

Bonni [00:00:00] Today on episode number 247 of the Teaching in Higher Ed podcast, Eddie Watson is back this time to share about reclaiming the narrative on the value of higher education.

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Bonni [00:00:24] Hello and welcome to this episode of Teaching in Higher Ed. I'm Bonni Stachowiak and this is the space where we explore the art and science of being more effective at facilitating learning. We also share ways to improve our productivity approaches so we can have more peace in our lives and be even more present for our students.

Bonni [00:00:51] Today I'm welcoming back to the show Dr. Edward Watson. Eddie has been on the show a number of times. He is the Associate Vice President for Quality, Advocacy, and LEAP Initiatives with the Association of American Colleges and Universities and formerly the director of the Center for Teaching and Learning at the University of Georgia. He's the founding executive director of the International Journal of ePortfolio, the executive editor of the International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, and has published on teaching and learning in a number of journals including Change, Educational Technology, EDUCAUSE Review, the Journal for Effective Teaching, and To Improve the Academy, among others.

Bonni [00:01:42] Today he is going to be sharing about a new report out from AAC&U and this report is looking at Fulfilling the American Dream: Liberal Education and the Future of Work.

Bonni [00:01:56] Eddie, welcome to Teaching in Higher Ed.

Eddie [00:01:58] Thanks. I'm glad to be back.

Bonni [00:02:00] We are in interesting times in higher education. And before we dive in and specifically talk about this new AAC&U report, I wonder if you would just start more broadly with us. Where are we in terms of the value of higher education?

Eddie [00:02:17] Well I think that's a real interesting question. I think that we have a unique opportunity maybe these days to, as AAC&U's annual meeting suggested, to reclaim the narrative on the value of higher education. I think that often because say political leaders will push really about the value of higher education being about employment and almost as if the sole output of higher education should be about employment. And then sometimes professors and those in higher education will put back and say "well no no no. It's also about citizenship. It's also about life. It's about lifelong learning. It's about the joy of learning." All of those great things.

Eddie [00:02:56] But I think that we have an opportunity to kind of position ourselves maybe in the middle of that and embrace the full value proposition that is that higher education offers. So it really is about preparing students for work, for citizenship, and for life. And we're hoping that our most recent report provides some mechanisms and tools to enable campuses and advocates for higher education to further make that value proposition argument.

Bonni [00:03:23] I remember coming into higher education- I have sort of a non-traditional path, which is I was in the corporate world for about 15 years before coming to teach in this context. I remember just being so surprised at how controversial it was- as if we could dare to say that part of what we're supposed to be doing in our jobs is help them pay off their college loans, just as when real practical example. It really does seem to be this false binary that so many of us adopt that- I mean of course I don't think it would be helpful to go completely in the other direction too and miss those things like you said becoming better citizens and could that not be more important than ever right now. I mean it's really- those things are essential. Also just human development, for those of us that are teaching our 18 to 22 year olds what an important part of their lives.

Eddie [00:04:13] Yeah I absolutely agree. I think with the expense associated with higher education these days, and you and I have had conversations about open educational resources and trying to sort of transform sort of that cost proposition for students, I think that there's more value than ever for us making the case for why higher education is worth the cost. Which is worth the time and money. And I think owning this broader value proposition of all of the components that indeed is the truth regarding the value of higher learning, I

think that it's very wise for us as an industry, if you will, to make that choice, that decision to own all of the components that are part of our value proposition.

Bonni [00:04:54] Talk a little bit about the Gallup survey that came out before yours and then a little bit of the differences in kind of how yours focused in a slightly different way.

Eddie [00:05:04] So there are public opinion surveys that are taken all the time. But there was one that drew a lot of attention actually about a year ago, maybe a little over a year ago. I think it was January 2018 that Gallup asked sort of the general American public about their confidence in colleges and universities. And among adults nationwide, only 45 percent said that they had either a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in colleges and universities. Where those responding to had very little confidence or only some confidence in colleges and universities, that was over half. It was 54 percent.

