

Limed: Teaching with a Twist

Season 4, Episode 2 – How Scholarship Shapes Our Mentoring Past and Future

Matt Wittstein (00:11):

You are listening to Limed: Teaching with a Twist, a podcast that plays with pedagogy. This season we're talking all about mentoring and higher education. This month we dive into a little bit of the scholarship and consider what the research on mentoring can teach us about building stronger, more equitable learning environments. In this episode, guests Ashley Finley, Jane Greer and Jessie Moore unpack the scholarly roots of mentoring in higher education. From foundational studies to recent approaches shaping the field. Today they discuss how theories from psychology, feminist practice and relationship rich education inform mentoring across disciplines and why understanding mentorship as both an individual experience and a systemic force matters. Now more than ever along the way, they explore key questions about intentionality, equity, and what it means to study mentoring, not just as an act of support, but as a catalyst for institutional change. Enjoy the conversation. I know I did. I'm Matt Wittstein. Hi, Jessie. Hi Jane. Hi, Ashley. I am so excited to have you here to talk more about the scholarship of mentorship and mentoring relationships. To introduce yourselves, I would love to hear about where you're from, what you do, but also when you think of your own mentors, what made them such great mentors for you, whether that's in the past or even current mentors that you're still working with. Jessie, why don't you go first?

Jessie L. Moore (02:03):

Thanks, Matt. It's great to be joining the conversation today. I'm Jessie Moore. I am the director of the Center for Engaged Learning, which is an international research center at Elon University. And I am also a professor of professional writing and rhetoric. And when I think about my mentors, a couple of the things that I appreciate is they have been really good at allocating one to one time for our conversations, for supporting my development from when I was a first year student in college, trying to figure out what academic writing looked like to more recently as an emerging administrator, trying to figure out what the secrets to budgets are and things like that. So across my career and stages, I've really appreciated that they make time. They think about the needs that I personally have and adjust our conversation to those needs. And they're just kind, they always think about me as a human first, which I think is really important and appreciated.

Jane Greer (03:11):

So I'll jump in after Jessie, I'm Jane Greer. I am the director of Undergraduate Research and Creative Scholarship at the University of Missouri, Kansas City. And I'm also a curator's distinguished teaching professor in the Department of English and Women's and Gender Studies. When I think about the mentors in my life, it's a little bit of a contrast to what Jessie had to say. The mentors that have been most important to me have been groups of mentors. When I was in high school, I was blessed to start with at the same time that a group of women began teaching right out of high school, Mrs. Al, Ms. Arant and Ms. Diggs. And they were amazingly connected to each other, but then they also brought, I think lots of us into that circle when I was in graduate school. It very much felt like my mentors were all connected to each other and then connected and helped me and other graduate students build connections. And then in the past 10 years, probably one of the most important mentoring relationships I've had has been with a writing group of other associate professors as we tried to move to full professor. And again, it was a group of women together rather than single or individual mentors. And for me, being part of a community and realizing that everybody has something to offer and everybody has something they need and allowing everybody to contribute their mentoring skills, that's been really impactful in my thinking about what it means to be a mentor.

Ashley Finley (04:38):

I love that. I'll follow up and add to the introductions here. I'm Ashley Fenley. I'm the Vice President of research and senior advisor to the president at A CNU, which stands for the American Association of Colleges and Universities. I loved hearing where Jessie and Jane are coming from with their mentors. And I think as I consider this question, what stands out to me is that the mentors I've had in my life, probably starting a little bit after undergrad in certain ways, probably going into grad school and then certainly into my professional career, were a couple of things. One, that these were people that found a way to get to know me. And I mean that in the sense of these were people that took the time to figure out what our connection was, not just that they should be helping me, but that there was something about us in a relationship that was common, was just a common point of connection. And then what also stands out to me in the people that I've really valued is humility, that I've had the great fortune of having mentors who just brought a healthy dose of humility to their own success and were very candid about their failures, and that always made me feel better about mine and that I might get through it. That's what I would say on that one.

Matt Wittstein (06:17):

I love these stories and I want to follow that up with knowing that we're going to be talking about the scholarship of mentoring relationships and studying mentorship. What actually drew you all to study and explore and pursue that yourselves? I

Ashley Finley (06:32):

Don't know if you want to go in reverse order, so I'll just start. So a personal and professional. So one of the things that strikes me about mentoring, and I joke in a way that's not super funny, but I always joke that my advisor, if you notice in my opening, I skipped undergrad. And that's because really my advisor and really my mentor was my big brother, and that was great. I love him and he was awesome, but he also was two years older and certainly had a big full life. And I just remember coming out of that experience thinking there's got to be a better way. There's got to be more help for students out there. And so professionally, I have over time just become so compelled by the idea of this resource that we have on campuses in advising, which I'm not necessarily is mentoring certainly could be, but thinking about how we have these resources on campus, but they are often not so formalized, not so conceptualize, and how it really fits with the big picture and how we really think deeply about what this means and contributes to student success and learning and development.

