

Bonni: [00:00:00] On today's episode number 87 I get the honor of talking with Sean Michael Morris about what the best digital teachers do.

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

Bonni: [00:00:21] Welcome to this episode of Teaching in Higher Ed. This is the space where we explore the art and science of being more effective at facilitating learning. We also share ways to increase our personal productivity approaches so we can have more peace in our lives and be even more present for our students.

Bonni: [00:00:49] It's always fun when you find someone on Twitter that with every tweet makes you think more critically about what you do in today's guest fits that category perfectly. I'm welcoming today Sean Michael Morris, he is a digital teacher and pedagogue and his experience is in the Networked learning mooks digital composition and publishing collaboration and editing.

Bonni: [00:01:13] He's been in Digital Teaching and Learning for 15 years and has been profoundly influenced by the philosophy of Paulo Freire and so many of the contemporary analogues to him the work of Howard Rheingold, Kathy Davidson (who's a former guest of Teaching in Higher Ed), Dave Cormier and Jesse Stommel (who's also been on Teaching in Higher Ed before). And I'm I'm just absolutely thrilled to have the opportunity to be challenged by him and to get to expose so many of you to his work.

Bonni: [00:01:47] So welcome to the show.

Sean: [00:01:49] Thanks. Thanks for having me on.

Bonni: [00:01:51] Well I talked a little bit about your bio and I got it off of your blog as you know and it speaks so well to who see you as just your whole person.

But I know that there's a little bit behind that that I didn't share. Could you share a little bit about your professional endeavors.

Sean: [00:02:06] I'm currently an instructional designer in the office of the provost at Middlebury College. I work with Amy Collier there. And you spoke with Amy in the past and that it's a real privilege to have that to be in that position. I've actually done instructional design for several years. I started it as an instructional designer. I was actually in a certain designer before I was a teacher and I was in the corporate world.

Sean: [00:02:27] That was about oh gosh 14 15 years ago something like that and then started actually doing teaching work and kind of have been all over the place for the last 15 years in education and and in and around education right before actually coming to Middlebury. I was with Instructure, the makers of Canvas LMS. I was there as an editor.

Bonni: [00:02:50] I am learning all this about you. I actually I grew up as a corporate training person myself I didn't know we had that in common. Yeah and I didn't know about the Canvas thing either I somehow missed that and probably got it and then it went out of my mind that's the more likely.

Sean: [00:03:04] But interestingly in my time during canvas and as as a company I have only really good things to say about that structure. But during my time there I had to be a little bit more careful in terms of my public persona because I was now I could potentially be seen as representative of the company. So I didn't actually write as much and I didn't do quite as many sort of I don't know radical educator things during that time.

Sean: [00:03:28] So just in January I switched over and started in Middlebury and now I'm out there again during my what I was doing before.

Bonni: [00:03:36] In the intro which you won't hear until this actually airs I talked about just how much did you make me think all the time and I didn't say this in the intro but I'll tell you now it makes me angry. You mean you make me slow down and go Oh you mean they can't just be lazy and start using all these tools without really thinking critically about what's behind them so it's you know you make me think it's a good thing you're a teacher for me without necessarily being paid for it in this particular instance. Are tremendous.

Sean: [00:04:00] Very sweet actually. I've been working with digital pedagogy since almost since the beginning and it's hard to know what sort of influence we're having.

Sean: [00:04:09] It's hard to know who we're reaching and in what way it's we're reaching anybody. It's always surprising to run into somebody who's like you say you know in your e-mail to me you said you've been following me for some time and it's like really I didn't really what I've been following. What do you know about me.

Bonni: [00:04:23] Yeah. When we got on the phone I told you that I have been following you and I thought you had moved because in January I did notice that you took the role there at Middlebury and so you are working remotely.

Bonni: [00:04:34] Can you share a little bit about what it is like to coach some of the faculty that you coach and helping them design their courses and maybe maybe even kind of how you approach that in terms of the tools you use and the approach.