Eddie [00:05:43] So seeing that less than half of adults in the U.S. had confidence in higher ed, that really for many of us was startling. So for our survey which focused specifically on those that are doing the hiring executives and hiring managers, we asked the same question to see is there a difference for those that are maybe the direct recipients of our students as they graduate from college? And we did see that it was quite a bit higher, that hiring managers and business executives, 63 percent of both of those populations agreed that they had confidence in colleges and universities. We would still like to see it a lot higher than say even 63 percent. But still it was interesting to us that there was this significant gap between those that are doing the hiring and the rest of the American public.

Bonni [00:06:36] And I know we're going to talk more specifically about the findings of the survey, but when you talk first just about the methodology? And also just a little background of what motivated AAC&U to take this on as a project.

Eddie [00:06:48] Well so AAC&U for maybe the past 10 to 12 years have been doing every couple of years, every two or three years, an employer survey often focusing on different elements or different topics. And this is sort of a continuation of that work. But one of the the focus from the past had always been on surveys of business executives. So business executives are like CEOs within our constructs, owners, CEOs, presidents, C-level executive, vice presidents, and in some cases, directors. But those that are sort of in the executive realm.

Eddie [00:07:25] And one of the critiques of our past surveys has been well this is really interesting, but business executives are not typically the ones doing the bulk of the hiring. And so it was theorized that maybe there are big differences between the way hiring managers value different aspects of our college graduates and the way in the things that business executives say that they're looking for. So since hiring managers are where the rubber meets the road that was a new addition to this survey is that we surveyed both business executives and hiring managers. We contracted with a group called The Heart Research Group in Washington D.C. and they performed the research for us. They have a response pool of 501 business executives in the current report and 500 hiring managers. So it's fairly parallel size groups from the business executives to hiring managers realm.

Eddie [00:08:21] All the respondents, whether they were business executives or hiring managers, were screened to be at companies that have at least 25 employees and report that 25 percent or more of their new hires hold either an associate's degree from a two year college or a bachelor's degree from a four year college. That gives you kind of a sense of the size of businesses that were included in the survey as well as the two populations that were under consideration, hiring managers versus business executive.

Bonni [00:08:51] You were talking earlier about that 60ish percent number and we wish it was higher, but I know that we're about to talk through some of your findings and we have sort of some bad news, good news, and everything in between. So let's let's start out with some good news. Would you talk a little bit-do business executives and hiring managers feel like college is valuable? Both in terms of the time spent and money involved.

Eddie [00:09:15] Yes. These were a couple of statistics that we were kind of happy to see. So for instance, we asked about the importance of completing a college degree. Do you see it as being absolutely essential or very important or somewhat important or not important at all? And 82 percent of business executives and 75 percent of hiring managers agreed that it was either absolutely essential or very important to complete a college education. When asked whether or not a college degree is worth the time and money, 88 percent of business executives said that it was either definitely worth it or probably worth it. Only 12 percent said that the time and money wasn't worth it. Hiring managers just a little bit less, business executives were at 88 percent and hiring managers were at 85 percent, either felt that it was definitely worth it or probably worth it. So those are pretty high percentages that even with a lot of

the narrative regarding the increases in tuition and the costs and student debt, all of those those parts of the narrative, employers, hiring managers and business executives, are definitely still seeing there being significant value in earning a college degree.

Bonni [00:10:24] That really is good news. And I know the next news is still good news, but a little bit more nuanced. We definitely have some work to do. Could you talk about both the business executives and hiring managers, they do show satisfaction with the graduates that they're hiring in terms of their abilities to apply the skills and knowledge, which I took it as a good thing. But I know we have a little bit further we could be going for this particular area of applying things.

