinging on a swing, and he's fixing the bike, or at least [laughs] tinkering with the bike, Where you trying to fix it, Dave. [laughs]

[00:01:55] David: Yes, kind of. Well, I don't know. That was my bike. Hey, little authenticity here.

[00:02:01] Bonni: When I begin this class, it's a leadership and technology class, I have just found there's so much anxiety about it. Sometimes candidly, Dave, there's some anger, not wanting to take a class about technology, not wanting to face their fears that they have. There's so much of a thing around. I will often see people who are feeling very apprehensive, "I'm too old for this stuff. I can't learn this stuff."

There's a lot of fixed mindset, and so I often will introduce your model very early on to try to overcome some of that. It's a seven-minute video. Then, I also have them watch a longer version where you go into this mapping exercise, which I know we'll talk about. Anyway, so they really get to know you a little bit, and it cracks me up because this most recent time that I had them watched it before they came in person with me, [chuckles] they were describing their feelings watching you, and it made me laugh so hard because one of them was talking about you getting back on the swing, and they're like, "Get off that swing, brother."

[laughter]

It was just so delightful that we could explore this mindset that so many of us have. It really depresses me sometimes, because these people are educators. When they look and I can hold up a mirror, and you help us hold that mirror up, a lot of us have

bought into this myth that we either have it or we don't. We either-- This elusive thing called technology. It's a mystery to us, and either we have it or we don't.

Tell me about what your early memories are with watching people, or your first early observations around this model, which we should say was originally coined by Prensky. Talk a little bit about Marc Prensky and how you first came into all of this.

[00:03:54] David: Yes, so Marc Prensky came up with the idea of digital natives and digital immigrants around about the year 2000. That became extremely popular. I think one of the reasons it was extremely popular, it's a mirror of what you're saying about those people in the sessions that you mentioned, which was that people liked the idea that the new generation gap, it was a whole generation of people that were good with technology, but the older folks were just somehow fundamentally not as good with technology, and that was always going to be the case.

Quite a long time, about a decade ago, I did a relatively simple piece of research, where I went around and interviewed face-to-face generally, students that are taking our online distance school, fully online distance courses through the University of Oxford. Through those interviews I found that the people that were into things like Facebook and social media weren't necessary into them because they were super high tech and super skilled with technology.

They were into them because they could see the relevance for their lives, they had a motivation to engage, it was a way that they enjoyed connecting to people. Similarly, the people who weren't into those technologies who said, "I think Facebook is ridiculous." Back in a day, people would say, "It's just a ... this parading in front of the whole bunch of strangers."

The reason they weren't into that mode of technology wasn't because they were too stupid to do it, it was because they couldn't see the reason why they need to. This is where I came up with colleagues', A response to Frensky's natives and immigrants idea, which was based around motivation to engage rather than a

centralized generational difference, and it was based not on your skill with technology.

A really good example is, what I find is if somebody's grandchildren move from the UK to Australia, then those grandparents suddenly get really good at using Skype, because they've got a motivation to do it. Suddenly, a lot of those technical barriers they seem to get past, and they asked for help with whatever it might be. Fundamentally, for me, it's about motivation to engage.

I came up with this continuum that at the one end had this idea of visiting the web, and just getting jobs done, and at the other end had the idea of residing, being resident on the web, living out part of your life online, and a whole sliding scale in between, which just seems like a more constructive and more positive way of thinking about how we relate to the network, how we connect with each other.

[00:06:44] Bonni: I have found it to be such a relief when people learn about it because it does help overcome some of those myths, but also just to have a different language that doesn't involve, like you said, a commentary on one's intelligence or one's skill. There seems to be so much shame in the other model. I'd also like us to look a little bit too about the other end of it.

On one hand, you might have people who are of the older generations like myself and saying, "We can't do this stuff." There's some kind of lock on it, but then, you also have the assumption that today's younger generations have it all already. Would you speak a bit about your experience in assessing whether or not our younger people are just somehow naturally skilled at this digital literacies?

[00:07:35] David: Well, it's interesting that you use the term digital literacies there, because I think what I'd say is that the same applies is that younger folk will get involved with technology that they see is relevant to their lives and might be really, really fluent in it, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they've got a broad range of digital literacies.