Sean: [00:04:46] Sure yeah. And at Middlebury. Actually a lot of the faculty that I'm working with are also remote because I'm working with people that there are Monnerie campus and then also in the language schools and those folks are are sort of scattered all over the place.

Sean: [00:05:00] In terms of actually just communication. It's just sort of finding the right tools for talking back and forth and actually collaborating in certain ways. One of the things that actually prepared me for that is working with higher pedagogy because it's Hybrid Pedagogy as you may know we started out with with staff that were in every time zone in the country and now we have people who are in Egypt and people who are New England who are working on the editorial staff there too so trying to figure out times when everyone can talk at the same time or you know you just have to be very creative in terms of the way that you communicate to try to make collaboration work.

Bonni: [00:05:31] Are there any tools you can mention that work well to find good times that people can get together. Anything that you like to use.

Sean: [00:05:37] Yeah sure. I prefer to card and used to use Google Hangouts every almost every week I think we would have a meeting and Google Hangout meeting with editorial staff. I tend to use whatever someone else is comfortable

with. So Jesse I text back and forth all the time with some people at Middlebury there's know go like e-mail.

Sean: [00:05:54] There are still people who like e-mail which is I think is charming and then video video is great. I like Skype. I was just introduced to appear in which is really nice video interface. Google Hangout to find that sort of thing. It's good though because you're having a face to sort of ground the voice. It's more whole person experience.

Bonni: [00:06:14] I agree. You were sharing that. Jesse we had been over video it's not record the video we record the audio but it really is did you get the sense of the person then you get to see their animals too it really. My husband is allergic so I have to just live vicariously through your animals and Jesse's animals that's all.

Sean: [00:06:34] Well that's an interesting thing too is there's something very personal and personal about working from home.

Sean: [00:06:40] I mean when I work in my home office you know you'll see my 20 year old wander by in the background and you'll see my dogs or you'll hear them bark. Somebody coming which is actually a fair warning that they may bark during this recording.

Sean: [00:06:51] So there is something you can't get too professional because there's always going to be something that breaks down that professional facade. I've been working remotely from home for the better part of 15 years.

Bonni: [00:07:05] I was teaching in a doctoral program and we have an eight week course and there's just a few times we get to get together live over some sort of synchronous video tool. And it broke down. The tool we were using stopped working and I've actually shared about this on the podcast before because we ended up using my husband's zoom account and I really ended up liking zoom a lot.

Bonni: [00:07:28] The quality of videos profound and how easy it was. Everybody shifted over. It wasn't that I needed to explain anything. It just all worked.

Bonni: [00:07:36] But at any rate while it was broken down I panicked and texted my dad and he came in and he's taking care of our two small children. So you know when you don't leave a bad time one and a half year old by and the two years older son by themselves you just don't do that.

Bonni: [00:07:52] If you'd like to have your walls remain clean etc. and some they were they were in the background and I was a little embarrassed because I want to be professional and I want to be respectful of their time and I don't want them to think that that that that is not the case and they were hysterical. They loved it and they said oh can we say would you please pull them up to the camera can we see them.

Bonni: [00:08:13] And then one of them even took a picture of it a little screen shot and sent it to me later and I thought wow that was that was so it really was kind of fun.

Bonni: [00:08:21] Like you say just allowing yourself to be a little bit transparent and let people see in who you are. It can build a lot of trust and be really valuable to them.

Sean: [00:08:29] Yeah. Prior to that structure I worked for the Service Employees International Union helping them with their digital campaign for organizing adjunct teachers and one of the things that I did was actually organize on air google hangouts with with some people who had who in social justice circles and that sort of thing who wanted to be able to speak to this cause.

Sean: [00:08:49] And the most wonderful part of it was the fact that most of these people were at home when they were doing when they were doing these things like Google Hangout said everyone could to watch and were recorded and put on this Web site and everything.

Sean: [00:09:00] Because you see these voices on Twitter or you hear them on. There were some people that write for like how close to her Al Jazeera. And so you see them there and you get the sense of who they are and then you see them at home.