Eddie [00:10:52] Yeah there's a couple of different ways that we kind of look at that question. So we ask about satisfaction with recent graduates ability to apply skills and knowledge they learned in college to complex problems in the workplace. So both groups were fairly close to that notion of being able to apply knowledge to complex problems in the workplace. 71 percent of business executives said that new graduates were capable of doing that kind of work and 74 percent of hiring managers felt they could. So about a quarter, or a little bit more than a quarter on average for those groups felt that they were somewhat or very dissatisfied with college graduates ability to do that work. I think always, regardless of what the stats are, you always want the very satisfied to be much higher than it is even if it was right under 100 percent. But still, these stats are somewhat troubling that a quarter of business executives and hiring managers were somewhat or very dissatisfied with graduates ability to apply knowledge right out of college.

Bonni [00:11:53] And I believe there was also an element of yeah maybe they can do it in entry level positions but that it was harder for them to be able to advance then, perhaps less than tied to just the ability to think in more complex terms.

Eddie [00:12:07] Yeah. We were trying to tease out a nuance in our questions. And that's indeed what we we found that business executives and hiring managers were pretty close in their reporting of stats, about 57 percent of business executives and 60 percent of hiring managers felt that recent college graduates were able to succeed in entry level positions at the company, that they have kind of the full set of skills and knowledge that they need to be able to do entry level work.

Eddie [00:12:33] When asked about being ready to be advanced or promoted within the company, about a third of business executives and a quarter of hiring managers felt that recent college graduates were ready to advance within the company. And you'd certainly would expect there to be a difference. Like you would expect entry level statistics to be higher than thinking about notions of being promoted or being advanced within the company. But that was still I think surprisingly low, that hiring managers felt that only a quarter of those recent college graduates were sort of well positioned, had the skills to be advanced within the company, that there was more growth that was needed before they would be ready for promotion.

Bonni [00:13:12] When I was reading that part of the survey, it was reminding me of an episode, it's episode 207 we had with Wendy Purcell. The name of the episode is called Rethinking Higher Education. One of the big points she made, so much better than I'm about to, was just that we think of so much in terms of very traditionally about 4 year undergraduate degrees, and then there's master's degrees, and then there's doctorates.

Bonni [00:13:38] But we in higher education, this is me speaking but also clumsily speaking for Wendy, we don't really think about that lifelong learning. And as I'm reading this we- I mean it would make sense right that there are good in the level positions, but then not as good as abilities to advance. Why doesn't higher education come in there- and what a wonderful opportunity to allow for more engagement with the business and other organizations in the community with governments I mean it just seems like such a missed opportunity for us. Do you see the same thing? Where there's just this gap where higher ed doesn't fit very well?

Eddie [00:14:14] Well I think that there's definitely opportunities that arise from the data. And so recognizing that wow okay so our students aren't really necessarily prepared to be promoted within the company. Are there things that we might be able to do? What are the missing elements? There is certainly some opportunities for follow up surveys or for individual universities or departments to follow up with their alumni board to tease that out a little bit further. What is it our students can't do? What might we be able to provide them to prepare them to be promoted or to advance within an individual work setting?

Eddie [00:14:46] So I think there's some real opportunities for additional follow up, but there's there's obviously something that's actionable here. What might we do different with our curriculum with a variety of practices whether they be internships or other real world opportunities to actually get some experience

while you're on campus? Whether it's service learning, or community based learning, or internship, or study abroad, things that that might take place in the real world that maybe would better prepare students to be promoted within their company.

Bonni [00:15:15] And I'd love to see to just there not be such severe borders between I'm in a formal degree program or I'm not. I think there could be so much that a university can- and I know some do by the way. I've heard stories of universities that are very integrated in the community and really do partner with organizations and it's definitely part of that workforce development that happens. But it seems to be the exception to the norm.

Eddie [00:15:43] It seems many institutions, they all have identities and so sometimes their identities are more that of an R1 which has a certain sort of profile or set of goals in mind. And there are other others that are regional institutions that might be almost entirely connected to the region and try to make efforts to speak to those workforce needs. But I think that regardless of identity, there's an opportunity for an institution to look at this data and other surveys that have been out in the last year from the Strata Institute for the Future of Work and Burning Glass and Hand Shake, there's several that have released reports over the last year that provide insights as well as hours into sort of what employers say that they're looking for these days and what we might ultimately do to better prepare our students for those needs.

