

3QTL: Three Questions About Teaching and Learning

Episode 11 – How do you peer review a podcast?

Guests: Stacey Copeland and Jill McSweeney-Flaherty

Description:

How might we reimagine what scholarship looks (and sounds) like in the twenty-first century? In this special reflection episode, Dr. Derritt Mason is joined by 3QTL consulting producer Dr. Stacey Copeland and Dr. Jill McSweeney-Flaherty, associate editor of the journal *Teaching and Learning Inquiry*, to discuss 3QTL Season 1's experimental peer review process—the journal's first-ever podcast review. Our discussion explores key themes that emerged across the season, including care ethics, community building, and pedagogies of kindness, while also examining what it means to produce the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) through podcasting. Join us as we reflect on the values that anchored educators during COVID-19, consider how conversation can function as scholarly method, and ask what sound-based scholarship might suggest about the future of academic research and knowledge creation.

Bios:

Dr. Stacey Copeland is an Assistant Professor of Cultural Heritage & Identity in the Research Centre for Media and Journalism Studies at the University of Groningen and an award-winning audio producer located in Groningen, Netherlands. She received her Joseph-Armand Bombardier SSHRC-funded Ph.D. at Simon Fraser University's School of Communication (Vancouver, Canada) with a research focus on the communication of queer feminist activism and aesthetics in radio and podcasting. Copeland's work on sound, media and culture has been published in top-ranking journals, including *Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media* and the *Canadian Journal of Communication*. She has published in various edited collections, co-published open-access guides on academic podcasting and soundscape assessment, and actively works to produce publicly accessible sonic scholarship that bridges research and creative practice. She is currently the co-director of Amplify Podcast Network.

Dr. Jill McSweeney-Flaherty is an Assistant Director of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning and an Assistant Professor of Wellness at Elon University, as well as an Associate Editor of the journal *Teaching and Learning Inquiry*. She has been working in the area of faculty development for over a decade, actively publishes in the area of SoTL, the scholarship of educational development, and is a two-time recipient of the Explorance Faculty Research Grant for her work on the ethical use of course

evaluation data for research purposes. Jill is a former Executive of SoTL Canada (2019 – 2022) and co-chair of the Ethical Practices of Educational Development (2015 – 2019), a special interest group of the Educational Developers Caucus of Canada. She has interests in learning spaces and their impact on student and faculty experience, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and inclusive spaces, and the philosophical underpinnings of SoTL.

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Transcription:

[Theme music in]

DERRITT MASON: [00:00:13] Well, welcome to the 3QTL: Three Questions About Teaching and Learning Season 1 Reflection Episode. I'm Derritt Mason. I'm the executive producer and host of 3QTL, and an associate professor of English at the University of Calgary. Joining me for this episode is Stacey Copeland, 3QTL's consulting producer and an assistant professor of media studies at the University of Groningen. Hi, Stacey, thanks for being here.

STACEY COPELAND: [00:00:36] Hi, nice to see you, Derritt.

DERRITT MASON: [00:00:38] Also joining us is Jill McSweeney-Flaherty, an associate editor of *Teaching and Learning Inquiry*, a peer-reviewed journal that focuses on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, or SoTL. Jill is also the Assistant Director of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, and an Assistant Professor of Wellness at Elon University. Hi, Jill, so excited to have you.

JILL MCSWEENEY-FLAHERTY: [00:00:58] So lovely to be here. Thank you for having me.

DERRITT MASON: [00:01:00] So, the reason why we're doing a reflection episode is that we collaborated with the journal, *Teaching and Learning Inquiry*, on a peer review process, and under Jill's leadership, the journal developed guidelines for their first ever podcast peer review.

3QTL Season 1 was triple anonymous reviewed in summer 2024, and an open version of this review was published in the journal in February 2025, and it raised some really excellent and compelling questions, I think, including the invitation to consider the value of a summary or reflection episode.

And so, the purpose of this episode is to reflect on our season as a whole, and engage with these questions as part of this somewhat experimental, collaborative peer review process. A typical peer review process involves incorporating feedback from our reviewers, and so this is our version of that. And the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, itself, which we're engaging in, is iterative and recursive, just like peer review. So, we're undertaking this process to think not only about how this season informed teaching and learning, but also how we might think about scholarship going forward. So, what's the connection of podcasting and sound scholarship to the scholarship of teaching and learning? Jill, did you kind of want to add anything before we jump in? What was the journal's kind of perspective on developing this collaboration with 3QTL?

JILL MCSWEENEY-FLAHERTY: [00:02:26] Yeah, it was an extremely exciting process to think about how might we be challenged as a journal to think about this really dialogic perspective. How can we think about different forms of the Scholarship of Teaching and

Learning artifacts to really engage in broadening the breadth of TLI as well? And I think one of the biggest things I'm taking away from this entire process is that we oftentimes see publications being very one-way, and we really appreciated you reaching out to us and saying, like, this would be a really great opportunity for my own SoTL, and then, how can we, as a publication, move forward to think about how might this be able to expand other people's work?

