

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Hello, and welcome to You Got This!, a podcast about teaching, learning, community, conversation, and your digital life, made for everyone at Thompson Rivers University. I'm your host, Brenna Clarke Gray, Coordinator of Educational Technologies, and this podcast is a project of your friends over at Learning Technology and Innovation. We're housed within Open Learning, but we support the whole campus community. I record this podcast in Tk'emlups te Secwepemc within the unceded traditional lands of Secwepemcú'ecw, where I hope to learn and grow in community with all of you.

It's exam season, folks. Let's get into it.

Happy exam week. I hope you are observing in the traditional way, which is if you are currently teaching faculty, I hope that you are quelling your coffee-induced anxiety gut and getting through your marking pile okay. If you are support staff, I hope that you are hanging in there. If you are a student, I hope you have every success in the world, and also that you have time for a big deep breath.

This time of year has always had this particular rhythm. It's the moment when campus starts to get quiet, but it's like suspiciously quiet, because the reason it's quiet is because everybody is panicking. It's not like the quiet of summer. It's a much more intense, sort of horror movie-type quiet.

I hope that you're finding some balance this exam season, regardless of what it brings for you. In the world of faculty support, I am looking at a lot of grade books. I am setting up a lot of Moodle shells for next term. I'm having some really interesting conversations about what assessments did and didn't work this term, and what to do differently next time.

It's a busy time for me, but it's nothing like it used to be when I was teaching faculty and I was marking all night long for the rhythm of this 13-week semester, where the drum just beats and beats and beats.

Thinking about that rhythm, it was why I wanted to talk to our guest today. I've invited John Belshaw. John Belshaw is an Open Learning faculty member in history, and he's also created some really great and well-used open education resources. He's an excellent person to talk to about all things open, the ethos of open learning and why it's something special.

I work in Open Learning, but I don't always get a lot of contact with Open Learning faculty members, so it was really lovely to talk with John about, well, all the things we both care about. I'm going to let John take it from here.

I am here today with TRU-OL instructor, John Belshaw. John, hi. I'm hoping we can talk a bit about all things OL today, but first I'd love it if you would introduce yourself.

John Belshaw:

I'm John Belshaw. I'm a professor of history. I've been working with Thompson Rivers University and its various forms for many, many years, and teaching on campus, but in the last 10, 12 years, teaching through Open Learning. I have a PhD in economic and social history.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

In addition to teaching for OL, you develop open educational resources, right? Some of the most popular that we use, I think.

John Belshaw:

Yeah, that was great fun. Developed three open textbooks. The first two were pre and post-Canadian history, and those are widely used across Canada, and also working with Chelsea Horton and Sarah Nickel. Chelsea is also a TRU-OL faculty member.

We've worked up an Indigenous histories textbook, which is ... I mean, what's wonderful about these things is they're available online all the time, free to anyone. You don't have to sign up or promise your firstborn child or anything like that. You can just use them.

For faculty, wherever they are in Canada, they can use them, instruct their students to go to the site and do that. If they want to make a change to it, if, for example, they're new in Newfoundland and there's really not a lot in the textbooks about Newfoundland as you might imagine, or PEI, they can add stuff to it. They can reuse, reproduce, rejig. They can do all kinds of fun stuff with the textbook, cut out the bits they're not interested in and make it their own. I think for a whole bunch of pedagogical reasons, that's just great.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

I agree. I think we share an open ethos, and I'm hoping we'll talk about that, a bit today. I will share links to those texts in the show notes if folks want to go and check them out.

I want to start today, John with, I feel like we're in this moment at TRU, where we have a senior administration that's very interested in an integrated vision of the university.

Ever since arriving here, I've felt a little bit like my job lives in Open Learning. I support the campus community. I straddle these two worlds, and I'm very aware of how little, campus in particular understands about the world of OL.

I wanted to start by just asking you, since we have a lot of campus faculty who listen. From the perspective of being an OL faculty member, can you talk a bit about what your teaching life is like?

John Belshaw:

Well, it's a great question. First, let me say, when I hear that there's interest in integrating the open learning side and the face-to-face side, my first concern is that, what integration means is what happens when a shark swallows a smaller fish.

I think that, that has been part of the conversation around OL within TRU for quite some time. How do we bring that into TRU as opposed to how do we really create something of a synthesis between the two?

I hope that's where the conversation goes, because there are strengths on both sides of the house, and I think they're very complementary. I, for one think they need to be both sides of the house for some time to come.