Bonni [00:16:34] The next thing I'd love to have you share about I know wasn't the biggest most profound findings, but I still find them interesting. That's the second tier college learning outcomes. Could you share a little bit about some of these more nuanced findings where I know there's one having to do with finding information and organizing and evaluating that. You did talk earlier about analyzing complex problems, etc. Did did you also find some of these second tier findings interesting?

Eddie [00:17:02] Well yes. What we did is we provided a list of knowledge, skills, abilities that we hope that we're producing in our college graduates and then ask for employers to rate them, which of these are very important or somewhat important and down the line.

Eddie [00:17:19] And what we found was there was agreement among executives and hiring managers that the ability to effectively communicate orally was the number one thing that they rated as being very important. So that's really I think an interesting nuance. But on down the line that of those that

were the top things for executives, it was to communicate orally, it was critical thinking, ethical judgment and decision making, and the ability to work in teams, and the ability to work independently. So there's a kind of like the top 5 for business executives.

Eddie [00:17:57] Very similar match to hiring managers, there was one for hiring managers that rated far higher than for executives. But the top four here for hiring managers was the ability to effectively communicate orally, ethical judgment and decision making, the ability to work effectively in teams, so that pretty much matches what the executives had listed. But the hiring managers also had as one of their top skills the ability to apply knowledge and skills to real world settings. So sort of that translation work. You've learned things in the classroom, can you make those things work in the real world setting?

Eddie [00:18:36] And what was interesting, the comparative point between hiring managers and executives this is one of the things that we were really looking forward to seeing and what we discovered was that hiring managers rated almost across the board all of these skills about 10 percent more highly than expected. So for instance, 80 percent of hiring of business executives listed or rated effectively communicating orally as very important to 80 percent of business executive said that, 90 percent of hiring managers. You can imagine if you're interviewing students or recent graduates that might be one of the things that would stand out as you were having those professional communications during the hiring process. But you have had hiring managers across the board were about 10 percent higher looking at that the applied knowledge and skills to real world settings, it was 87 percent of hiring managers listed that is very important. 76 percent of business executives listed that as very important.

Eddie [00:19:39] And there were sort of this next level of skills that were I guess less needed by sort of the variety of employers that were contacted and we did survey across all business sectors. We had 23 different business sectors and we tried to draw from each of those sectors fairly equivalently.

Eddie [00:20:00] But some of the things that were more lowly rated across the board across a sort of business sector proficiency in a language other than English was the lowest it had twenty five percent of hiring managers said that was a very important skill. 23 percent of business executives said that was very important. There were some things around sort of I guess media literacy or technology literacy that were in this mix as well. You see about three quarters generally of the business executives and hiring managers found those to be very important as well. But there's a lengthy list of these. And of course the report is

available full text open access on the AAC&U 2eb site I'm sure that you'll have a link to it on the podcast page as well.

Bonni [00:20:45] Yes.

Eddie [00:20:45] So people can go in and dig through these stats, we've got charts for all of these kinds of things as well.

Bonni [00:20:52] I want to circle back for a minute to the oral communication. I know this is just a bias of mine so... I can't tell you that I'm super well versed in all of these reports that come out, but every time I see one every single year that just pops out. I mean it's near the top or at the top of every one I've ever seen. And so I'm curious, Eddie, what have you seen in your experience where universities have had that stand out to them too and then changes that they've made to really recognize that that is so important and so many ways that we've designed our classes don't really develop those skills very well.