When they come to say scholarly work or education, they could be brilliant on social media, whatever you think brilliant might mean, but it doesn't necessarily

mean they can do things like pretty ... they evaluate information, navigate dialog and discussion online. It doesn't necessarily mean that they're comfortable with forms of digital identity that go beyond their social circle, for example.

I think in education sometimes we misidentify those things. I think historically, we see the young people arriving in our institutions and they seem to have, quite often, they appear to have better phones and laptops than we do, and they seem to have these fluencies that perhaps we can't exactly tap into. It's not to do with how good they are with the technology. It's to do more with the way that they perhaps socialize in different ways, or the way that their notions of what it means to be authentic might be different from us.

Generations do change in that sense. I think the problem we've had is that we've misidentified those differences as forms of literacy, and that meant that there was this long period of time where we left a lot of students out in the cold, because we assumed-- I mean a really blunt way of putting it, is in some sense we assumed if they had a lot of Facebook friends that they be brilliant at doing online research, that's effectively what happened. It sounds so ridiculous to say it out loud, but that was what was happening.

What I find with students in my own institution, and more broadly, is actually they're really anxious about a lot of these things. They're very well aware of what they don't know and what they know they don't know as well, if you like. It's important to not confuse ownership of technology and social fluency with the kind of literacies that we hope to equip students with, so that they can really navigate their studies and their education.

[00:10:01] Bonni: You're really addressing trying to help people comprehend the breadth and depth of digital literacies. We've just become so myopic on the social sharing or the social media lens. What tools or what tool do you use to help people broaden their view of all the kinds of things we might want to be building our own literacies on and our students?

[00:10:27] David: Yes, so this is where I developed the visitor and residents mapping process or activity, which is a really simple activity. I'm sure you'll put links in to point people at it. It is something that anybody can do with their students or you can do it with fellow members of staff, and it helps you to very quickly and easily create a map of the things that you engage with online, and the way that you use technology.

It's got the visitor and residents continuum horizontally, and the vertical axis goes normally from personal to institutional, or for students it might go from personal to their course because context becomes really important. What you end up with, is a map with lots of different squares on with some names of different technologies in it. It just helps you to visualize the way that you engage online across the park, and you can start to see patterns in it.

I think one of the most interesting things is that it almost always comes out with for me because it's generally a paper-based exercise, where some people do it online as well. One of the things that comes out of is that people look at each other's maps and they see the same technology mapped to different parts of the map, because what's happening is, different people are engaging with the same technology in different ways.

The reason for this is that what's important is our practice in those technologies. The way that we use those technologies, our expectations of what we're trying to achieve when we engage with those technologies actually is the deciding factor on where it goes on the map. For example, Facebook can end up almost anywhere on people's maps, and then you get these really interesting discussions arising where people go, "Well, why have you put that there?"

They'll go, "Well, because obviously this is for this." You go, "Well, I don't think it's for that, I think it's for this." Then, people really start to talk about how they go about using the digital environment and why they use these in certain way. All of that just comes out into the room and you can have a really, really useful discussion, because the map creates a vehicle or an object for people to talk around.

I always say that the conversation that the map encourages is almost more important than the map itself. It's very, very difficult to start a conversation by saying, "Let's talk about digital", because people just freeze, because it's too big, nobody really knows what it means. Everything stops, so everybody talks across purposes, but with the maps, it's just enough of a shared territory, if you like, for all of these stories to appear in the room.

A really great one's Wikipedia. Some people have mapped Wikipedia, some people won't. In any educational setting that always starts off a really, really interesting discussion about almost like the philosophy of people's approach to teaching and learning. Things like that start to happen when people do the mapping process. I think that I've certainly found that useful in my work, and I know other people use it as well.

[00:13:37] Bonni: Well, and Wikipedia is an interesting example too because I know you know this, but people listening may not realize the extent to which some people are using Wikipedia in their pedagogy. Having students actually become editors on Wikipedia and contributing to the dialogue and editing of posts up there. The one that I can think of most recently as an effort to better document the history of women in STEM fields and that being a big initiative. A lot of people don't think about the participatory nature of Wikipedia. They see it more as, an in your model being visitors and going and looking things up.

[00:14:18] David: Yes, absolutely. That can happen with other platforms as well. YouTube would be a good example, so you might contribute through comments, you might contribute through posting videos. Things like Twitter and different forms of social media are really interesting from that point of view as well. I know a lot of students will do what I call elegant lurking, which is where they will join something like Twitter or Instagram and they'll connect to people that they see as relevant to their studies and that they're just interested in. They'll really engage with what's going on, but they won't necessarily post or say anything.