(07:53):

So I am very excited about this conversation. I've been very excited the conversations I've had a chance to be part of it at Elon around what it means to really think about mentoring as a high impact practice.

Jane Greer (08:06):

I'll be really honest, I didn't really think about starting to study mentoring. It happened fairly organically for me. I was a pretty panicked assistant professor and was worried about getting a book done for promotion and tenure. And I decided on a whim almost that I was going to change up my course and take my students into the archives with me and involve them in the research that I was doing. And I thought that would help me then move a little faster in getting the book done that I needed to get done. And it was the most amazing experience I ever had as a teacher. And I think I can point to some pretty good things that happened for students out of that class, but that introduced me both to undergraduate research where mentoring is such a key part of that high impact practice. So that I think is the organic way I got started in it.

(08:59):

But then over the course of my career watching changes in the educational sort of environment and landscape, I see mentoring, and I hope I'm not getting myself in trouble with this, but as a way to really resist some kind of techno efficient models of education that I feel have really come to dominate what we're doing in higher education. And assuming that we can measure everything through student learning

outcomes and then rubrics and just slotting people into boxes really doesn't always feel great to me. And I feel like mentoring makes me focus and helps me think more about the relationships we have with students and how crucial that is. And that higher education is this fundamentally human activity that can always be managed through super efficient processes.

Jessie L. Moore (09:48):

Jane, I love both your attention to your organic entry into mentoring, but also your rebelliousness about mentoring as a practice. I do think that it has a lot of power. I would say that my entry into studying mentoring probably started, if I were to name one moment, the Center for Engaged Learning or what we sometimes call CEL, CEL had a research seminar, which was a three year project on mentoring undergraduate research. And we started there because as you're noting, mentoring is such a key part of excellence in undergraduate research. And so we did a three year multi-institutional study of mentoring in that specific high impact practice. And then we continued with other research seminar topics and over the decade that followed, one of the things that I was noticing as a through line, regardless of the topic of the seminars, was the importance of relationships and starting to think about what are the different types of relationships that students encounter.

(11:03):

It could be coaching, it could be advising, it could be supervisors and mentors. And then trying to tease out what is unique in each of those roles and how do they fit together. And where I currently am thinking about it in my scholarship is really thinking about mentoring constellations, which Jane you also alluded to in your introduction, but recognizing that no one person can be everything to a student. And so helping our students learn strategies for developing their network or constellation, and then also helping faculty and staff think about their important roles in that constellation, whether or not they're a mentor, they might be another meaningful relationship in that constellation, and that matters too. And so that's kind of where I am now. And that certainly was centered in the research seminar that we just wrapped up at Elon on mentoring meaningful learning experiences.

Matt Wittstein (12:06):

So it's great to hear the different ways that brought you all into learning more about mentoring relationships and what to do with that knowledge and what institutions can do with mentoring as a practice. When we're thinking about this conversation as a scholarly topic, I'm really curious where would we point our listeners of where to start to learn about mentoring relationships as a practice? And then we'll get a little bit more into how does the scholarship actually happen

Jessie L. Moore (12:42):

To name a few of the people who inspired work that the Center for Engaged Learning has done... I think Kathy Kram's work in mentoring at work in career settings has been foundational for a lot of the work in higher education. It does require some translation to think about what might be different from the workforce versus higher education, but she was certainly doing some of the early work that a lot of people draw on. Brad Johnson has also written prolifically on mentoring, and I think his perspectives on mentoring have also evolved over time. And his latest edition of his *On Mentoring* as I'm trying to look at my bookshelf, I think also references *Mentoring Constellations* as a concept that he's warmed up to over his career looking at mentoring. And then one other that I'll mention that I have found really helpful to draw on is Mary Deane Sorcinelli and Jung Yun did a piece for *Change the magazine* of higher learning from mentor to mentoring networks. And they were thinking specifically about faculty development context, but that was one of the earlier references, not the only reference, but one of the earlier references to the idea that we have more than one mentor in our lives and that that's helpful for supporting our holistic development as individuals, as students, as lifelong learners, et cetera. I'm curious, Jane or Ashley, who would you add to the list?

Ashley Finley (14:28):

One that comes to mind is Felten and Lambert's relationship ridge education that comes up all the time and conversations I'm on, I have with campuses or various campus practitioners. But part of where my brain went with this question was something I mentioned earlier, which is the possibility of thinking about mentoring relationships as a high impact practice. So part of what I think is valuable in these conversations is letting different pockets of scholarships speak to each other and deepen both fields in ways by bringing up and raising different kinds of issues. So one of the things that strikes me is I think our understanding of mentoring gets deeper when we think about what qualifies as a high impact practice, and we think about qualities of high impact practices. So Kuh and O'Donnell back in 2013 had some of the early identifiers of characteristics of high impact practices.