The thing about online teaching and open teaching, they're different things. Teaching online is just putting your course into some sort of shell, and away you go, and there's various degrees of doing that, too. I've taught online for the University of the Fraser Valley, for Royal Roads University. Very, very different models.

Teaching an open is inherently ... I think it's inherently different. Partly, it's the self-paced aspect of it, because there is a box around the thing, and you mustn't change your course as you're going along. We have a different kind of control over what the content is, so that other OL faculty members can take on a course, and it's still packaged and ready to go.

Within that, your first focus is, all the time that you might take to revise your lectures or revise your course outline, every term. I know colleagues who do this on campus will spend weeks doing that. Well, I don't do that, but what I do is, I spend a lot of time in contact with students. I think that's the real value-added proposition here.

On campus, most of your students are going to be 18 to 22 years of age. Most of my students are in their mid-30s. They're moms, mostly. They have 2.5 kids. Kids go to bed at 8:00. That's when they turn on their open learning course.

Their circadian rhythms are very different from those of on-campus students who are worried about whether they can get a part-time job working somewhere in town to subsist as they do their undergraduate studies. These students are in a very different situation in their lives, and some are 18, some are 20, and some of them are just filling a gap, and all the rest are ... What they need as they're going through these courses is, generally speaking, a lot more communications.

Not handholding, but they need to be engaged, and they're not going to be engaged with other students because it's self-paced, so they have to be ... I'm the one who has to engage them. I have to be ready if they seek me out, but I also have to put myself out there, and a quick turnaround is absolutely essential.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

That's an interesting perspective on it. I've never heard it articulated in that way that, instead of having a classroom of colleagues who they can turn to, they really are in much more of a one-on-one relationship with you as the instructor.

John Belshaw:

Yes, that's right. It's much more, in many respects, it's bizarrely, perversely, it's more like an Oxbridge seminar, a one-to-one tutorial than what we would tend to see on campus.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Oh, that's so interesting. When you were talking about what integration might look like, I similarly share anxiety around that. I think the values of open learning are also values that TRU as a whole, either holds or once held.

I'm thinking in particular about the Open Access mandate, and what it means to have a population of students who come to the university via the Open Access pathway. Do you have any thoughts about that?

John Belshaw:

Yeah, I do. When the two institutions, UCC and BCOU fused back around, was it 2005, there was a lot of confusion as to what constituted open. The President at the time, Roger Barnsley spent a lot of time talking to people at the Open University in the UK, trying to get a sense of what openness meant and how this might work here.

Our mandate, our legislation is very clear on this. We are BC's open institution and we are meant to provide access to open learning, not just to courses, but to open learning across the province and beyond.

That's a mandate, a mission that, how to put it? A lot of my students who aren't 35-year-old single moms or single dads or whatever, a lot of them are trying to find that course that they can fill that one slot with. They just need this one course, and they need it off-cycle. They can't wait until September because they've got to get their credentials in by the end of August if they're going to move on to the next program.

The kind of openness we provide, it's teaching on time. It's, providing a resource in a timely manner, regardless of where you are, regardless of when you are. That's something that on-campus education

cannot provide. I think this is something that TRU needs to be really proud of. We can, through OL, make a real difference in the lives of our students.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

You're describing a kind of flexibility of learning that is a popular notion. We'll hear, we'll see these consultants step out. "Learners really need more flexibility. Learners need to be met where they're at," these kinds of phrases that we hear, but TRU-OL has been doing it, right?

It often feels like, when we talk about the strengths of TRU, capital T, capital R, capital U as an institution, I think sometimes the value of that flexibility is missed in the larger picture.

John Belshaw:

Part of it is just purely situational. When you're on campus and everyone around you is teaching face-to-face, and they may be teaching, also an online course, but you don't see them doing that. Your encounters with them are going to be as other face-to-face instructors teaching courses that are fairly conventional in their structure.

I mean, they follow that 13-week cycle that most of us knew when we were undergraduates, 1,000 years ago. There's something really familiar to that. Of course, there are exceptions. Of course, there are exceptions, but there's something really familiar to that part of the conversation.

It strikes me that, I think for a lot of faculty on campus, and I used to be a on-campus faculty member, the mistake is thinking this is just an online version of the same old thing, and it's not.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

I want to ask you to think about history, specifically as a discipline. When you say there's this difference between campus, that 13-week course, and the pace of it, and the traditional scheduling, and the way you engage with the material, or students are able to engage with the material in an OL version of a course that might be the same on paper, I wonder if you could dig in a little bit to what the difference is in the way it feels, or the learning experience for students, or your experience as an instructor.