In that sense, they're going to be mapping towards the visitor end of the continuum. Whereas other students might get into those environments and get the

confidence to start contributing to that dialogue, into that discourse within that field, within that network. They're going to be mapping towards a more of the resident end of the continuum.

I think your points are really important one about highlighting that there are these participatory opportunities and that there are large portions of the web that we engage in, where there is that opportunity to have a voice and develop a voice. For me, that's a large part of what the process of education is about, it's about developing that voice. As educators scaffolding students to the point where they feel confident in expressing themselves and getting involved in those conversations.

[00:15:48] Bonni: You used the word "confidence", and one of the things that I've noticed in, if we can release ourselves from the binary way of viewing digital literacies of immigrants and natives, and if we can transition into residents and visitors, I just see there being so much less shame there. We can just name these things. I use this, I'm a lurker, I don't leave a social trace in this particular tool and it's describing our behavior, instead of judging our behaviors online.

I have found that by doing that, it does release some people to grow that confidence and to then begin to want to share and engage. For others, there may very well be absolute valid reasons. "Valid" I'm putting in air quotes on podcasting world. [chuckles]

[00:16:40] David: Okay, I get it.

[00:16:42] Bonni: Because who am I to say what's valid and what's not? I try to put myself in their situation and say, "Yes, I don't know that I'd be too keen on sharing online in that particular context either." We can move away from that. To me, I have found that there's less unlearning then that has to happen. Unlearning it's time-consuming and it's difficult.

This, just by putting a new lens on it, we can say-- The other thing I wanted to mention is that you talked about relevance. I have also found that rather than trying to cram a lot of digital literacies into a course, I mentioned this leadership and technology class, I used to have them, there was a textbook before in the class,

and then, they would blog about that textbook and they would tweet about that textbook and what we were learning.

Today, all these years later I've learned, no, just have them blog about something that's of interest and sometimes it's a humorous blog. One woman, a couple of cohorts again blogged about her dog, Dr. Lizzy, the entire blog was all this character of the dog, [chuckles] it was so fun. This time I'm teaching a class and they all are passionate about this thing called an instant pot. I don't know if you're familiar with that, a pressure cooker.

[00:17:57] David: Yes, pressure cooker.

[00:17:58] Bonni: They've taken all the features of a pressure cooker and they've developed essays, personal essays about leadership qualities mapped to the features of a pressure cooker, [chuckles] and this because it also can be a slow cooker. There's the pressure release valve and all these various things. Then, just by me allowing them to focus on the things that are most relevant to them, I just watched the digital literacies emerge out of relevance instead of out of me assigning it.

As an example, the other night we do work in Google Docs and they were there and someone said, "I am having trouble finding things." As before our very eyes, we're on Zoom and the person sharing her screen. I can see someone else's going in and reorganizing all the documents because people are having trouble finding stuff. Then, someone else is showing, "Oh, here's how you can make comments" "Oh, here's how you can suggest edits."

I thought, "Oh my goodness", this is unfortunately taken me years to learn some of these things, but that focus on the relevance to me can provide that motivation that you described to engage in these ways that may be challenging for them. Have you seen similar things in your research and also in your teaching?

[00:19:12] David: Yes, absolutely. I think what you're describing there is a really important distinction because the motivation to engage in blogging is not to learn the blogging platform. The motivation to engage is because you've got something

you want to say. The practice of blogging is actually the practice of reflective writing that happens to be in a blog.

Often with technology, we accidentally switched those things around. Another example would be if you wanted to get into something like Twitter, you could describe to somebody how Twitter functions. You could describe what an apt reply was, and how to follow someone and what a direct message was. That's not the practice of Twitter. The practice of Twitter is the posting and the conversations and the dialogue, and the thinking that happens within that network.

The real motivation isn't to learn the platform. The real motivation is in getting excited about the practice that the platform supports. It sounds like a kind of relatively nuanced difference, but it makes a huge difference. What you've done with your students there is you switched that round, you given them a motivation to engage, and suddenly, there's as you say, that relevance.