And it was a really great way to think about the rigid system that we have and think of around peer review. How do we invite people into that space? How does it become more formative in nature, and how does that create a process of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in and of itself? And I think that is one thing that this really mirrors, is that meta idea of peer review being part of that cyclical and iterative process, like you spoke about.

DERRITT MASON: [00:03:30] Stacey, in many ways, you were kind of the architect of 3QTL's peer review process, because this isn't your first time at the audio peer review rodeo, if you will [both Derritt and Stacey laugh]. And you, at the, you know, beginning of this process, we had conversations about wanting to peer review 3QTL, and you had several different avenues that you, you know, suggested we might be able to pursue. Thinking back to those early conversations, do you remember the kind of different routes that you proposed for peer review, or routes you've taken, podcasts through peer review in the past?

STACEY COPELAND: [00:04:02] You know, when we first started talking, I was working really closely with Dr. Hannah McGregor at Simon Fraser University to develop the Amplify Podcast Network, so we both co-direct that network now. But at the time, I was just coming out of the PhD, trying to figure out what does it even mean to think about podcasting as a form of scholarship outside of media studies. Because in media studies, we've had a long-established trajectory of creative work counting as part of your scholarly research, but outside of that community, I had so many peers, like Hannah's work, for instance, who were making such amazing content that was part of their research, part of their scholarship, but was seen as kind of a side gig and didn't count in the same way as, say, an article or other scholarship that they were publishing.

So, when Hannah was thinking about creating the Amplify Podcast Network, a big part of that project was thinking about what we can do to actually make podcasts count as scholarship. And when I came on to 3QTL as a consulting producer, you know, we were talking not only about, like, how do we make a podcast, what are the, you know, ins and outs of producing something, but also how can we make this count for you, Derritt, and also make it, part of peer-review and community like SoTL.

DERRITT MASON: [00:05:21] Yeah, and I think we landed on, in—this is what Lori Beckstead, Ian Cook, and Hannah McGregor in their book, *Podcast or Perish*, call a “summitative” review, which I think is a term that they coined, where the peer review of the podcast happens at the end of the season, much like it did for us, and then it iterates based on that feedback, which is kind of the reflection episode. And I remember in those conversations, too, thinking about the different avenues. Because this was a podcast about teaching and learning during COVID-19, and we were starting the work in 2022, it felt urgent to kind of take advantage of one of the affordances of podcasting, which is to get material out faster than it might should it have to undergo a rather lengthy peer review process from the drop.

STACEY COPELAND: [00:06:03] Yeah, exactly, and *Podcast or Perish* is such a good resource if people are interested in what are some different possibilities of thinking about what peer review is, because it isn't just the one model, for instance, of classic blind peer review. And podcasting can kind of help us along with that, too, because having conversations like this, for instance, is a very different way of thinking about and thinking through scholarship. And I mean, the behind-the-scenes, I'm sure we'll talk more about, you know, the nuts and bolts of producing 3QTL [laughs], Derritt, but the amount of research that you put into every episode, the amount of notes [laughs], even for this conversation today that you put together, to really craft the arguments of each episode is sometimes hidden labor when it is a podcast conversation, makes people hear it as so natural. When in fact, just as much research can go into something like this as a published article.

DERRITT MASON: [00:06:57] Yeah, absolutely. Thank you so much. Jill, anything else to add before we talk about some of the comments in the review?

JILL McSWEENEY-FLAHERTY: [00:07:04] Echoing what Stacey just said, seeing behind the scenes for this episode really gives a different perspective of the amount of work that goes into researching, crafting a narrative, the same way that you would in a manuscript. I think one of the challenges that we had at TLI was, while it's great to push the boundaries, do we have the capacity and the expertise to do a review like this?

So, not only were you challenging us as a journal outlet, but also challenging us as colleagues and peers to think about, okay, how would one peer review a podcast? Particularly when we're working with reviewers across a variety of disciplines. We have that challenge just with manuscripts, and the focus if it's a disciplinary manuscript versus one that's cross-trans-multi-inter-disciplinary. And so this was really challenging to find reviewers that felt comfortable and confident in trying something new, but also what does peer review look like in this, particularly from that SoTL lens?

And so, I think it brought up a lot of different questions in terms of how do we, as a journal, adapt and evolve and grow based on what our readers and audience are utilizing in their day-to-day practice, but then, also how do we grow ourselves and our capacity to still maintain our expectations and create a scholarship that is peer-reviewed, and what does that mean? And I think that's been a nice conversation for us behind the scenes to have, as we can say, like, maybe this is a time to redefine what we think is SoTL and peer review and what scholarship looks like. Thank you for reaching out to us and encouraging us to have some of those conversations behind the scenes, because I think it's gonna end up really growing what we can do at TLI.

DERRITT MASON: [00:08:47] Yeah, it was a really exciting collaboration, and this does feel like an appropriate moment, too, to maybe give a shout out to the rest of the 3QTL team, because we were talking about all the work that goes on behind-the-scenes, and all of the kind of labor that's often unseen, that works to craft an episode that sounds like it's a relatively informal conversation—and it can be—but, you know, there's a tremendous amount of editing, and we had a really, really fantastic team in Xenia Reloba de la Cruz, our producer; Tarini Fernando, producer and editor; and Eric Xie, who is our sound designer and editor, as well.