John Belshaw:

Well, first off, I want to say that I haven't taught in the ... Well, I have taught in the classroom, in the last half dozen years, four or five years, but not in the same way that people who are teaching in the classroom now, and have been doing so for the last 10, 20 years have. The culture, the community, the supports.

I mean, Brenna's there. You can go to Brenna and ask her questions about what's great in terms of pedagogy and technology. My experiences in the classroom are, they're somewhat different.

In Canadian history, if you're teaching a paced, in-the-classroom course, well, if this is Tuesday, then it must be Louis Riel. You've got a point in the course, you have to be there by week 12 or week 11. If you don't, and of course everybody always panics when there's a snow day or something. They think, "What? What's going to happen to World War I? I won't be able to teach ..." Those sorts of gaps will emerge and students won't know how World War II ended, that sort of thing.

In Canadian history classes, you're moving along at this pace. In the OL version of those courses, if a student gets through assignments one, two, three and is finishing assignment four and says, "You know, I still don't get this thing about the seven years war. I realize there's a gap in what I know," and you can go right back and start over with them on those issues, you know. You can keep that conversation going, regardless of where they are, ostensibly in the curriculum.

Indeed they might say, "I was going to tackle assignment one first, but assignment three, that looks like the juicy one. I want to go for that. Okay, well, how do we get you ready to succeed at that?"

Those are the kinds of conversations you can have that, speak to a student's particular learning needs, or their questions, or their obstacles, or the things that puzzle them, which it's harder to do ... I think I can say objectively, and it's probably empirically verifiable, you can't do that in a course. It has to happen in 13 weeks, and you've got 35 students, or 100.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

It's funny because what you are describing is the kind of "personalized learning" that so much ed tech professes to do, but you're doing it as a human being, providing a very personalized experience for the learners who are looking for it.

John Belshaw:

I'd like to think so. Part of the challenge is, of course getting students to come forward, but ... I think a lot of faculty on campus and at OL realized, and certainly I think this was reinforced during the pandemic when people were teaching online, is if you're in a classroom and you've got that student who sits in the third row off to the left, and never says a word, and is busy doodling in their notepad, and looks panicked, but never says a thing, right? Well, they will talk to you online.

They will communicate with you on it through email because maybe they're intensely shy, perhaps they're intimidated by the other students in the class, perhaps they're intimidated by you, but on screen, in an email environment, it's a much more level playing field.

Drawing out students, I regularly send reminders and wake-up calls to them. "It's been three weeks since I've heard from you. What are you up to?" I'll set them a challenge. I'll say, "Don't get back to me with a problem. Get back to me with something that surprised you in the readings. What did you see that you didn't expect to see?"

Brenna Clarke Gray:

It's interesting what you're describing, of the silent student, because I would say that the number one technology-related request that I had when campus faculty returned to in-person after the campus closure period is, "What can I use to replicate the experience of the live chat during lectures?" because faculty were seeing this wild engagement from students during those sessions that, they don't have an equivalent for in a face-to-face lecture.

John Belshaw:

Isn't that great? That's really good. I like that a lot.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

I do, too. We've hacked together a few solutions using, Slido has a question and answer function where you can vote up questions, live. That works a little bit if you have it going on the slide deck in the background.

It was interesting to me that so many people realized for the first time, if you're a member of any online communities, you know that, that kind of online back channel is a constant. It was interesting to see that get picked up in a teaching and learning context.

John Belshaw:

That's gratifying to hear.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Yeah, it's not bad, eh? I want to circle back to the connection between developing OER and Open Access, meeting students where they're at, idea. You've got, obviously lots of experience when it comes to creating OERs. We're seeing more and more faculty taking up that challenge here at TRU on both sides of the house, which is wonderful to see.

I wonder if you can cast your mind back to why you took on that challenge in the first place. Is there advice that you might give to someone who is sticking a toe in the OER creation waters?

John Belshaw:

I was in an administrative capacity, doing stuff with BC campus. BC campus' story arc is an interesting one, in that they were created, I think in the late 1990s, and nobody quite knew what it was they were supposed to be doing. Every now and then, they throw money at putting a course online, and you'd be able to go into this vault, this savings account of courses and take it.

There's a course on forensic anthropology. Okay, great. Now I can take that and I can use that. It's ready-made. It's like a cooking show. "Here's what I baked earlier."