Sean: [00:09:12] And you're like oh you're just the you have to get groceries to fix that I think there's something wonderful about that in terms of the digital tools that we use. And I normally don't sort of get into talking about tools.

Sean: [00:09:23] But I think that that's important to consider how do we make that connection. Like that's what the tools therefore right is is making this connection over distance that is very difficult to bridge otherwise. I think in that way the sort of digital tools that we have available to us really are really useful.

Bonni: [00:09:40] I love that you say that I have been thinking a lot about this because doing a podcast like this I want to make it practical and people can take action on part of that is recommending a tool that's working well for us.

Bonni: [00:09:51] So it's certainly we recommend tools. Yet in my mind the more it seems that you become whatever An expert looks like you would know. These tools look a lot like each other. They really do and sometimes they have just such a fine appreciation for those tools that decide we're not going to be feature rich.

Bonni: [00:10:12] We're going to be easy. And then forget about the tool and then you're just you're in the conversation or you're teaching or whatever it is it can just blend into the background of people don't even have to think about it.

Sean: [00:10:23] A great idea has the very best digital tools get out of the way and let you be human. That's what they're there for.

Bonni: [00:10:29] Speaking of humans talking about Paulo Freire and the quote that you've got on your Web site.

Sean: [00:10:36] Sure. So for the listeners at home the quote says I am hopeful not out of mere stubbornness but out of an existential concrete imperative. And I believe that comes out of his final book which is called pedagogy of hope. The quote actually. Well actually let me just start if I could just tell a story.

Bonni: [00:10:55] Yeah.

Sean: [00:10:56] My 20 year old is sitting within earshot so he's going to hear the story and that's about him. But I warned him ahead of time that I'd probably be talking about him so that's OK. So when when he was 5 his mom and I took him to California to visit my dad there. And of course he had never seen a beach.

Sean: [00:11:14] He grew up in Colorado so he'd never seen the ocean ever seen the beach. So it's out where we have to go. So we went to the beach and he of course wanted to build a sand castle because that's what you do on the beach.

Sean: [00:11:24] The previous day he had basically a traumatic experience at Disney World Disneyland because Disneyland for a five year old there was a traumatic experience it's thought through and not much fun when you're that

small. So it was it was sort of concerning to us that he had some sort of good experience at the beach.

Sean: [00:11:38] So we set him up. We're building a sandcastle having a great time. But he didn't want to go in the water like he doesn't want to be anywhere near the water. And so here he's building a building and is warning on the tide starts coming in. Right.

Sean: [00:11:51] And as the tides coming in we are all his mom and I are both recognizing oh we need to move him we need that well we don't want panicking we don't want to freak him out so we're ready to build levee build. And at one point we realized that he really had to pick him up and go because the tide was really getting close.

Sean: [00:12:07] There was one point where I just I knew I had to pick him up and get him out of the way. And as it came in the way it came so close that I just had this instinct to kick it back to try to keep the tide from hitting my kid and it was of course it's it feels futile right. Because it's the ocean.

Sean: [00:12:24] You're not going to hold the ocean back. But the instinct is still there and I think it's a very important instinct and I think this is what this is where that affinity for that quote comes from is that I feel like in the face of everything we have to maintain that level of hope that we are going to be able to push the tide back. It may seem it may seem completely impractical. Look no no I can't hold the ocean back and I will hold the ocean back. I have to hold the ocean back. I think there's simply no other response.

Sean: [00:12:58] To Crisis and Hope. I think sometimes I hope it needs to last a long long time and sometimes we see things fulfilled really quickly. But hope is ultimately agency. It's our choice our ability to choose hope over despondency or resignation.

Sean: [00:13:14] And that keeps us attentive to possibility and also to our own imagination which I think it's our imagination and our and our and our sense of possibility that enable us to solve problems.

Bonni: [00:13:26] How is hope part of your pedagogy. What's the what's the ocean that you are trying to hold back in your eyes.