Eddie [00:21:35] Well I think I think we are seeing a significant shift from employers these days. So there was a Washington Post article this past summer that summarized several reports that kind of came out in the late spring. And as I recall the summation in The Washington Post suggested that the reports indicated that the skill set of graduates rather than their major might matter most in hiring. That taken together that these reports I think ours contributes somewhat to this same narrative, but taken together the report showed that today's undergraduates along with their parents and colleges need to prepare differently for the job market than they did a decade ago. And I've read different reports that have also kind of pointed to the economic downturn and that students have come out of that experience or parents, families, and students that have come to college thinking that some degrees might better prepare them for success an economic downturn.

Eddie [00:22:40] I don't think that there's evidence that shows that you can't get jobs with certain degrees. But I think that there's a mindset, that there's a belief by parents that doesn't necessarily match the reality. But there is a belief and so therefore some are making decisions toward some career paths or majors as a result of a belief that might be erroneous and certainly doesn't necessarily match what some of these employer surveys are suggesting, that actually the skill set that is provided is maybe more important than major in hiring processes.

Eddie [00:23:20] Of course that's a huge generalization that doesn't match every discipline and every hiring situation, but that seems to be what the

preponderance of the evidence over the last year regarding employer research seems to be pointing in that direction.

Bonni [00:23:35] And actually I didn't want to forget too, that's another one of my big things is looking at developing those oral communication skills and the writing skills and some of these other things you were saying really are important for employers working in teams, ethical decision making. Could you talk a little bit about the findings having to do with whether transcripts matter more to measure these skills they're seeking or whether approaches like e-portfolios are standing out to employers more?

Eddie [00:24:03] Yeah. We asked a couple questions around e-portfolios. We asked how useful do those that hire and executives, how useful do they find the college transcript when it comes to evaluating a recent graduates potential to succeed? And both groups, business executives and hiring managers, had responses that were right around 50 percent that they found transcripts to be either fairly useful or are very useful. So 51 percent of business executives, 48 percent of hiring managers. But whenever we described what an e-portfolio can be and then asked would an e-portfolio in addition to sort of the traditional resume and transcript as part of an application package, would that be useful to evaluate your recent graduates potential to succeed, 78 percent of business executives and 81 percent of hiring managers said that sounds like it would be very useful or fairly useful. So almost a 30 percent increase between both groups in their perception of how valuable a e-portfolio would be as they go through that evaluation process of candidates.

Bonni [00:25:11] So in terms of the report, we have talked about your findings and I do want to ask you a little bit about how we could take action on them. Any advice you have. But before I ask you that question, I'm just wondering is there any other findings you want to tease out before we talk about that taking action part?

Eddie [00:25:28] Well I think the last thing I want to share is a finding that directly relates to the taking action question. So we ask not about specific skills and outcomes but about experiences. Like we gave a list of experiences in which of these experiences would make you much more likely to hire a recent graduate? So if they had this experience, would you be somewhat or much more likely to hire them? And by far the number one I guess valuable experience that employers said would make someone a more attractive candidate is having had an internship or an apprenticeship with a company or organization. And I

think we hear this in lots of different contexts, it just gets repeated again in this survey.

Eddie [00:26:12] But actually my son's in college and there was a guest speaker on campus and he thinking about the future raised his hand and said "what would you say would be something that I should do while I'm in college to make me more marketable?" And the answer was "you need to get an internship."

Eddie [00:26:29] So that's not necessarily a surprise but it's something that we can think about how we might embrace that even further. In fact the percentages were really really high for that. Hiring managers and business executives were both at 94 and 93 percent that they would be much more likely or somewhat more likely to hire someone with that experience. Looking down the list other experiences that were seen as being important in the hiring process, one is for the students who have had a project in a community with people from different backgrounds or cultures or multiple courses requiring significant writing assignments. So again that communication piece is in here. Research done collaboratively with peers so that kind of evokes teamwork as well and larger projects like advanced comprehensive senior projects or a thesis, service learning, and study abroad were among the others that were rated fairly highly as well.