It seemed really limiting and the quality was all over the place. I think in 2011, people were getting ready their obituaries for BC campus, and somebody hit on this idea of doing open educational resources and open textbooks.

At first, I was asked if I would like to muster some open educational resources. I thought, "Well, that's a great idea," because interested in digital histories, and what's available online have been for about 20, 30 years now. Started doing that, and we got about halfway through.

I said, "Really, what we need is a textbook, a solid resource of some kind." Unsolid, it's in the air, but it has to be a conceptually solid resource. They came up with the funding for the creation of open textbooks. I think that was the second textbook produced by BC campus. Exciting times.

I would say, the excitement can continue. What I found in the writing of, both post-confederation textbook and the Indigenous experiences, Indigenous histories textbook is that it's better to work in a team. If you can establish yourself as that person who is going to be the hub, and distribute a lot of the work out, I developed chapters, anything from 500 words to a couple of thousand words by calling, just cold calls to colleagues across the country who were expert in those particular areas.

Clean water on reserves. How long has this been an issue in Canadian history? Called up Adele Perry at the University of Manitoba. She said, "Yeah, I'll get you something together, maybe by the weekend, 750 words. Okay, that's great." We got a really good section in the textbook from the expert in the field. It introduces students to the various names of scholars working in the discipline. These are people you're going to hear on CBC or see on the news or whatever.

They'll encounter them again and again. That's all good, but also writing a textbook is, I got to tell you, it's hard work. It's not like writing a monograph, and I've written a couple of those. It's much harder work. You have to cover a huge waterfront of material in order to have a real sense of where the field's going, where it's been, that sort of stuff.

If you can call up that resource, the person you met at the conference last spring, who's doing this great stuff on whatever, on cognitive psychology, then that makes the task, not only easier for you because you don't have to develop that expertise, but just so much more fun because then you're going to have

a conversation with this person. You're going to catch up on the research. Where's the field going? Isn't that great? Now I know more than I did, going in.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Well, that's cool. It's also, there's just this ethos, I find, in open education, more broadly about sharing expertise, because when you're not quite so worried about the scarcity of publishing contracts or what have you, there's a much more shared spirit in how we produce work that is ultimately centered on the student experience as opposed to on careerist tick boxes or whatever other reason people might pursue publication.

John Belshaw:

Absolutely. Most institutions, now recognize the creation of OERs as contributing to tenure applications and promotion applications. Your portfolio is not going to be hurt. It's going to be helped by having that kind of work. It puts you in touch with a different part of the field, too.

Anybody who's published with a university press knows what the timeline is like. It's awful. You put it out to reviewers, yes. Oh, yeah, we have. They'll get back to us someday, and then you've got to make revisions, and that takes a while. It just goes back and forth.

Well, it's a lot more immediate with the OER. What's great about that, too is that people who are using it at other institutions will get in touch with you and say, "You made a mistake in section 7(3). This is my thing, and I got to tell you, you're wildly off-course here. Oh, great. Well, let's fix it."

We don't have to worry about going to the publisher and saying, "Can we have a second edition?" We just get the keys to the BC campus vault, and we go in and we make a change and we come back out. It's easy-peasy. You can be more responsible and you don't have to fear error.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

It's a good modeling for students, of whether it's noticing an error and approaching someone and working together to fix it, or the humility in recognizing the error and being willing to make that change. I find that across open that, making mistakes in public is part of the deal and that, that's okay.

John Belshaw:

A couple of years back, a couple of colleagues of mine in Ontario decided to put together a collection of primary documents, diaries, maps, whatever they could find that was available. It was in the Creative Commons, what the copyrights had expired, that sort of thing. Put it together and assemble it with introductions, and perhaps with analysis, that sort of stuff, and in the form of another open textbook.

This was meant to complement. I mean, these guys ... I didn't work with these guys on the open textbooks, but they wanted a primary document collection to complement my open textbooks. This was all getting together just great. It covers about 500 years, 600 years of Northern and North American history.

Great stuff. We're at a conference and we're talking about, "Well, what's missing?" I said, "Well, we have nothing on the experience of the LGBTQ community in the mid 20th century. There's nothing in here. Can we do something?"

We sat down, and within about an hour's time, we had a whole section of materials that students could use. Then we took that back to students and said, "Is this going to work for you? Are these the resources that, to your eye, look sufficient? Can you find anything else?"