Sean: [00:13:32] That's a good question.

Sean: [00:13:33] It's also that's also a loaded question because there's probably a lot of people who wouldn't agree that the ocean I'm trying to hold back is an ocean that needs holding back. There's a great deal in education now that has to do with that works against agency and it works against empowerment of students.

Sean: [00:13:50] But I also think it works against the agency and empowerment of teachers. These are systems that we have in place. These are good bureaucracies. But there's also just this sense of. The conversation of school as a way to get a better job.

Sean: [00:14:03] I know that's the reality for a lot of people a lot of people especially in community colleges they're going and they're getting their associates so that they can get a better job or they can get a raise at their current job.

Sean: [00:14:13] I know that's a reality for people and in some ways that's that's the ocean the ocean is a reality too. But what we have to push against that there has to be there has to be some other reason or for an additional reason or a deeper reason why we're in education can't just be for a job when we teach.

Sean: [00:14:31] I also believe that we shouldn't just be teaching content that we're not just teaching to standards we're not just teaching to the test we're not teaching so that our students will finish this semester and and and vacate the classroom and then we can start over again in the same way again.

Sean: [00:14:47] I talked for a little while. University of Colorado Boulder I taught creative writing there and there was one semester that I taught where I didn't want my students to leave. I felt so close with them and felt so strongly that they had that they'd realized things about themselves and about their lives.

Sean: [00:15:05] And you know they've also done some creative writing. But the point of the course was really to figure themselves out just the work a writer does right. So it's actually all about creative writing but at the end of the course I didn't want it to end and I didn't want them to just pass the test and leave.

Sean: [00:15:21] Of course it did have to end and all those things happened but I thought very carefully about like my final words. What was I going to tell them. Like how was I going to send them off. You know we see the teachers in Hollywood all the time.

Sean: [00:15:32] Right. Sort of like idealise teacher the Robin Williams and that sort of thing. And there's problems with that. It's not a practice of all sorts of stunts that they pull. But there's something that activates the imagination.

Sean: [00:15:45] Anyone who teaches and I think that's something you pay close attention to when our imagination is being activated when we feel unreasonably passionate about our subject matter when we feel unreasonably passionate about learning. That's that that's something we need to follow.

Sean: [00:16:03] Too many teachers are caught in this cycle of teaching content grading homework teaching tests grading tests and then just out they go. I don't feel like teachers don't want that. That's not why they got into teaching. They want something more than that.

Sean: [00:16:19] And I feel like that's part of the ocean that we're trying to fight against is this idea that there's this is just a bizarre bureaucratic exercise because it's so much more than a bureaucratic exercise. I've recently been in discussions with people about designing courses right.

Sean: [00:16:33] And we're we're currently running a MOOC MOOC Hybrid Pedagogy runs on a regular basis.

Bonni: [00:16:39] And would you just share quickly what a MOOC MOOC is?

Sean: [00:16:43] Sure. MOOC MOOC started.

Bonni: [00:16:45] I love that. Everytime I see it on Twitter it just makes me chuckle Yeah.

Sean: [00:16:49] And it started almost as a as a tongue in cheek sort of poke at MOOCs, right? It started in 2012. We had our very first map of which 2012 was the year of the MOOC. And I was talking to Jesse on the phone and he said we need to do a MOOC. And I said OK let's do a MOOC. And I said, "But you know it's got to be a MOOC about a MOOC, because Hybrid Pedagogy is about looking at things critically."

Sean: [00:17:11] So it can't just be a MOOC about like English or MOOC about - you know - it has to be a MOOC about a MOOC. So that's how MOOC MOOC started. And we've run one every year since then and this is the sixth iteration and we're doing a book that focuses on instructional design with the idea that that instructional design.