You know, most of our... I say our episodes generally average half an hour, 25 [minutes]. I think our longest one is maybe 40 minutes, but the interviews were often around an hour; the raw audio was around an hour, and then Xenia first would very carefully carve out the story that we wanted to tell in each episode, and then often she would recommend re-records where I would then go back into the studio and record some either additional context. A ton of editing and polishing work went in there as well. So, yeah, that, I do think that gets lost, especially maybe in the interview-style podcast, where, you know, you can record an interview and then throw it online, but we were quite intentional about, polishing and carving out very specific stories that were surfacing through the interviews.

MUSIC BREAK [00:10:08]

DERRITT MASON: [00:10:20] So, why don't we turn now to talk about some of the feedback that we got, and maybe enter into conversation with it. So, one question that was raised by the peer review was a methodological question. You know, how were the three questions for Season 1 developed, and then also, how did we select our guests? So maybe I'll just speak for a bit and offer a bit of context to our listeners. So, just a reminder of our three questions for Season 1, which were: how did COVID prompt shifts in our fundamental values? What most supported and challenged our teaching and learning practice during COVID, and how might we describe our most successful pandemic-era classroom innovations?

In 2021, the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning at the University of Calgary received a 3-year gift from the Flanagan Foundation to support blended and online learning opportunities, and some of these funds were used to support a secondment that I received into a role called Educational Leader in Residence, through which I started developing the podcast. And a big component of this project was what we were calling a “lessons-learned component,” which involved gathering and collecting stories and experiences about what teaching looked like during COVID-19, and how folks had kind of transformed what they were doing in the classroom as a result of lockdowns and all of the other effects of the pandemic. And so at the time, scholarship about COVID-19 and teaching and learning was really just emerging. The University of Calgary Press had published a collection called *Voices from the Digital Classroom: 25 Interviews about Teaching and Learning in the Face of a Global Pandemic*. This was edited by Sandra Abegglen, Fabian Neuhaus, and Kylie Wilson. And this book was based on audio and video interviews that were conducted during lockdown that were then adapted into a book. And in the introduction, it describes itself as, and I'm quoting here, “a time capsule of the early days of the pandemic.” And it involved two series of interviews that were conducted between July and December 2020, and there were around five questions that roughly structured each conversation. So, when I was imagining the podcast, I was most interested in something that would kind of build on these conversations that took place in 2020.

2020 was really, you know, this was the time capsule book. These were interviews that were conducted during the early days, and so now that we were a couple years further down the road, and had had maybe a bit more time to adapt and reflect and imagine what teaching and learning might look like going forward, that was what I, you know, was imagining capturing in 3QTL. And above all, I wanted something that was relatively short, structured, and practical, that would also offer some clear takeaways for listeners, in addition to some broader, you know, philosophical reflections about the landscape of teaching and learning. And that's what brought me to the three-question format. And in particular, the third question, which is the question about just one thing, or maybe a couple of things, that folks had done to change the way that they teach that had had a positive impact on students.

So I developed these questions in conversation with other members of the Flanagan Foundation Working Group, which included the Vice Provost of Teaching and Learning at the time, Leslie Reid, as well as Natasha Kenny, who was the Senior Director of the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning. And we landed on these first two questions about values, challenges, and supports, because these ideas really seem to be surfacing both implicitly and explicitly in many of the formal and informal conversations that were happening at the time. And so, we were wondering how we might intentionally draw them out of guests to kind of capture a snapshot of the teaching and learning

landscape. And these questions were also in dialogue with some of the questions from the digital classroom book, which did ask participants about challenges and opportunities, and also effective digital tools that they were using.

And in terms of guest selection and consideration, because this was a University of Calgary project, I knew we wanted to have a mix of local, national, and international expertise. We wanted disciplinary diversity, scholars from diverse cultural and racial backgrounds, and at different career stages, but all guests who had been somehow recognized for excellent teaching and learning. And honestly, when it came down to some guests, it was like, who was available to speak with us [laughing]? Because everyone was so, you know, busy at the time that we couldn't necessarily get everyone that we wanted. So, folks who were available and interested and eager to talk with us. So that's some of the kind of context that went into planning 3QTL and those questions. Stacey, was there anything else from those early conversations that you can recall that might be relevant here?

STACEY COPELAND: [00:14:58] I came in when you already had, like, a clear idea of what you wanted this project to be and just wanted to know better how you could execute it as a podcast. So, it was thinking about how do we structure those three questions into a predictable, right, flow for each episode that made sense, so that the listener can go from episode to episode and know what to expect? To build your host rapport so that we had a sense of what sort of introduction and conclusion this needed to—for thinking about them as chapters in a book, the same way—episodes in a series, how are we going to open each argumentation to make a clear sense of what this particular episode is doing, so it isn't just you asking a question that we've already heard in the last episode, and then we hear that question again [laughs]. How do we make that sound natural, even though there are only three questions that we are really delving into in the series? So that, I think, was really interesting to work with you on. How do we take these three questions that you spent so much time really crafting and make it still sound quite conversational, and be able to invite people into that conversation with you?