What happens is they're so motivated to do that reflective and creative writing that learning how to use the blog is really not that big a deal, because you've given it a really, really positive context, which is, I need to know how to get this stuff out there because I want people to read it and I want to connect with other people through it. I think that's very powerful, and it's spotting that difference that I'm describing, twisting it round and then finding ways to teach, to take advantage of that, which I think is really, really important.

Your example about Wikipedia is the same as well. Once people find it, they can contribute to knowledge, that gets a lot of people really excited. Once they find that actually I'm an authentic person in the world, I've got as much right to add to this huge fund of knowledge as anybody else, especially, in things that I'm excited and engaged with. Then, actually learning the intricacies of how to edit an article and all of those various sort of rules around how you engage with Wikipedia, then becomes almost subordinated to the motivation to get your stuff out there and get involved.

[00:21:49] Bonni: I'm becoming so convinced that the two things we should be focusing on at the center of our teaching are helping people to expand our curiosity, and also helping them to expand our collective imagination. I'm wondering if you can fit that into your own work of how you go about helping people expand what's possible and helping them become more curious. So much of the time we have our curiosity deadened in parts of the educational process to reinvigorate that, and of course, the digital flows throughout this.

[00:22:28] David: Absolutely. A personal story for me is I started blogging quite sensitively a long time ago. I wrote a blog post about a slightly wonky piece of research that I'd done, that was nevertheless fairly novel. Two weeks later I was sat in the audience in a conference and the keynote speaker had included my blog post in his talk, and gave a shout out to me.

Suddenly, everything became so real. My work was part of the fabric of this kind of discipline area. I wasn't like a legitimate participant in an actual thing. I found that incredibly compelling. The way I look at it is, as educators-- One of my favorite phrases, I think it comes from George Siemens actually, is that teachers are the arbiter of connections. I really love that phrase.

For me, that's what education is about. It's encouraging people to make connections. Through the digital, we can express the connections we've made as well. The question in hand for us as educators is, how can we facilitate, nurture, scaffold our students to the point at which they're prepared to talk about the connections they're making, and by talking about, that might be posting in social media, might be writing a blog, it might be making video, it might be talking in the room.

How can we encourage people to get those thoughts out into the room and start to become part of the dialogue in a back and forth of what's going on, because that's where it gets really exciting, and that's where people get genuinely inspired.

[00:24:16] Bonni: We've looked at your model of residents and visitors. You also spoke about context being important between the personal and the professional.

Would you give a few more examples of that importance of context, the personal and professional and what you've seen as you've witnessed other people drawing their maps? Of course, I'm sure you've drawn multiple, multiple versions of your own.

[00:24:37] David: Absolutely, I think the key thing that I found through the idea of introducing context was that a set of practices or literacies that exist in one context don't necessarily easily translate over to another context. The important one in that was perhaps, maybe, I don't know, six or seven years ago, around about that time, a lot of universities for example, would say things like, "Well, we're going to start a social media-like platform for the university." They'd start it and nobody would necessarily get involved with it.

It's because students didn't want to translate that very social practice of being in social media into an institutional space. When it went from the social to the institutional, it killed it on the way across, if you see what I mean. We have to be very, very sensitive to that. I think in some ways it's misreading of that situation that has perpetuated the digital natives and digital immigrants idea, because it's easy for us to say, "Well, the students seem very, very comfortable just talking about anything social media, so what we're going to do as part of this class is we're going to get them to all sign up for this social media platform, and then we're going to have a big chat about something to do with the course," and it doesn't work or it's very difficult to make it work. A lot of it's to do with identity.

You can't go too far wrong coming back to identity. It's because the students are confident in their own personal identity and within their own personal social networks, but they're not necessarily confident in their scholarly or educational identity, and they don't necessarily have those kinds of connections with that kind of fellow students in the same way and haven't built them up in the same way.

Perhaps, the trust isn't there. It's the same as it's always been in that sense. Nobody necessarily wants to talk first in case they look stupid, for example. That's why it's really, really important just to cross-check the context before attempting an approach to teaching and learning, because the practices, as I say, don't necessarily kind of copy and paste from one context to another.

[00:26:53] Bonni: As this model has gone out into the world, I'm curious, what have been some surprises for you where someone else says they referenced your work, helped you put even a new lens on it you hadn't seen was there before, or just a surprise of how people have used the tool or a surprise that seen some people's maps as they share them with people on various social media?