Sean: [00:17:30] And this is where some people would object to what I'm saying but I think that instructional design as it stands is part of the ocean we need to hold back because it distances us from the students like you're talking about it doesn't allow us to connect with students who are in pain. It doesn't allow us to connect with students who are who are having a joyful time either, like, it actually it actually cleanses, if you will, or sanitizes the relationship between the teacher and students so much that now all that's going on is a really sterile sort of interaction. Now that's not necessarily true. The people who are teaching within courses that were designed by instructional designer but there are no principles that I'm aware of in instructional design that allow for the human to creep in.

Sean: [00:18:14] It's very mechanistic and if you do this this and this then don't meet this objective and do this this and this meet this objective and that everyone gets a good grade. And if someone doesn't get a good grade it's because they're just not a good student.

Sean: [00:18:27] It's not about the design at that point it's about the student at that point. So it's I think it disconnects us from critical pedagogy that connects us from our students disconnects us really as teachers it just connects us from our teaching because I believe the teaching that method but the teaching is intuitive to a certain extent that we enter into a classroom every single time we enter into a classroom or design a new course and seven. We have to step back and realize we don't know anything.

Sean: [00:18:56] Each time is new. And that's because people in the class the people in the classroom and they are the content not all were there to teach the people that are the content.

Sean: [00:19:07] So in trying to examine far from design from that perspective looking for ways that we can either modify existing structures of design or dream up a brand new instructional design that that compensates for those sort of more qualitative experiences in the classroom.

Bonni: [00:19:26] We talked earlier about how nice it is when the tool just blends into the background and part of what using an almes to some extent is to create some skeleton of consistency between courses so that I don't have to learn the interface every single time I go up and take a new class particularly.

Bonni: [00:19:48] I think the more a program might be relying on technology such as if it was a fully online class or a high flex class or something of that nature how do you as a person giving advice to to so many people within the program how do you build that tension.

Bonni: [00:20:06] Yes we need to have the consistency but at the same time want you to break it and be completely spontaneous. Is there a place where you've landed or does it just depend on the situation.

Sean: [00:20:15] I suppose it depends on the situation. To me it's it almost always comes down just a dialogue. Finding out where are you at with instructional design with this course or with its content where where are you coming from.

Sean: [00:20:29] What do you want to achieve. So as instructional designer for example that's how I approach everything is I approach by asking what is it that you're wanting to get from this. And I also want to know what is it you want your students to get from this and I don't want to hear that. I want your students to finish. I don't want to hear that I want your students to get A's.

Sean: [00:20:47] I mean getting A's is great but you know that's. You can give A's if you want to. So we're asking those sorts of questions and really starting that fire back and then and then looking at OK what what tools can we use to make that happen for you. So each time can be different.

Sean: [00:21:04] Some teachers don't like Twitter. That's fine. Some teachers don't like social media at all. Some people are what they want to live entirely inside the walled garden with the elements. That's fine. As long as what you're doing inside there is inspiring agency and helping your students learn about themselves and learn about about about their own power.

Sean: [00:21:21] You can do that inside LMS. Jesse posed the question the other day on Twitter.

Sean: [00:21:27] Could you have a critical pedagogical. Pedagogically sound course that had to use Blackboard and turn it in.

Sean: [00:21:36] And I was like yes you can even if those are the tools you have to work with. You can Hackham you can figure them out you can you can get. You can ask your students to get this and trying and say hey we have to use it and let's talk about Turnitin. So let's let's try to figure this.

Sean: [00:21:51] And you know what. Why don't you submit things have turned it in that you know you're going to get a high plagiarism score just to see how the system works. Let's figure the system out. Let's break the system. There was one time when my older brother this was before this was some time ago my older brother emailed me and when I emailed him back.

Sean: [00:22:08] Google supplied some sort of ad next to his email. Right. That had to do with the content of our e-mails. It read our e-mails and it provided an ad. So I emailed him again something completely bizarre and and it broke the system. Google had no ads for that.

Sean: [00:22:25] So as soon as you're aware that that sort of thing is happening that you're being manipulated by some sort of software manipulated back. I mean we are the people who are in charge. After all we have agency and software doesn't.