DERRITT MASON: [00:16:06] Yeah, I remember you also pushing me and challenging me in the early days to think about what this teaching and learning podcast was going to do differently from other teaching and learning podcasts that are already out there. So why do we need 3QTL in an audio landscape where there are already a number of teaching and learning podcasts? And for me, it was the focus on... the specific focus on COVID-19 and the structure of the three questions that would be the same from episode to episode. You know, I listen to both short-form and longer-form podcasts, but my own preference for what we might just... I might describe as, like, work-related podcasts [laughs] is, I prefer short episodes. You know, I want to listen to something, like, while I'm having lunch, right? And not necessarily something that I have to break up my

listening to over the course of a day or several days, again, with, like, a clear takeaway for me at the end of the episode. So that was really what I wanted to do differently. I mean, there are a lot of really fabulous teaching and learning podcasts out there. They tend to be on the longer side, and they vary, you know, from episode to episode and guest to guest.

Jill, anything—because you're responsible for some of these questions as well, because you co-authored the open version of the review—does this get at some of your curiosities?

JILL McSWEENEY-FLAHERTY: [00:17:14] It does, and I think part of our curiosities were the fact that this was such a different artifact that we were reviewing, and I want to give huge kudos and nods to Dr. Kate Thompson from Dalhousie University, who was my co-author, who was one of the reviewers on this. Hearing you talk, I'm going back and saying, like, "oh, this would be an interesting thing to also consider in a review." So, how often do we have to consider rapport in a manuscript? That's not a category that I would consider required, but as I hear you talk, the intentionality, the thoughtfulness of how you plan it out, rapport was something that was really well-built, and it did feel like a conversation, and so, I think, you know, this is getting me to think about, you know, what criteria does it take? Like, what does peer review mean? Like, what's the purpose of it? What's the value of it? And I know we've had some conversations about the timing of it, so when you submit a manuscript, peer review is meant to be formative, to enhance, to develop your final product, whereas peer review for this was very much like a book review, and what's... what does that look like then? You know, you're choosing to go back and do a reflective exercise, which really mirrors that iterative process of peer review, but you don't have to. And so, I think this really begs the question of, why do we do peer review? How does this feed into scholarship? What does scholarship even look like, in this area?

And then, for me, I think you hit the nail on the head about the length of episode and wanting to have somebody take something away. That practice side, the connection back to what we're doing, is so important, and I think that was something that really highlighted, in my mind, the fact that this was the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, bringing it back to that practice side of the classroom, which I think is so needed. And I think, you know, when we talk about manuscript reviews, one of the biggest pieces of feedback that we have is, how can other people use this in their own context? And I think you always did a really great job of filling in that blank for us as listeners, and I would say that, you know, that is one of the critical pieces of SoTL that we need to be really focused on.

DERRITT MASON: [00:19:16] Yeah, interesting. It's making me think, too, the three-question format, because one of the anonymous reviewers actually found it slightly repetitive, because it does have limits as well, right? Like, is it limiting the conversation that can happen? Yeah, anyway, it's an interesting... it's an interesting question, because it might not work for everyone, and I think that's... that's completely fine.

STACEY COPELAND: [00:19:35] And I think it also speaks to conversations we had, Derritt, about who this was for, right? If we're thinking about something like a three-question format, a podcast that does something like that is really helpful in the classroom space, for instance. Because then you also have those as talking points that you can bring into conversation with people, and there's clear takeaways. So, thinking about, you know, who you wanted to be the audience for this within your own community, as well as just, you know, curious souls, could also listen to this, and it is quite publicly accessible in the way that you have conversation, but still dealing with some pretty high-level theory and concepts at times that you really need to be with in arts and humanities or [the] university space to understand some of what's going on. There's a little bit for everyone there, in one sense, but very much geared towards your own community of teaching and education.

DERRITT MASON: [00:20:28] No, I agree, and I think that's probably a good segue to talking about maybe some of the content of the episodes, themselves, and reflecting on what we and, you know, what potentially listeners have taken away from Season 1.

MUSIC BREAK [00:20:42]

DERRITT MASON: [00:20:55] So, something that is really interesting that the review raised, was this observation that, you know, we had this question about shifting in values, but most of the folks that we spoke to actually said that their values during COVID-19 did not shift; the values that they had already identified as being key to their teaching and learning practice were reinforced.

So, for example, in Episode 3, Alan Martino explicitly says that the values emerging from his discipline of disability studies, in this case interdependence and community, were reinforced. Bryan Dewsbury talks about how his values were deepened, and Jesse Stommel and Cate Denial both describe “aha” moments about assessment that took place, long prior to the pandemic. We have maybe one exception, our interview with Morgan Vanek in Episode 7, who says that before COVID, she was quite focused on expanding equitable access to post-secondary education and universal design for learning as a crucial tool. And while those remained important, emerging from COVID was this, what she describes as a new faith in English literature studies and the humanities as providing resources for living through crisis.

