

SOTL in 60+ Podcast

Transcript for Session 10: Sarah Bunnell (Elon University) and Joshua Hill (MRU), interviewed by Sally Haney

00:00 - 00:13

Sally Haney

So, I'm so glad that you're both here. And if we could begin with you introducing yourselves and locating yourselves within this, this setting, that would be wonderful.

00:13 - 00:28

Joshua Hill

Thanks for having me. My name is Dr. Joshua Hill, and I'm an assistant professor at Mount Royal University. And at our SoTL symposium, I have the responsibility and unique pleasure of offering a closing keynote.

00:28 - 00:29

Sally Haney

Great.

00:29 - 00:55

Sarah Bunnell

I'm so happy to be here. Thanks to you both. My name is Sarah Bunnell. I am the director of the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning at Elon University, and associate professor of psychology. And a day and a half ago, I was invited to share some opening words for the keynote of this convening and have appreciated learning with and from folks, over the days that have followed.

00:55 - 01:12

Sally Haney

We have both keynote speakers at the table. And, when you're asked to be a keynote, I'm just curious, is that, what goes through your heart and your mind when you get asked to do something like this? I'd be curious about that.

01:12 - 02:18

Joshua Hill

Well, I'm a first time [?]. Like, they have a sticker on the first time SoTL participant. I wanted a sticker that said I'm a first time keynote speaker at an academic conference. So certainly, in the moment, a moment of hubris had me say that I thought I could do it. And, then afterwards I was, you know, thinking a lot about how what stories, would be appropriate in large part because I've been at this conference and I... it's big shoes to fill because there's a really, incredible group of people that come together here and thinking about an opportunity to bring some sort of synthesis or a little bit of collective story

01:50 - 02:17

Joshua Hill

to all of the storytelling that's occurred, feels like a really important responsibility. And, so I've been willing on how to do that and also know that that on the flip side, that beautiful bunch of people, is interpreting it and they're going to have conversations about it. And so it's not all on me. It's actually, you know, put something out in the world and hope that other people bring, it opens up interpretive possibilities. That's what I'm hoping to do.

02:20 - 02:57

Sarah Bunnell

You know I really appreciate that and the word responsibility resonates with me. I think about who are the folks in this space, and how can I carefully welcome all of them into the conversation? So thinking a lot about the onramps within and addressed so that folks find something that is resonant, whether these are some new ideas that I'm starting to engage with, and I need a moment of validation to say it's okay to think and sit with this, or I'm really trying to do some large change work.

02:57 - 03:30

Sarah Bunnell

And I've been in these ideas for a long time, and I need some energy to drive me forward. So, I'm thinking about, it really being a relational, conversational set of moves, within a keynote address. The other pieces, I think it can do some really powerful leader work. So, I had great conversations with, Michelle and Cherie Woolmer, around what is the institutional climate and context right now?

03:30 - 03:58

Sarah Bunnell

I'm sensitive to the power of not being a prophet in your own land when you come in as a keynote addressee. And so how can you make resonant and name to other folks in this space? "Here's what's happening, here's what's so important and powerful about what you're doing, and here are some avenues forward." So thinking about a lever of change through naming, that can happen in a keynote space.

03:58 - 04:26

Sally Haney

A few people have sat around this table in the last, 24 hours. And several of them actually mentioned your keynote, Sarah. And of course, they haven't yet heard yours, Josh. But they were really, I think, really embracing that, that notion of, some of the key SoTL values and principles. Maybe we should be thinking about these values and principles and mapping them on to particularly academic leadership, you know, what is it to lead, and how do those principles relate?

04:26 - 04:46

Sally Haney

And so, Josh, I would ask you, you know, and again, it's not really fair because you haven't given your keynote yet and I don't want to put you on the spot, but is there any piece of that, you know, some of Sarah's messaging that is resonating for you and will potentially intersect with your keynote?

04:46 - 04:51

Sally Haney

With your idea, with your big idea or your story actually, for sure.

04:51 - 05:24

Joshua Hill

For sure, there's lots of resonance. There's lots of specific elements that are shared. But I think the big intersection is thinking about SoTL as leadership. And for me, I'm going to kind of put out the idea that the very community of SoTL is leadership. So it's a mechanism of collective and shared leadership. And sometimes we think... Sarah did a really nice job of reframing sort of hierarchal command and control leadership as heroes journey.

05:24:07 - 06:04

Joshua Hill

And, you know, which is an old story but still plays itself out in some of the ways that people enact leadership and a lot of how our structures are position leaders and their responsibilities. And for me, I've always navigated to a different kind of leadership, which is a leadership of being in collaboration, being telling, sharing our stories together, thinking about creating spaces for the community to become the shared change agents within a school system or a school or a classroom.