Sean: [00:22:38] That's I don't know if I even answered your question. But there's there's there's that sort of idea of let's start from scratch. Let's start from the very beginning of what you want to accomplish and then let's talk about tools.

Bonni: [00:22:50] Give me an example of what it has looked like for you to see a student get agency can you think of an example either in a class that you've taught or a class someone else has taught. What would that look like.

Sean: [00:23:03] So in my creative writing classes long long time ago I used to do something called an adventure report. I didn't care what it was they did but I wanted them to go out and do something they always had wanted to do.

Sean: [00:23:14] Or something that they never thought they would do something completely outside the norm for themselves. And I had I had people doing things from all over the spectrum. I had one person who had never tried caffeine so she went into a coffee shop and she ordered some like triple shot thing right and then reported on the effects of caffeine which was a great experience for me it was small wasn't a big step or anything I wasn't jumping out of a plane but it was it was that and it was important to her.

Sean: [00:23:42] And so she had choice in that and she had she could decide what she wanted to do. I don't all I said was go out and do something that you've never done before that you've always wanted to do. My favorite was when I had one person who.

Sean: [00:23:54] Who went and sat under in Boulder Colorado and sat under a bridge sort of a walkway and tried to collect money from people. And he collected a bunch of money and then he donated that money. But he'd never done that. And he wrote about the experience of that alienation that occurred here. And the people ignoring him and he'd never really known that was what it was going to be like.

Sean: [00:24:17] So that was something that he chose and it changed the way that he thought about the world that one that one tiny thing and didn't change everything about the way he thought about the world but it changed a tiny thing about the way that he thought about the world but my very favorite was an ROTC guy in my class who was like you know tall and buff and totally masculine right. He went into Macy's and tried on women's clothes and had the.

Sean: [00:24:42] And had the experience of being told by people you can't do that you can't go into the women's dressing room you can't do this you can't do that. And he reported on that. And it was this whole sort of exploration of gender which he didn't expect to have. He thought I'm going to go goof around.

Sean: [00:24:57] But then you had this whole experience of gender. And it was really for him it was really empowering even just even just teaching poetry. I think it is something that that amplifies agency and in students lives as long as you're not telling them OK right like Shakespeare has the secret to at least what I found the secret to helping students find that agency.

Sean: [00:25:19] I mean because I've got it they have it in their lives. They just for some reason they lose it when they come into the classroom. It hasn't been built into the classroom. So essentially give them permission to have it. They'll take it they'll do it.

Sean: [00:25:32] And I think that if you just don't put it if you just put expectations down if you don't say it has to look like this it has to look and feel like this it has to be this kind of thing that you're doing then then they're going to they're going to take it out and that's agency they'll do their thing.

Bonni: [00:25:47] And I'm going to do it 15 second rant about and then don't ask them to put an 800 word post on the discussion forum and then you have to reply to at least three of your colleagues posts and those replies need to be of substance and they need to have this this and that.

Bonni: [00:26:03] Because do I actually I probably am more of an expectation setter than you might agree with me. We might find some tension there but what you just described I could have listened to for hours. And when we really find something like that in our teaching we don't need to say that it needs to be 800 words or that you have to respond to so many other people and it doesn't have to be legalistic like that that that to me. But yet that consistency over time and trying to grab where we can the effects of the learning and the teaching is also important to them.

Sean: [00:26:40] Yeah and I think that teachers I often hear from teachers that say you know they'll say Well but you know that's really nice for you.

Sean: [00:26:47] And that was a creative writing class and that's really great. And I can't do that in my with with my curriculum and the expectations. And that's again. That's interesting because the expectations are things we inherit our administration has expectations on us. We don't have expectations on our on our students.

Sean: [00:27:02] And I think that we've got to break that cycle. Someone has to stand up and say No I'm not doing this and I'm not living up to your expectations. But what I was going to say is is that I have a lot of teachers who say well I can't do that because of the expectations of my administration.