JILL McSWEENEY-FLAHERTY: [00:22:02] I kind of go back to some of the work that Felten and colleagues have done in the area of trust; thinking about trust in the classroom and those values around trust, how it really reiterated what was important to me. What I needed to trust students, trust my institution, trust my colleagues. I listened post-pandemic, and I think it was a nice way to be reinforced that, yes, we went through this thing globally together, it changed some of my perspectives, but it also doubled down on other perspectives and values in the classroom. And it gave me a lot of really great tools to reinforce what I'm doing. So I think about building community during that time. I might have done it a couple different ways prior to the pandemic, but then during the pandemic, I reshaped how I did that, and I almost think I'm now better in the classroom around some things than I was, pre-pandemic. So, in listening to that, it gave me some nice reflections of, like, "yeah, you know what? You know, I did have these aha moments. I did connect to broader questions of access, accessibility, equity in ways that maybe I wouldn't have been asking myself," and I continue to ask myself now.

I also really liked the diversity of voices that you had. I know one of the comments that we had, throughout the review process was the geographical scope. And I thought that the people that you connected in with were from a variety of different contexts in teaching that still were relatable to, I think, a lot of different people. And even though it's shaped kind of with the Western context. I thought it was... connective enough across all global contexts in a way that was really nicely done, and reinforces that shared kind of experience that we have across higher ed during this time, which I think is really important to talk about.

DERRITT MASON: [00:23:54] Now I'm also seeing the season as an invitation for listeners to do this kind of reflection, on their fundamental teaching values. I mean, we're often in this profession having to write and rewrite our statements of teaching philosophy for various kinds of documents, and this is maybe, hopefully, a way in to some of those ideas for folks who are... who are thinking about, you know, what are... what are my kind of core values when it comes to teaching and learning, and how, at all, have they been, you know, shaped by the last couple of years? Because mine... I think this question, too, came from how, like, I think my values were deeply transformed during COVID-19 as an instructor. Like, I radically rethought the way I assessed during the pandemic, you know, that's something I talk about in the first... very first episode with Jesse Stommel, because his work was very influential on how I started thinking about ungrading and alternative forms of assessment based on values of access, flexibility, care, community, given everything that was going on. And so, that then, shaped, you know, how I wrote my teaching—a recent version of my teaching philosophy statement—but I think it's also evidence that if we do have a good sense of those values that we take the time to reflect on, they can be anchors during times of crisis; not only in post-secondary, but various forms of crisis [laughs].

JILL McSWEENEY-FLAHERTY: [00:25:17] Building where these values come from, articulating them within the context, grounding them within where we teach, why we teach, who we teach, how we teach, and the literature. And I think going back, stepping back and looking at the meta-ness of how this process, in and of itself, is SoTL, I think asking yourself, and showing that reflective process, and how it's gone in and informed the cycle of SoTL has been really great at, you know, saying, "this is scholarship. This is scholarship that might look different than our traditionally peer-reviewed manuscript, but you're still going through those fundamental and really important iterative steps that we want people to do when they're practicing SoTL. And you're also drawing people in to a community and a discussion, which we know is really important in even building our own SoTL capacities. I think in many ways, you're modeling the conversations that we want people to be having, you know, in the hallway, next to the water cooler, on Zoom during lunch breaks, in any capacity, and that we value that as a community engaging in this type of scholarship. And we recognize that those discussions are important to building our capacity, informing our values, and that practice of thinking about why we're doing what we're doing in really important ways.

DERRITT MASON: [00:26:31] Yeah, an interesting piece that I think 3QTL is in dialogue with appeared in *Teaching and Learning Inquiry* in 2023, and it's an article by Laura Facciolo called "I Appreciate You." And she engaged in a study of scholarly blogs that were published during COVID-19, and found that four themes emerged, and they were, number one, endless possibilities; number two, teaching as craft; number three, care ethics; and number four, community awe. A-W-E. Particularly the care ethics and the community awe, I think, surface in probably all of the episodes. I was, you know, re-listening over the last couple weeks leading up to this conversation, and it's interesting that Laleh Behjat's episode, which is the second of the season, really sets up, I think, many of these values, because she talks about her four C's: courage, care, creativity, and community. I think we see those surface in every episode in the season. It really sets up the rest of the season in a way, in retrospect, I found very interesting.

JILL McSWEENEY-FLAHERTY: [00:27:33] And I would argue the invisible work that you do of grounding all this in the literature does emphasize teaching as craft, because you're putting such thought into how do you build this narrative that is, in the foundations of the key pieces of literature that we want to highlight. How are you making it evidence-informed? And so, I would also say to you, too, like, you know, what you're doing is also emphasizing that craft nature of teaching, too.

DERRITT MASON: [00:27:57] Yeah, so, in terms of other values that emerged across the episodes, I just... teaching as relationship and community-building; justice, equity, and accessibility; student-centered learning; imagination comes up a lot. Were there

other, Stacey, as a kind of—although, now I wouldn't say you're an outsider in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning—but coming in, did anything surprise you?