[00:27:15] David: That's a great question. It's a funny thing because I feel like the idea's grown up and left home and it wanders around the world and occasionally I bump into it and I go, "Oh, you've become this thing", which I really love. I'm a real advocate for that kind of open way of working. It's been great seeing that happen. I think one of the most surprising and rewarding uses of it that comes to mind is it's used quite extensively in a UK institution around social work. The reason for that is it's very much around the residents' idea.

A social worker in the UK will support people in various ways as they go through life, whether it's to do with work or with life challenges they might have. What this person had said was, well, we need to acknowledge that people live as much online these days as they do in the physical world, so if we're going to be effective social workers, we need to understand how people are living out their lives online, so that we can support them in that too.

They've taken the visitor and residents' idea and the mapping and they've extended it and they've shaped it and they use it with social workers, help tune them into that idea that actually the digital environment is as much where people live as the physical environment. We need to come to an understanding of it without being terrified of it. That was so rewarding to see that because you start with an idea that seems quite conceptual, and then, it ends up supporting people that are going into a profession that very, very directly supports people in very, very real ways.

[00:28:58] Bonni: I'm thinking about, I have a family member who is sadly very, very far down the road of Alzheimer's and dementia, but earlier in the road, just even trying to find a telephone that she would be able to operate if she needed to

reach someone is really quite a challenge. I'm imagining all of these ways that we can help people if we think about putting the lens on it.

I'm also contrasting that with a story someone in my current class shared about the way-- She was on her map, FaceTime was on her map, and she shared about her mother who's 95 years old and lives in Mexico and they don't ever get to see each other. She doesn't get to see her grandkids in person, but, boy, do they ever use the heck out of that phone and just that lens of being able to see ways we can help other people navigate their life. That sounds like such a powerful use. That must've been very inspiring for you to know that it's extended like that.

[00:29:51] David: It was really great to see that. Just thinking about your examples there, it is so easy for us these days to think of the digital environment as you know polarized and aggressive and not inclusive and an unfriendly place. What's actually happened is we've become so normalized to the ways that we engage online, that it's part of the direct fabric of our lives and a really positive. We become so normalized, that we forget they exist. That's why it's so great to hear about that FaceTime example, because would that have come out into the room as a practice and unless you had done the mapping process, because it's just part of somebody's lives.

It's interesting to me to keep an eye on the things that people don't map because they've forgotten that they do them. Quite often people won't map Google search. Quite often people won't map Netflix as partly because they forget it's the internet and online. That really shows you where these practices are so useful and so good at connecting us with other people, that they've disappeared into use, they've become transparent to us. Sometimes it's good to reflect back on that and bring them back them into the room. Otherwise, we only ever seen the challenging stuff.

[00:31:12] Bonni: An example of that in my own life is I had never mapped podcasting on my map, [chuckles] and of course-

[00:31:19] David: That's ironic, isn't it?

[00:31:20] Bonni: -my husband has a podcast. I have a podcast. We also listen to podcasts pretty much every single day for at least an hour every single day, but yet, not on the map because it's so close, I can't see it.

[00:31:32] David: I think if you're in a room full of people mapping, then, a really fun thing that happens is that people will do the initial version of a map, and then I'll start talking about something else. You can see people, as I'm talking or as people are looking at each other's maps, just sneakily, you can think, "Oh, yes that," and they'll add another thing to it. Then they'll add another thing to it.

By the end of the session, there's about twice as much on it, at that point halfway through where they thought they'd finished, because we're so close to this stuff, often, we can't reflect on it. The mapping and the visualizing this idea just helps gives it just enough sort of a distance and a perspective to help us think about it.

[00:32:17] Bonni: This is the time in the show where we each get to share our recommendations, and mine are actually both things that you had shared with me. [chuckles] I'm going to need your help, actually, because I want to hear about this first one that digital creative attributes framework. I went to it after you shared it with me and was completely enthralled with the use. It reminded me of the Ireland digital literacies.

I'll link to that too in the show notes just so people can know what I'm talking about. It looks like a subway map. I find it a helpful way of showing the wide expanse of digital literacies and the different ways you might travel to communicate, to collaborate, et cetera. It reminded me a little bit of that, but of course, this is different. Would you talk a bit about the background, how it came into being, and how we might use it as educators?