Sean: [00:27:16] And I guess I would ask them to really question that and to find small ways to go ahead and do it. Now we are being observed that carefully in our classes. And so for example when I taught a composition class online I thought so composition. No one wants to composition everyone hates second composition and I didn't want to.

Sean: [00:27:36] I didn't want to grade those essays are you kidding. Who wants to grade you know a hundred essays about some conflict in politics like this is boring as all heck. So I gave them an adventure report as well. It's a composition class.

Sean: [00:27:51] But it was one of the very first things that we did because I wanted them to recognize that there was a quality of personal narrative that goes into every composition that you're not divorcing yourself from your writing at any point.

Sean: [00:28:03] A lot of academics especially folks who have you know gone all the way up to their PHD and that sort of thing would would disagree with me.

They would say well actually I suppose you're supposed to lead the person out of you you know your personal side out you don't even use the first person in writing. Right. Which is not the case in hyper pedagogy by the way. We are all about people's stories on higher pedagogy. But.

Sean: [00:28:25] But I try to encourage learners to recognize that no matter what you're writing no matter what your homework is no matter what your assignment is you are there as a human being. You are there and don't leave that behind because that's what's really going to matter in the end.

Bonni: [00:28:40] This is the time in the show in which we are going to each get to share a recommendation and I'm going to actually pass it on to you because my recommendation is that all of us including me check out some of the new courses that you are offering on your site. So can you talk a little bit about your classes and how we can get involved in those.

Sean: [00:28:59] Sure sure. So digital pedagogy lab is a kind of foundation or school that Jesse and I have have started based off of Harvard pedagogy and the work we were doing there. And we offer online courses. We also offer a yearly summer institute which this year will be in August at university Mary Washington in Virginia.

Sean: [00:29:19] But the online courses which you can find out there's a pedagogically dot com slash courses. These are courses that try to use an online format. We use canvas in the course is what we try to use the online format to really explore ideas of pedagogy and all of them are set up in a way that that what you're really developing is community and sharing sharing and collaborating with on on ideas with other students.

Sean: [00:29:44] There's obviously there's like quote unquote required reading there's discussions but no like no post once you're respond twice kind of a requirement. There's Twitter chats there's all kinds of different fun activities that we do to really try to get people outside of their standard way of thinking about pedagogy.

Sean: [00:30:02] We have one coming up actually really soon called teaching with Twitter that Jesse is teaching that's all about using Twitter and both your online classroom and your hybrid classroom. So in order to bring students into a much larger conversation with other educators and with other students and with the public at large that there's some Twitter activism stuff in there and there's

there's a lot of other stuff that relates to using Twitter and that we have a couple of others coming up this spring. There's the intruder.

Sean: [00:30:28] There's a humanities pedagogy which would be really interesting for some of the humanities folks out there are learning online course that I'm teaching which just explores the whole idea of what happens when you bring learning online and then we'll be teaching a course actually. With me and Amy Collyer will be teaching a course on critical instructional design.

Bonni: [00:30:47] And for anyone that hasn't been listening for that long and missed the episode with Jesse he gave an episode where he will say it was an overview. Thank God there weren't focused or disciplined stay on it but the subject was Eugene with Twitter and we talked a little bit about the courses there too so I'd encourage people to check out that episode I'll be linking to all of the things that we're talking about in this episode at teachinginhighered.com/87 and now I'm going to pass the recommendations officially over to you I know you have a few things you want to recommend.

Sean: [00:31:18] Sure yeah. So these are all books so currently I'm reading through three books A Pedagogy for Liberation which has Paulo Friere and Ira Shor and the thing I like about that book is actually it in X critical pedagogy because it's a conversation it's a dialogue between Ira Shor and Friere and to me the the best pedagogical research is dialogue so to me it's just it's really wonderful to read it.

Sean: [00:31:43] Then I'm also reading of The Qualitative Manifesto which is the other side of the quencher positivism if you will and trying to figure out ways that we can look at things from a qualitative side as opposed to the quantitative side.