STACEY COPELAND: [00:28:19] Yeah, you know, it's funny, like, I teach almost every day these days, but I don't often [laughing] actually engage with teaching and learning, research, you know? So there's a lot of us out there teaching, but not taking the time to really think through what is happening in the research space that surrounds what we are doing each and every day. And I think, for me, you've pointed out, one of the key things I... in listening back that I found still held a lot of value for me, and that was the care and kindness. So, like, Cate Denial's episode, thinking about how we bring kindness into the classroom, but also, being kind to ourselves in what our limitations are, what our capacity is, and how much labor we can actually put into transforming our teaching during times of crisis. Transforming our teaching, even in the day-to-day, if you don't have access to resources, and you have to work with what you have to build, a classroom space that you want to be in with your students, and that your students want to be in.

And so that, for me, in listening back at this particular moment, now that we're a few years post-COVID, I think is more important than ever, because during COVID, we were, I think, much more forgiving with each other about, not being able to do everything, not being able to, learn every new tool or publish a ton because it was COVID. And now we've had a little bit of selective memory loss, and that some of that care and kindness we gave to ourselves and to each other actually made us better community. It brought us together in ways that were really helpful for thinking about how to make the university a more equitable space for everyone, whether you're a teacher or a student or staff. So, listening back to some of these episodes was really interesting for me in thinking about what we've forgotten in the past couple of years, and then, what has actually stuck in terms of those politics of care and kindness.

JILL McSWEENEY-FLAHERTY: [00:30:19] I hear a lot from folks that are just starting to come into the area of SoTL, and they're not sure where to start, or how to begin, or what the literature is going to say, and I think a podcast like this is an excellent bridge for people to start understanding that they can engage in a variety of different ways, it's a really accessible way to get to know some of the literature, some of the names, some of the concepts, and I just think it's a great opportunity to think about the resources folks like myself who are supporting SoTL, and institutions, can use to bring people into this space.

MUSIC BREAK [00:30:55]

DERRITT MASON: [00:31:09] In the anonymous reviews, there were some questions about whether or not the podcast could be considered SoTL, which I found really, really

interesting and compelling. And so, just a reminder, for listeners, either a reminder or an introduction to Peter Felten's piece called "The Principles of Good Practice in SoTL," which was published in *Teaching and Learning Inquiry* in 2013. And these principles—there are five of them—are, number one, inquiry into student learning; two, grounded in context; three, methodologically sound; four, conducted in partnership with students; and five, appropriately public.

So, Jill, in your published review of 3QTL—which, as you mentioned, was co-authored with, Kate Thompson from Dalhousie University—you write, and I'm quoting here, "reference to other scholarly work is not the explicit focus, and does not need to be. Rather, the scholarly value comes from the discussions themselves, acting as the method or mode of SoTL." Can you maybe elaborate a little bit on this comment? How can a discussion act as a method or mode?

JILL McSWEENEY-FLAHERTY: [00:32:15] One of the great things about SoTL is, going back to Felton's principle of good practice, is appropriately public. And also, grounded in context. And so, I think about, like, what do these mean? What does this mean in terms of peer review and scholarship? What we see is that oftentimes, when we're sharing our SoTL, it's the discussions, it's the feedback that allows us to say, "okay, here's what I'm experiencing, and here's how my teaching is shaped by those contexts."

You and your guests going through that each time you have a conversation, an episode, you're asking those scholarly questions that are grounded in the literature from the host perspective, and then, you're hearing about that context that the guests are teaching under or experiencing their scholarship under. And so, I think discussion is an opportunity for us to practice what we see at conferences, and workshops, when we're sharing, informally, our teaching through a scholarly lens. And you can see through this discussion that you are asking people to take a thoughtful, intentional lens, and the research that you're doing behind the scenes to make it a scaffolded conversation is similar [to] what we would see in a manuscript. So, and this is kind of like the magic behind the scenes, and going back to what Stacey said, all that invisible labor that you do, I think that's really important. I think one of the other aspects of the conversation is we are hearing more about why we're doing what we're doing, the values, the things that matter to us, you know, what brings us to the classroom, what brought us to this area of teaching, this profession, higher education, in ways that we don't get to in a manuscript. It's more personal. I'm going back to, like, this rapport that Stacey mentioned that kind of just was a light bulb for me. Like, you are building that rapport with the listener, with the guests, in a way that I think we traditionally don't see that as scholarship.

With the discussions, is we are seeing that we're going through that iterative process in the moment, live in the discussion, that would typically be mapped out in a manuscript in a different way, and you're able to ask those questions in the moment and get at areas that we would during a peer review. So, tell me more about what you did? What was the context? Where did this come from? Why did you decide to do this? in ways that you don't necessarily get to do if you're reading SoTL. You can't just say, "okay, hey, excuse me, I want to know more about this." You act as us, Derritt, in those moments of wanting to know more. SoTL, because it's so disciplinarily rich and disciplinarily broad, is a really great place to practice this and explore and experiment. Because this appropriately public means so many different things.