(15:31):

I quite like this scholar named Jessie Moore, who developed a pretty terrific list as well. And Jessie, please help me with name Key Practices in Fostering Engaged Learning. Now, this means that I got it right because I'm watching Jessie nod her head that I got that right. That means I've cited it so many times that I can now rattle off the title, which I'm proud of. But all seriously love Jessie's conceptualization of how we might think of qualities of high impact practices. And a big one in that list in my mind, is cultural relevance, cultural wealth, and how we think about elevating students' assets in those conversations that the role of mentors might have in articulating a student's strengths in ways they may not have thought of before. So I'll stop there, but those are a couple things that come to mind.

Jane Greer (16:30):

So I might chime in and be kind the Amen Chorus, definitely Kathy Kram, Brad Johnson, Felten Lambert, and Jessie Moore. I think for me, I often live with a split brain. I know the conversation in mentoring related to undergraduate research, but then also because I'm in English studies and do work as a feminist rhetorician, I also feel like I have encountered mentoring and really important scholarship and conversation about mentoring in that space. I think it's one of the challenges of the research conversation about mentoring is it happens dynamically in so many spots and pockets, both a richness and a weakness to it. But some names I would add to the list would be very practical. Jo Handlesman and her co-authors entering mentoring, which is designed to help graduate students, particularly in STEM fields, begin to think about themselves as mentors rather than just students. And then coming out of the research seminar, that cell sponsored on excellence in mentoring undergraduate researchers, Jenny Shanahan, Eric Hall, he and was, and I have these written down, it's the only reason I can rattle them off, Liz Ackley, Holbrooke and Kearsley Stewart had what for here on our campus has been an invaluable list of key salient practices for undergraduate research mentors.

(17:52):

It's comprehensive based on a comprehensive lit review. And I use that practically in so many times, sharing that with mentors, having mentors think and push back against it to sort of recognize what's awesome about it. So I would add that piece of scholarship to the list is really informing my thinking as an undergrad research director.

Jessie L. Moore (18:15):

Jane, I'm so glad that you referenced the salient practices. I also had pulled off my shelf Excellence in Mentoring Undergraduate Research, which came out of the first research seminar. And yes, it is focused on undergraduate research specifically, but again, I think so many of the ideas translate to the other high impact practices and other meaningful learning experiences. And one that stands out to me that has a familiar name on the list, Jane and her co-authors, Vicki Baker, Laura Lunsford, Dijana Ihas, and Megan Pifer wrote about supporting faculty development for mentoring and undergraduate research, scholarship and creative work. And two things that I really love about that chapter: One, it's one of the continuing reminders that mentoring is not something we inherently know how to do. We do need professional learning, professional development to help us think about how to do it more effectively. And then it also invites us to think about mentoring across disciplines. And there are some disciplinary practices that may shape mentoring in different contexts in unique ways. So there are some things that are common across our

disciplines, but then sometimes I think it's helpful to remember that we also are mentoring in context, not just mentoring real people, but also mentoring them in specific contexts.

Matt Wittstein (19:37):

I think all of you talked about how mentorship as a scholarly field has been dynamic and has crossed multiple disciplines. So my next question is generally, are there ways that mentoring research is done or organized? Are there common methodologies? Are there subfields within it? How is sort of that scholarship structured and how can that best serve someone that is approaching it from their own context, whatever that might be.

Jane Greer (20:11):

I'll, go ahead, jump in here. So I think for anybody coming to the conversation about mentoring, whatever research method makes sense for you in your field, I think you will find that that methodology has been applied to studying mentoring. I can think of studies that involve surveys with large numbers of alumni of institutions, which I find really powerful. I can think of studies of mentoring that are more narrative based and involve people sharing stories of mentoring and doing narrative inquiry. I can of methodologies that involve case studies and mixed methods that are surveys and pre-post testing and so many different things. So I don't think in terms of methodology, if there's a particular methodology somebody wants to use to study mentoring, they can probably do it. And if there's a particular methodology that people find particularly persuasive, they can probably find that that methodology has been used to study mentoring. But again, I live in these kind of two packets of undergraduate research and English studies, and Ashley and Jessie may have a much more high level view of the different methodologies.