Sean: [00:31:53] And then I'm also reading Complexity Theory and the Philosophy Education which is sort of less emergent than I would. Expect in its format. It's pretty standard educational material which is sort of funny to me because it's about complexity.

Sean: [00:32:07] But one thing I want to throw out there is actually probably one of the most critical pedagogical books that I've ever read. It's a middle great book called Savvy and it's by Ingrid law. It deals with the sort of it's a coming of age story but it deals all it's all about agency. It's all about understanding how powerful you are and how the effect you can have in the world. And and and and the ways in which that can be squashed. So really really good book.

Bonni: [00:32:35] I have been trying to force myself to get through a book about the history of the middle the conflict in the Middle East and it helps me fall right to sleep. I think I might need to pick Savvy up it sounds like maybe I need to get lost in the book.

Sean: [00:32:57] Yeah it's definitely a good book for that. If you if like middle grade fiction it's a delight. There was a Newbery Honor winner a few years back. So it's a great book but I also want to mention that my favorite that a lot of my favorite texts are are those that are always being written specifically. Some people's Twitter accounts and if I if I can I would like to call out actually do some twitter account of Simon Esnor who's who has a really creative critical engagement with education which I find really refreshing and also at times incredibly poignant. He's also a blogger. Can get to his blog I'm sure through his Twitter account.

Sean: [00:33:33] And then there's Pat Lockley who technically is an educator. He's a technologist but he's the only person I know who can wear a Pikachu hat. And also grind you into theoretical dust. At the same time. So he's he's. And you're smiling the whole time while he's doing it.

Sean: [00:33:49] He's amazing. And these are people whose whose stories whose texts are always being written. What I think is the most important voice is probably the most important voices are the ones that we don't hear enough from.

Sean: [00:34:01] So we look at books we look at publications we look at journal articles and that sort of thing. That's one representation of what's being said out there about education. But there's so many people who are not being published. There's people who aren't Friere who aren't. bell hooks who aren't Jesse Stommel they're the educators with our publication credits who never get to tour or have a keynote but have incredibly important things to say.

Bonni: [00:34:24] Thank you so much for sharing those that have captured both of them. And thank you for coming on the show and being so gracious with your time and all. I just had really a great time talking to you.

Bonni: [00:34:34] It's just like talking to on Twitter only I get to see the dog that I don't get to see the dogs and what are quiet is.

Sean: [00:34:41] Not quite so much. Yeah. Well thank you for having me. It's really really a pleasure.

Bonni: [00:34:45] And I'm just looking forward to continuing to learn from you and thanks for all that you do.

Sean: [00:34:50] Thanks so much.

Bonni: [00:34:52] Thanks for listening to this episode number 87 of Teaching in Higher Ed. And thank you to Sean Michael Morris for sharing so much of your wisdom with us today. If you have yet to subscribe to the weekly e-mail that I send out it's just once a week and you'll get an article about teaching or productivity written by me and also the show notes that have all the great links of the things that we speak about during the show.

Bonni: [00:35:16] We'll come to your inbox automatically and you don't have to remember to go to teachinginhighered.com/87 in order to find it. But if you would like to you can go to that link and comment about anything that you heard on today's episode.

Bonni: [00:35:29] But if you want to subscribe that's at teachinginhighered.com/subscribe. I welcome your feedback on the show. I welcome it and a couple of ways one is it's always great when you write reviews on iTunes or whatever service it is you use to listen to the show. It just helps other people be able to discover it.

Bonni: [00:35:46] And I'm just really enjoying seeing so many of you follow up and do that and in addition to that another way to give feedback is that teachinginhighered.com/feedback.

Bonni: [00:35:58] Thanks to all of you have been sending e-mails to me with encouragement and suggestions about the show. I really do treasure that and it just helps me be better at what it is that I do. Trying to bring you great content great interviews every week and just help us all be more effective at our teaching and more present in our lives. Thanks so much for listening. I'll see you next time.

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.