Eddie [00:27:28] So that provides some sense of what actions might be taken if you're focusing on not only what experiences students might have but also these experiences engender a breadth of skills. So being involved in an internship will certainly help you, if it's a good internship, that's kind of the big caveat it's always that these things are done well. I think that there's examples of students who have had bad intern experiences and good internship experiences. But if you've had if you have a good internship experience you would hopefully be applying what you learned in college in a real world setting in sort of limited mentored situation. The same thing goes for whether you're out doing a community based project or doing a service learning project, you're applying knowledge in real world settings. So I think that there's multiple benefits of these experiences. Yes employers are looking for them, but also students learn deeply through these kinds of experiences as well.

Bonni [00:28:26] Listeners may or may not know this, but sometimes I stack up interviews in a day. I don't do any more than I think I have it set no more than two. But you're the second interview of the day. I didn't even tell you that, Eddie.

Bonni [00:28:38] But the episodes are going to air a little bit out of order. So the conversation you and I are having is going to come before the episode I'm about to share with you. So I interviewed Dr. Sylvia [00:28:47]Feuerbach [0.0s] and she is going to share a little bit about mindset metacognition and math on Episode 249. But the reason that you're reminding me of her is she was talking about math that learning math is not talking about math. You want to learn math, you've got to do math. So it's kind of really reminded me of just as educators we become so much more effective when we stop talking about it, but actually do it. And when we're actually doing it it's so much more motivating for the students because it helps them see those connections, the relevance between the work that they're going to put in to learn it and then whatever outcomes they might see. So you are just reminding me of so many themes that are coming out on so many episodes these days.

Bonni [00:29:31] So this is the point in the show where we each get to share our recommendations. And I wanted to share about some writing Kate Bowles is someone who have not had on the show, but I should really have this as a nudge to invite her. She is a wonderful wonderful writer. She just wrote the most powerful thing the other day, I'm going to be posting a link to it in the show notes. It's called Not Our Dark. It has to do with reference to dark as in the color of one's skin just in case that helps with the story I'm about to read. She writes:.

Bonni [00:30:04] "It's 2013. I'm in the back room of a small library in a town in western New South Wales scrolling through a microfilm newspaper reader scribbling notes with a pen I have found in the bottom of my bag. Next to me my daughter's looking through a book of war records. We're all there the five of us together looking for a family history for which we have only two clues, the shape of something starts to appear. Names connect. We drive out of town to look at a house and come back to the cemetery. We fan out and walk carefully up all the rows squinting in the sunlight. Things add up, and then don't. There's someone we are recommended to visit who might help us out parked outside her house. I say that I will go because whatever this is going to be about, it's not about me. Anyhow, it's a long shot that she'll know anything. She's elderly and white and doesn't seem to be surprised that a stranger is at her door. Her garden is tidy. I give her the name. And there it is. Yes I knew about her. She was dark but not our dark. She was my daughter's great grandmother and in living language there is still a form of words that talks about people who are dark as belonging to the people who are not."

Bonni [00:31:36] That was Not Our Dark by Kate Bowles. And it's just one of many of her magnificent pieces and in this case talking about a family member and

her daughter has been trying to find the origins of her background. So I'd recommend that you go read the rest of that and Kate Bowles writings as well. She is a magnificent writer.

Bonni [00:31:56] I'm going to pass that over to you now Eddie for your recommendations.

Eddie [00:31:59] Sure that was very fascinating.

Bonni [00:32:01] She has such a- I've been thinking so much about writing has John Warner has been on the show a couple times recently and so he's just such a magnificent writer and so thinking about the introduction whether it's the title of something or just those first little clues that really just draw you in because you're- I try to spell everything out. I'm too much like "this is what I'm going to write about." And the really great writers just draw you in, you're not quite sure what this is all about. Yeah. I just I'm very intrigued by writers who do that so well.