06:04 - 06:49

Joshua Hill

So yeah, for me, some of the leaderly the moves that Sarah was asking us to reflect on like how the SoTL ways of being and seeing the world could support leaders is quite aligned with what I'm going to hope to ask us to consider, which is, as the leaders we are, in the multiple roles that people in that room are going to bring, how if we think about what we're doing is leading or how is it, you know, in a responsive, collective, emergent space, leading not only our institutions, but the world.

06:49 - 07:12

Joshua Hill

What might we do to contribute withi.... how's that metaphor Help us think about our some of our next steps? And moreover, how does it help us think about what it is we've just been engaged in? So, a chance to reflect on how they've been leading our world over the past three days.

07:13 - 07:38

Sally Haney

One thing, Josh, that you touched on was stories and storytelling, and I wonder where that fits in that maybe, you know, if either of you, can talk about the power of story as it relates to the leadership endeavor, the SoTL endeavour. Maybe that's not a fair question. Again, I leave it to you.

07:38 - 08:21

Joshua Hill

No, absolutely fair for me. Story is ontology. So, you know, question mark. But I say that because so like, to me story is, SoTL is sharing stories, creating collective stories. It's a form of storytelling. And so, thinking about the supporting individual and collective storytelling and mechanisms for folks to

to think about the stories they're telling is, is one metaphor for me for when I think about SoTL. Sarah how does that sit for you?

08:21 - 08:56

Sarah Bunnell

Well, yeah, that that definitely resonates. I think in one of the things that I think about with stories is that we tell stories to find meaning and purpose and to think about lesson and intention. And so when I think both about how am I making sense of the learning and learners in the communities that I'm operating and in my classrooms, but also how am I, as a SoTL leader, helping to construct the stories at the level of leadership and advocacy?

08:56 - 09:29

Sarah Bunnell

For my colleagues of here are these individuals amazing strengths and skills and capacities that could be applied to something that we care about, that could help us find meaning and purpose and connection towards more inclusive institutional change. And so I think we as SoTL-ers, have one of our superpowers is to do that translational storytelling work for others to see why these skills are so important for what I think we need in higher education today.

09:29 - 09:59

Sally Haney

It seems like with, SoTL scholarship and SoTL practice the reflection piece is really, important. And I wonder if it's too early to ask this, but when you leave this space today, tomorrow, how will you reflect on this and what will be the story, that personal story that might be resonating or beginning to percolate for you?

09:59 - 10:27

Joshua Hill

I've been thinking a lot about the story of the conference and Michelle and I, and Sarah, and others have been just thinking about all of the really important design elements that are at work in creating the setting for these stories to be told and shared. And, what are some of the specific design components that contribute to that?

10:28 - 10:56

Joshua Hill

Because it feels like a special community that's creating lots of important knowledge together. And I'm kind of a teacher geek like that. I'm always wanting to think about so, like, what's at work, what are the conditions? How do we sponsor conditions like this? And then what can I, how can I think about... can I learn from that towards my own other contexts that I'm leading, learning, creating spaces for learning.

10:56 - 11:24

Joshua Hill

So elements like the pop up poetry, the eating together, the many thoughtful formats and how they interact are just some of the components. The role of the keynote in the closing and the emergent attempt to have us be in relationship between those two stories. You know, there's just many components of the SoTL Conference. The SoTL symposium that I'm reflecting on.

11:24 - 11:37

Sally Haney

Yeah. Okay. Is there any anything to add there or on your own, your own takeaway, your own reflection, your own sort of personal story that maybe is beginning to form as a result of your time here.

11:37 - 12:06

Sarah Bunnell

So I have a number of things that I want to sit with and reflect on coming out of this. And I want to echo Josh, what you just said about the power of watching the leadership that is happening, by Michelle and others in facilitating this space and time and community and how important it is that this work continues, that these conversations continue.

12:06 - 12:42

Sarah Bunnell

And so I'm just really impressed by the leadership that is happening in the creation of space and time here this weekend. And I want to glean as much as I can to bring to my home context. I am also so appreciative to be in this place, on this land, to breathe this air, to see snowflakes. So being re-

reminded of the power of being grounded, with others, and to create physical space and intellectual space and affective space to do this work. Yeah. I'm really moved by the time

12:44 - 12:53

Sally Haney

Anything else to add before we, call it a wrap?

12:53 - 12:59

Joshua Hill

I think I can save the rest of my ideas for later, if that's okay with you.

12:59 - 13:01

Sarah Bunnell

And I'm really looking forward to your closing.

13:01 - 13:03

Sally Haney

As am I. Thank you both.

13:03 - 13:05

Joshua Hill

Thank you.