We showed them how to find primary resource, whether it's a newspaper article from 1895 or whatever. You can build something as part of a project in class and have that roll forward in the next years. Your students' work, rather than being an essay that goes in the garbage bin when they're done, becomes something that lasts. I think there is a huge difference in the students' level of engagement in that kind of a project.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Well, it really matters. I mean, it has an audience, and as you say, a life beyond the class itself. You're also picking up another strength of open resources, which is this adaptability piece. You alluded to that, off the top that, somebody who's teaching in another context might find that they really like your chapters one to five, but they're revising chapter six.

I think that, that capacity to localize is, maybe an under-tapped or under-resourced strength that, oftentimes people feel like, "Oh, well. I got to take this text, or not," but here's an option to make it exactly what you need it to be if you have time and resources to do it.

At the same time, I remember as a student, the number of times I bought a \$200 textbook, and I get to class and the professor would be like, "Okay well, we're only going to use chapter two and five because the rest of it is garbage." I'd be like, "Wish you had said something before I bought it." Right?

Whereas, there's, A, that cost doesn't exist for students, but B, that kind of ethos, of taking it apart and dismantling it and reassembling it into something that is usable for us in our contexts, is part of the deal.

John Belshaw:

I hadn't realized how much the cost of textbooks had gone up. There was a five-year-period where it just seemed to go up exponentially, and to the start. Then I hadn't looked until the end of that period, and oh, my God. We're asking students to spend 400, \$500 on these two textbooks for this course.

Really, are we making good use of that resource? Are they actually reading it? Do we test their reading of it somehow, because we're also asking them to read different articles and all the other stuff?

Realizing that they were spending a lot of money on something that really wasn't ideal from a pedagogical perspective. It covered the wrong themes, perhaps, but I thought it was an affordable ... Oh, my God. There were all sorts of mistakes being made. It was just terrible.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Okay. You're making me think of a moment where I had a real wake-up call. When I was at Douglas and I went down to the bookstore and I saw what my textbook was being sold for, I had been quoted one price from whoever it was, Broadview or whatever, and then I saw it at the bookstore's markup price.

I mean, there's a very real, tangible question of ethics. Instructors who are in control of their course materials, there has to be a bigger, ethical conversation around that piece of it.

John Belshaw:

Yeah, I think there does. What do you really want the students to get out of this? I look at some of my course, and one of the things I used to love doing was going to bookstores, university bookstores on different campuses. I'd go down the shelves, find the courses I was teaching, see what they were using.

Sometimes you'd find that they had a textbook, survey text, but also they were asking the students to read four or five, maybe six other smaller books, a novel or two plus this one special essay, long essay and all this.



I think, "Oh, my God. This looks like a graduate course, and this is a first year course. The students, they don't have time for this. Maybe they did in the 1960s and '70s, and you're still using the same bloody lament for a nation anyways. My God, these students do not have that sort of time."

I think one of the things the pandemic, and the one that really hit us when I was teaching this course at Fraser Valley was the atmospheric river, which flowed into a valley basin. One of my students ... There was a lot of talk on television, media at the time about a pumphouse. It was breaking down, and just keeping this thing operating was all that was saving that valley.

Her dad was the pumphouse. That was his job. He was responsible for this pump station, and she was spending every minute she could, helping him out. I mean, she wasn't an employee, but she was doing what she could to just help him out.

It was one of those moments really illustrated for me, how we talk about students having jobs and otherwise, but they really do have other lives. They have really rich, and textured, and busy, and complicated, and messy lives. Asking them to read six books in a course, that's an ethical issue. You're right. We need to have a conversation about whether you're doing the right thing there, pal.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

You've brought us back full circle to this idea of who the student is and who it is we serve. I think that, whether the actual student body has changed, we're certainly more aware of those rich and textured lives that you're describing, and the ways in which we as faculty, as people who support learning can do a better job of making learning, something that fits into their lives.

The idea that you can leave everything at the door when you walk into the classroom, I think that's a fairly antiquated notion, and it never fit very many students, I don't think.

John Belshaw:

The academy leads you to think that way, anyways. That, if you've got the time to do a doctorate or a master's and really sink your teeth into thoughts, thinking about your field and research, I think it leads to this misguided perceptions that all students are in that situation, and they're not.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

When you're going through a PhD ... I think it's changing, but even still when I was going through my PhD, there's a real sense that you're being trained to create new people who'll eventually go to grad school. Then you get in on the job market and you take a job teaching, whether it's at a college or ... My discipline is English, so most of the jobs in this discipline are no longer teaching majors. They're teaching introductory academic writing or whatever.