[00:33:05] David: Yes, absolutely. Well, at my institution, the University of the Arts London, we developed this creative attributes framework, which is a version of a graduate attributes framework, but with a creative twist. These are the attributes that we are keen that students develop throughout their course, which might not

be captured through the fact that they've been awarded a degree or standard forms of assessment.

It's got things like proactivity, agility, resilience, these words in it. What we did was we added digital practices to each of those nine areas in that creative attributes framework. What you've got there is a list of digital practices, which, if you look at them, they don't ever mention a specific technology. Those example are, seeking out and using appropriate digital technologies or becoming active part of an online community or network, or critically evaluating sources, or being able to respond constructively to comments that you might get online, these kinds of things.

I think it's really helped us at my institution to think about how we can design curriculum that-- We're working in a particular discipline area. Also, if that curriculum involves different forms of digital engagement, digital technologies, maybe digital collaboration, then we can talk to the students about the practices, about these digital creative attribute practices that they might be developing as part of doing what they're doing.

You could say that developing these practices is fundamental to navigating your way through a piece of curriculum. You could say developing these digital creative attributes is a side effect of sincerely engaging in a piece of curriculum. The point is that they give us this shared language around digital, which really helps us to design the way that we teach and also a really useful point to be able to talk around with students and with staff as well.

I think they've helped in that regard. Certainly in my institution, they're out there online. They're available for anybody to use, if you wanted to incorporate them into your work as well.

[00:35:36] Bonni: I realize my next question is rather myopic, but I can't resist before I go on to my next recommendation. This is within the digital creative attributes framework. I really appreciated your distinction between digital tools and digital

spaces. I think that might be helpful for our listeners. Would you describe how you distinguish those two things from one another?

[00:35:59] David: Okay. Yes. This resonates back with the visitor and residence idea again, which is that sometimes when we're engaging with digital technologies, we're doing it as if that digital technology was a tool. By tool, I mean it's something that will help you get a specific task done. It's quite instrumental. You've probably decided what you want to achieve.

Here's a really simple example. I want to find a piece of information. I'm going to go to search. I'm going to type it in, I'm going to find it. That's a good example of approaching the web, if you like, in that tool mindset. Whereas the digital space is anything where people are co-present with each other. Your motivation to go online is like a resident motivation. You're going online to be co-present with people, to express yourself, to connect with other people. The obvious example of that is social media.

Although it doesn't have to be, some people would use email that way as well. Some people use email really socially. Some people use email as a tool. A good example of the difference or where the difference can occur, I find is in something like Google Docs. If I'm working on a Google Doc on my own, it's a tool. It's a word processor. If a second person or a third person appears and starts co-editing that document with me, then suddenly it becomes a place.

It's a location, where we're writing, and how I feel about what I'm doing, and how I feel in some sense it's in the same space as those people is what shifts for me. It is a really big change. I think you can feel it. You can feel that moment where something moves from a tool to a space. I think it's really important to make that distinction because a lot of what our students are doing is navigating online spaces, and it's really helpful to think about that side of it.

If we only think of the digital as a massive, great big untidy toolbox, I think we miss a lot of opportunities. Also, we miss where we need to equip our students with certain

literacies and attributes, as the things that are in the digital creative attributes framework.

[00:38:21] Bonni: I treasure those times when I've seen the cognition of what's possible when you transition from a tool over to a space, and that's really fun to see. I also realize, for some people, it's a little disconcerting at first, like, "I'm not used to this. This is very outside of what I'm typically comfortable working in," but then when they see the potential, it's really fun. I feel like I just recently got to witness that in the last week, and it's so great.

[00:38:47] David: It's worth saying as well. Generally speaking, education is something that we do in private, or on our own, or separately. Even if we're in a lecture there together, somehow we're engaging with it separately. This idea of being in this space, as being co-present, and working collaboratively or communally, that's a huge change. It's a huge change for a lot of people who are teaching, and it's a huge change for a lot of students as well.

I especially find this for students that perhaps coming out of the UK school system and into UK universities, that it's worth remembering that that's a massive shifting mode. Even though we recognize it as something really positive, it can be almost shocking for people to suddenly find themselves in that situation. That's where teaching comes in.

[00:39:40] Bonni: Even good changes can still be stressful. Not all stress is bad, and so just to recognize the stress inherent in that.