Eddie [00:32:31] So I have a couple of recommendations and I've been on the Teaching in Higher Ed podcast in the past, I've always had books and articles or journals or websites to point people to. I am going a different path this time that's a little bit more I guess sort of personal for me. But I guess I have a book to recommend for anyone out there that is a music fan. I'm a I'm a musician and kind of a music head and I still call things albums because I've got a big vinyl collection and that's kind of my hobby is vinyl. But there was a excellent book that came out right at the end of the year by a musician named Jeff Tweedy. The book is called Let's Go (So We Can Get Back). And he may be better known because he's the lead singer and sort of chief songwriter for a band called Wilco. And before that he was in a band called Uncle Tupelo. And I was Uncle Tupelo fan. I did college radio for seven years and discovered them when their first record came out. And was a huge fan.

Eddie [00:33:30] So reading his memoir was really sort of intriguing in that for me personally it kind of filled in some gaps in my knowledge of that band's history. But he's also very open about his songwriting process. Probably a third of the book is about sort of writing process. Some things are kind of almost games or thought puzzles he sort of positions for himself that he he works his his way through in the songwriting process. And then in other ways that's far more organic than that. So I'd recommend anyone that's a fan of indie rock or alternative country or that genre, you would really enjoy Jeff Tweedy's book.

Eddie [00:34:11] I'll also recommend there's an anthology from Uncle Tupelo's days when they were an active band from 1989 I guess through 1993 they put out four records during that time. But there's a disc that's an anthology her Uncle Tupelo from that time. And what I loved about that band is that it they were sort of bringing together bluegrass and folk elements with punk rock, if you can imagine. The first three records especially seemed to be very sort of bridging genres if you will, while the fourth record was more of a merging of genres it was sort of very much kind of a straight ahead almost radio friendly rock record. But those are my two recommendations. Jeff Tweedy's Let's Go (So We Can Get Back) and the Uncle Tupelo anthology.

Bonni [00:35:01] First of all I have to say that title of Jeff Tweedy's book is exactly what I was talking about. I'm hooked right from the let's go so we can get back and I go "what's this all about?" It just draws me in. And then I graduated from high school in 1989. So college would have been 89 to 93, so I'm I'm so intrigued by this because you said can you imagine? And I said No, I cannot imagine punk rock and bluegrass and I'm so intrigued, very intrigued.

Eddie [00:35:26] Loud guitars and banjo here and there. They did it.

Bonni [00:35:30] I just listened to an episode of On Being, which is a podcast, and she talked to two banjo players and of course you would think I would remember the people's names but I don't. But it really introduced me to some background of the banjo I was not at all familiar with. I just thought oh my gosh there's so much there in that one instrument, in our history and music. It was really intriguing. So now you've got me even more intrigued.

Bonni [00:35:53] Well Eddie, as you mentioned, you've been on the show a number of times and I spend so much time being so nervous to interview people hoping that the episode will go well and this is just like a conversation with an old friend it feels like now I've really enjoyed getting to know you and even actually meeting in person a couple of times and it's just it's just great to have this passion for caring about our students and helping higher education get to where where we need to go.

Eddie [00:36:19] Well thanks for saying that. I very much enjoy these conversations as well. It does it feel like talking to an old friend for sure.

Bonni [00:36:26] Yeah. Well thanks for coming in. I just have to have you back whenever you got something new to share with us.

Eddie [00:36:30] Ok will do.

Bonni [00:36:34] I always get so much out of every conversation I've been privileged to have with Eddie Watson over all these years now. If you would like to go check out the recommendations from today's episode, you can go to teachinginhighered.com/247. I'm so intrigued by the book he shared about Let's Go (So We Can Get Back) by Jeff Tweedy and the anthology of music. I'm so intrigued by a combination of bluegrass and punk rock. I hope you'll also check out the writing and other writings by Kate Bowles that I shared in the recommendations as well.

Bonni [00:37:09] Thanks so much for listening. We've got some great episodes coming up next week. 248 is going to be Debbie Baff coming on talking about surveying social and open learning and there's just lots of other good stuff to come. We'll see you next time.

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