DERRITT MASON: [00:35:37] Piggybacking on some of your thoughts about producing scholarship through conversation, it makes me think of a couple of really excellent points in, Beckstead, Cook, and McGregor's book, *Podcast or Perish*, where they point out that, kind of all research is, and should be, discursive. Because you're in dialogue with other scholars, you're in dialogue with folks who have, you know, published in the area that you're researching on. They also point out that podcasting is not something that's done necessarily by a host or by a producer, but it's something that's done with an audience of listeners. Just like, SoTL, and really all scholarship is done in this kind of discursive way. There's more alignment there than we might initially imagine.

JILL McSWEENEY-FLAHERTY: [00:35:36 And I think, welcoming in different voices, that is something that we want to do in partnership with students. But when we think about the applicability of the work we do in SoTL, we want to invite other people in from different disciplines, different contexts, to help inform what we're doing. And so, I think that this really does... if you were to answer those three questions from one perspective, how valuable would that have been? You invited people from a variety of different contexts, perspectives, disciplines, to help shape so that becomes more applicable across your audience. I just think this is such a really nice meta-experiment of SoTL. And I say experiment because this was the first time I was doing something like this, but I know, Stacey, that this is kind of your background, too.

STACEY COPELAND: [00:36:37] I love listening to other people work through, like, their thought process of thinking about podcasting as a form of scholarship. I think it's interesting to look at something like 3QTL, because we can think about each person that Derritt invited onto the show as a citation.

These are... this is Derritt's reading list [laughs], right? For thinking about, what we need to be taking away from this context, and what are key values in teaching and learning that we learned from COVID-19. If this was an article, all of these people would be cited

in it. That's the way we would, in an article, be in conversation with others, is by citing their work. Here, Derritt is literally in conversation with those scholars.

DERRITT MASON: [00:37:09] Thanks, Stacy, and if I can make even, one more, maybe, meta connection. Peter Felten's article is very important to the field of SoTL, as is another piece by Pat Hutchings, in which she offers four essential SoTL questions: what works? What is? What could be? So, what is possible, and also how can we formulate new conceptual frameworks? And every piece of SoTL doesn't necessarily have to answer all four of those. But I think that other scholars have reworked these questions recently in really interesting ways that, maybe shed light on what 3QTL is doing.

So there's actually another, COVID-related piece that was published in *Teaching and Learning Inquiry* by Laura E. Cruz and Eileen M. Grodziak called "SoTL Under Stress: Rethinking Teaching and Learning Scholarship During a Global Pandemic. And this was published in 2021, and I actually regret not coming across this when I was developing 3QTL, but thanks to the recursive peer review process, I've now come across it [laughs]. And in this piece, Cruz & Grodziak reconfigure Hutchings' four essential SoTL questions, and they add, "how's it working?" "What's your story?" and "How do we make sense of all this?" And I really think that that's kind of what 3QTL was getting at through different questions, but, like, "how's it going? This is, you know, a kind of... to overuse an overused word, unprecedented global event. How do we make sense of it in the context of what we're doing in our classrooms?" They write— I'm quoting; this from page 9 of their article—the "what's your story question endangers SoTL's hard-fought reputation for quality, largely forged through rigorous application of social science methodologies, which leave little space for the telling of stories. Both public scholars and crowdsourced wisdom have a long way to go before they're fully embraced by the academy." And I think that the what's your story question really was, you know, we didn't actually literally ask people, what's your story on 3QTL, but we did, through these different kinds of means. And it's interesting that they point at how this might challenge, you know, notions of quality or rigor, or the soundness of methodology, in the same way that some of the reviewers were uncertain as to whether or not 3QTL Season 1 did constitute scholarship or did constitute SoTL.

JILL McSWEENEY-FLAHERTY: [00:39:18] We did have a reviewer that did challenge this, and I think it gave us pause to challenge what is our mandate? What are we thinking of scholarship and rigor, and there have been a lot of conversations in SoTL as to how do we be disciplinarily inclusive? What does this mean for methods and methodology? How are we embracing different ideas of inquiry that aren't bounded by one set of rules? Particularly because we are so inter-trans-multi-disciplinary that when we bring our own epistemological perspective, we then narrow that down, particularly

during the peer review process. And I think that's a little bit easier for people to navigate during the traditional manuscript review, when we have really bounded questions of, oh, do we understand the methods? Is the results section clear? Do we have some kind of stapling in our own discipline that allows us to interpret this? But when we're thinking about a podcast in which people may have not yet listened to those through a lens of professional kind of context. I listen to a lot of podcasts outside of my work context. It challenges them, and I think it challenges them deeply in terms of their epistemology, how they see the world, how they're defining scholarship.

And I think that's an important challenge and an important thing to do, but it does create difficulties when you're thinking about the behind the lens of the peer review process, and navigating that feedback, and navigating it to say, you know, as a journal, how are we supporting different forms of scholarship? Is this a form of scholarship? What makes scholarship and not scholarship? And why can't this be scholarship, given that these fundamental principles that we talk about that are inherent in SoTL are, you know, easy to see in your podcast. And so I think it's really challenging us as, again, a journal, challenging us to, you know, push our reviewers to ask these questions. And then, I go back to thinking about methodologically sound. How does that come out in your episode? Does it need to come out in every episode? Could it come out in just the reflection episode? If people are only listening to one or two episodes during the review, what does that mean to their context and their ability to review this? So, I think it's... it's an interesting thing, and it was a challenge for us.