There's not really a sense of how that changes. As we've been talking about the ethics of teaching, the choices that we make, it's a whole different ballgame. I don't think ... I hope programs are getting better at it. I did not feel well-prepared for that reality when I came out.

John Belshaw:

I certainly hope that programs are addressing those issues. I know, as I say, I was doing this very part-time work, recessionary work at Fraser Valley through the pandemic, and we had great tech support, we had wonderful tech support. They were able to provoke conversations among faculty at a time that I was teaching face-to-face on campus there, which was very brief.

I just wanted to ... Actually, I just wanted to see how the open textbooks worked in a face-to-face environment, which was a lot of fun, and that was my opportunity to do it. In the time I was teaching

face-to-face, there weren't conversations about students, students' particular needs, or the culture of students' needs, and how we might be doing things carelessly.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

A nice part of this gig is, I get to talk to student affairs professionals on campus and see what's going on in that world. I think, compared to what was around when I started my teaching career, I think it's really expanded. I think faculty are in a position of having to catch up. Right?

I think, often the classroom, unfortunately is, maybe the least connected to students' real lives in a lot of contexts. Maybe that's the work that those of us who care about teaching and learning need to focus on, now.

John Belshaw:

Yeah. I think I got lucky when I started my career at Cariboo in 1989. I taught, earlier at some English universities and polytechnics. In my first year of teaching at Cariboo, I had an extraordinary group of students, and I think, maybe one in a 100 had parents who'd gone to post-secondary.

They were great. Many of them had parents who hadn't completed high school, and they were a great bunch. Some of them, I still keep in touch with. They're all over the globe. There was this group of, I don't know, a dozen who were in this BC History course, and they taught me so much about the community, and their culture, and what it was like for them to be able to stay in Kamloops to do third year university as opposed to, having to transfer to the coast to finish their university degree.

One of my intro Canadian students show up ... I've had big lecture hall. There were about 100 students in that class, in the Clock Tower lecture hall, and he'd fall asleep within five minutes. His head would be on his desk.

I thought about being a jerk, and going over and waking him up or something like that. I thought, "No, just got to let it ... He knows he's falling asleep. He'll work out what he needs to do. If he needs to talk, make myself available, and that's great." I go home and read the paper. The guy's competing ... He's got a black belt in Judo and he's competing internationally.

Two things I took away from this. One, if I'd woken him up, I'd be dead . He would snap me like a dry twig. The second, you've got to assume that there's this other world going on out there. Because they're not coming from Shaughnessy or some nice neighborhood on the west side, because they're coming from a variety of backgrounds, yeah, that's what makes it exciting. I don't want those samey students. I want the ones who've got really interesting lives.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

I think that is a fantastic place to end our conversation today, John. I really appreciate your time. I think, thinking about our students as whole people and how to best serve them, especially as we seem to be entering a period of transition for the institution, I think it's really valuable. So, thank you so much for your time today.

John Belshaw:

You're welcome so much for my time today. Good to talk. Take care.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

That is it for season three, episode eight of You Got This! As always, if you want to write to us, you can email me. I'm bgray@tru.ca. I'm also on Twitter at Brenna C. Gray. In both cases, that's Gray with an A.

All of our show notes and transcripts are posted at [yougotthis.trubox.ca](http://yougotthis.trubox.ca), and of course you can always comment on individual episodes there. I'm going to leave you today, with a Tiny Teaching Tip, a Tiny Teaching Tip for end of term. One that calls back my conversation with John Belshaw today.

When's the last time you checked in on your textbook prices, if you're teaching faculty? I ask because as John and I were talking about, for faculty who have control over their teaching materials, this is one place where we can be having some really serious ethical conversations about the choices we make, and whether or not we live our classroom values when it comes to stepping into the bookstore.

I definitely had the experience of being surprised by what the price of my book was when I finally went down to the bookstore to check it out one day, back when I was teaching faculty. I had been quoted a very different price from the publisher, and I was shocked to see what I was asking my students to pay for.

In other semesters, I had thought every individual book I was assigning was affordable, and it was, but when I added them all together, it was not. This is a good moment to check in on what you've assigned for January. I get that you probably can't make changes about it now, but knowledge is power, and it's the first step towards a more ethical practice. If you haven't done that yet, please do.

For those of you who are already my open education resource champions, you get this week off. My friends, thank you for your patience, your support, and your listening. Until next time, take care of yourselves and each other, and I'll see you real soon. Bye-bye.