[00:39:47] David: Yes, absolutely.

[00:39:49] Bonni: The second thing I'd like to recommend, I'll just mention quickly, I hope people will go over to your blog post called Explicit Education. Again, I'll link to that in the show notes and in the recommendations. What I appreciate about this post is just your emphasis on transparency, and that being the centerpiece. You look at things like the model of our university and how relevant it is, and some anxiety around technology. It's just a great read, very thought provoking. I feel like

this just might have to be an excuse to have you back sometime [laughs] because there's so we can talk about.

[00:40:23] David: Well, I'd love to come back and talk about that.

[00:40:26] Bonni: You gave me such a hard challenge to say these things we could potentially talk about, and I was like a kid in a candy store. I couldn't stop.
[chuckles]

[00:40:34] David: Well, I'm going to take that compliment.

[00:40:36] Bonni: Very much. All right. I'm going to pass it over to you, Dave, for your recommendations.

[00:40:41] David: Okay. In a complete contrast, my recommendation, which really I've just picked up in about 150 pages into is a book called *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism* and it's by Shoshana Zuboff. I hope I'm pronouncing that correctly. The reason that I'm recommending it is, because it's a book that explains in some detail, but in a very engaging style, how the game has changed, how the rules have shifted, and how the big corporations like Google, Facebook, to a certain extent Apple, are interested in us because they want to gather what Zuboff calls behavioral surplus, which is essentially gather enough data on us.

They can predict what we might like, what our actions might be in future, whether we're going to click on certain things, which is a very salable item. The reason that I mentioned it is not to spread doom and gloom, but because I firmly believe that it's part of our responsibility to educate our students in the character of the digital environment along these lines. That doesn't mean that we have to suddenly become despondent about that.

I think what it means is that it gives us an opportunity to equip our students to make critical decisions about that environment. We can't really not be in the digital environment these days, but we can be aware of what's going on, and then, make certain choices. It's a term we use a lot in my institution, which is agency, the idea of personal agency. My view would be the actually, quite a lot of education needs

to be considering the motivations, if you like to use that term, again, of the digital environment that we are living within to a certain extent.

I think you can do that without necessarily being, as I say, like a naysayer about it. I don't think it's possible to talk about digital identity, digital literacies, and all of these things without being honest about the nature of that environment that these things take place in. Also, where our students spend a lot of their time, an awful lot of their time. Where spend an awful lot of their time. That's my recommendation. As I say, I'm just getting into it, but I found it it's really equipping me with the language I need to talk about this really difficult subject in a way that's actually very constructive.

[00:43:16] Bonni: I'm so glad to hear you mentioned that one. It's been on my to-read list for too long, and you're motivating me to want to dig it up and [chuckles] move it closer to the top. Dave, it's been such an honor to get to talk to you. I've admired your work for so long and have just taken in everything I could get my hands on, as far as what you've had to share.

I'm so excited for people to get to hear this episode and also to access in the show notes, the links with all the resources that we've talked about today. Thank you so much for your time and just sharing your expertise.

[00:43:46] David: Well, thank you for having me on and giving me an opportunity to talk about all this stuff. It's been great.

[music]

[00:43:52] Bonni: Thanks once again to David White for joining me on today's episode, and for all the great information about your residents and visitors model and everything else I learned so much and it was really an honor to talk with you. Thanks to all of you for listening. If you would like to get the show notes for today's episode, you can go over to teachinginhighered.com.

They also are visible in most, if not all of the podcast players, so you can tap on the links straight from your player. If you want to not have to remember to go over to access those links, you also are welcome to sign up for the weekly update. That's at

teachinginhighered.com/subscribe. Thanks so much for listening, and we'll see you next time on Teaching in Higher Ed.

[music]

[00:44:45] [END OF AUDIO]

The transcript of this episode has been made possible through a financial contribution by the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE). ACUE is on a mission to ensure student success through quality instruction. In partnership with institutions of higher education nationwide, ACUE supports and credentials faculty members in the use of evidence-based teaching practices that drive student engagement, retention, and learning.

Teaching in Higher Ed transcripts are created using a combination of an automated transcription service and human beings. This text likely will not represent the precise, word-for-word conversation that was had. The accuracy of the transcripts will vary. The authoritative record of the Teaching in Higher Ed podcasts is contained in the audio file.