But I would also say your podcast does a really great job of asking Pat Hutchings' four questions. So you talk about how some of the episodes are a philosophical perspective, some of them are more practical. Some of the episodes have all of that in there, and I think it emphasizes that in our SoTL, we can ask multiple questions. They may look different based on why we're asking them or where we're asking them, but fundamentally, they are still inquiring about student learning, the student experience, and how, ultimately, we can tell our story to shape the practice of others. And that's really what we want in SoTL.

DERRITT MASON: [00:42:06] Yeah, and I mean, something so valuable from the peer review that I learned a lot from was this challenge to really make these kind of connections between pieces that I hadn't found when I was developing 3QTL, right? And really kind of push at those key concepts and questions and principles of SoTL as well, and so that was of tremendous benefit, to me, I think, in having the opportunity to really reflect on what we were doing. It also brought me back to a really fantastic, another *Teaching and Learning Inquiry* piece that was written by a former colleague of mine at the University of Calgary, Faye Halpern, called "The Morphology of the SoTL Article," which won the Article of the Year Award last year, I think, at the International

Conference of the Society of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. And she also problematizes or rereads Hutchings' essential questions, and proposes four alternative stories. And these four stories are "what can't be," "trade-offs," "the limits of individual agency," and just "what is." So really just describing "what is," and her kind of argument is that SoTL scholars tend to tell a recuperative narrative in describing their teaching and learning activities. So, it's like, "there is this problem; here's how I came up with the solution. I implemented the solution, and everything worked." Which, of course, sounds reductive while I'm saying it, but Faye Halpern traced this narrative across a number of SoTL pieces, and so she wants to talk more about actually just, like, failures, trade-offs, things that can't happen. And I think that so many of these stories emerge in 3QTL. Like, what is the story of teaching and learning during COVID-19 if it's not a story about, like, trade-offs and can't-bes [laughs], and limits on our agency because of lockdown, right? And I can think of so many episodes, for example, Laleh Behjat's interview, again, about creating communities, for students online, because you can't build community in person, so this is what we did, right? This was our trade-off. Or Alan Martino doing arts-based feedback activities with students. Or Harper Keenan encouraging students to document and share moments from their life with consent. So, so many kinds of examples in there of limits on our agency, and so the trade-offs of what was done while teaching and learning during that really difficult time.

JILL McSWEENEY-FLAHERTY: [00:44:18] I think it's also a really great point of the file drawer problem, that we only ever publish significant results. But then I think about who are we welcoming in, and what space are we creating if we're only publishing the positive, if we're only talking about and celebrating the wins, when we know so much of our teaching is practice, try, trial by error? How does it create a different space when we are sharing maybe the not-so-great things that happen, or the trade-offs, or "I tried this and it didn't work, but here I am, the resilience that I have, going back and trying it again and adapting?" And one of the things that TLI now has is the "SoTL in Process" articles, and I think this is a really great space, again, along with going public, thinking about alternative artifacts for SoTL, to share some of that, and to create a community where we say, "it's okay if you try something and it doesn't work. You can still come in, you are still a part of that community. Just people who are doing amazingly successful things that we celebrate. We celebrate anyone trying to take a risk and come in." And I think your podcast does a really great job of telling those stories and normalizing them as part of just the process of SoTL in and of itself.

MUSIC BREAK [00:45:25]

DERRITT MASON [00:45:30] This has been such a fabulous conversation. Maybe I can just end with a quote from *Podcast or Perish* that I really like: "sound-based scholarship might offer an opportunity to rethink some of the fundamental questions of how and why

we produce and communicate research.” And I think that that's a really exciting question to ponder as we move forward into the future of the relationship between scholarly podcasting and SoTL. Jill McSweeney-Flaherty, Associate Editor of *Teaching and Learning Inquiry*, thank you so much for being here today, really appreciate all of your contributions to the conversation and your support through this experimental peer review process.

JILL McSWEENEY-FLAHERTY: [00:46:06] Thank you so much for inviting us into this. I really appreciate you challenging us to think about SoTL going public in different ways, and you have challenged me to think about that in really fun ways, so thank you, Derritt and Stacey, for allowing us to be part of that.

DERRITT MASON: [00:46:21] Yes, and thank you, Stacey. Stacey Copeland is 3QTL's consulting producer and assistant professor of media studies at the University of Groningen. Thanks so much for being here, Stacey. I miss our regular collaborations, so it's such a pleasure to chat.

STACEY COPELAND [00:46:34] I know, I was like, “oh, this was so nice to hang out” [laughs].

DERRITT MASON: [00:46:38] And thanks to everyone for listening.

3QTL is recorded at the University of Calgary, which is located on the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta. The City of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation within Alberta, Districts 5 and 6. 3QTL's consulting producer is Stacey Copeland, who also edited this episode. Our music was composed by Eric Xie. Support for 3QTL is provided by the Taylor Institute at the University of Calgary, and a generous financial gift from the Flanagan Foundation.

[Music out]

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