Ashley Finley (21:31):

One of the things that Jessie and I have been involved with along with our co leaders in a recent cell research seminar on mentoring meaningful relationships with Titch Madzuma, Sabrina Thurman, and Azul Bellot and Tiffanie Grant, and is that one of the things we've been taken in that process is a literature review of mentoring practices. And now we all can benefit from this amazing spreadsheet that we have from all the ways that we've analyzed this lit review. I didn't do it, so I was involved in bits of it, but the organization of this thing is so helpful. And even as I'm scanning it and coming into this conversation, and just to verify what Jane just said, I mean it's really an incredible diversity of methodological standpoints and approaches to how the work's being applied or how we're examining what mentoring relationships look like and who they benefit.

(22:40):

And so it strikes me that as I've gotten into what we know from doing that literature review is how much it raises those questions. I think the layers of mentoring that were already brought up. So peer mentoring can be is it graduate students? Is it undergraduate students? The ways in which faculty play into that, really thinking about who plays a role in that constellation of mentoring. But I think what also makes mentoring research unique is, and I'll have to think about this more deeply, I'm just going to go ahead and say it and then I'll think more deeply about it later. But one of the things that strikes me uniquely about it, particularly if you were going to consider it a high impact practice, is it's one of those that I think we're equally in some ways interested in the outcomes for both parties at play here. So we're interested in outcomes for mentees, but it's one of those, it's a rare practice in which I think we are also equally in some ways or we really ought to be equally interested in the outcomes for the mentors and how that's affecting them. So that strikes me as a unique quality, and it definitely showed up in some of pieces of our literature review was that attentiveness to kind of both sides of the equation. It wasn't just a one directional kind of intervention, if you will. It kind of was bi-directional in that sense.

Jessie L. Moore (24:13):

Jane and I are both vigorously nodding because the reciprocity does seem really important for mentoring. And I would echo what Jane and Ashley said about the methods we use are really the methods that you feel comfortable bringing to the study. We see such a variety of methods and we learned slightly different things from each of those approaches. I do want to highlight a couple things that I've seen recently that I think are helpful and maybe new or at least new in this context. One is actually something that Matt has done with his research team from the Center's research seminar of actually inviting students to map their constellations. And so getting students actively thinking about and naming who's in their constellation. And that can take different forms, but I think that that's an interesting way to both see who else is supporting our students and how students understand the different needs that they have in their lives and how different mentors and other supporting relationships serve different functions.

(25:27):

The other one that I think is interesting that it's not necessarily new, I think we've seen it in our systematic review, but it also seems to be a little bit more prevalent in some recent studies, is doing interviews of both the mentor and the mentee or a mentor and their mentees plural and mentees and their mentors plural, to just understand that reciprocity and the different ways that people in these partnerships experience the relationship and the relational nature of this work. So lots of possible ways to explore questions related to mentoring, and I'm eager to see what new methods others bring to the conversation.

Matt Wittstein (26:11):

So knowing that the field of mentoring as a scholarly field has been around for quite some time, very broadly, but being maybe applied more intentionally in higher education, do you think that there's a strong consensus in the scholarship of what mentoring is, what mentoring is not best practices or anything along those lines? Or do you think there's still disagreement or ongoing debate on how to mentor and what makes a great mentor and those types of questions?

Jessie L. Moore (26:43):

I'm going to step on a landmine to just get us started, but I would say mentoring is more than a cup of coffee. And I think that that's still a tension sometimes that we feel there is a lot that goes into a mentoring relationship. They require a time intensity of commitment to duration and time to develop a reciprocal relationship. And sometimes I think mentoring gets presented as, oh, I'm taking a student to lunch. I'm taking a student for a cup of coffee, therefore I am mentoring the student. And yes, if that activity is part of a ongoing relationship that is mindful of the student's goals and development and the functions that you can support as a mentor, maybe it is moving in that direction or part of an ongoing relationship. But I think that there's, I at least want to push back on the assumption that a single act that is time-bound is mentoring.

Ashley Finley (27:54):

Well, Jessie, I love that you opened up with something provocative, if you will. That was kind of what came to mind for me as well. And it was that I think we tend to think of mentoring as being happening organically. And it is that notion of organic in a learning environment is one of my least favorite uses of that word because all it screams to me is a lack of intentionality, wild inequities, and very little responsibility to do something about it. So I think one of the things that has compelled me with this work and compelled me with the research around it is taking seriously what it means to build mentoring as certainly parts of student success, student development, but also valuable pieces of student social capital that when we are talking about underserved student success is a critical piece of how they will achieve the kinds of long-term outcomes, both while they're in their learning journey, but then also beyond when they're leaving campus.

(29:05):

So that intentionality around how these relationships are formed, making sure that when they form they can be as sustained and sustainable as possible because people simply know what they're doing and they're taking seriously what that role is. So that's something that stands out to me is that we don't just say, oh, and

when students arrive on campus and you'll find yourself a mentor like where in the cafeteria crossing the quad, where exactly is that going to happen? So demystifying this for a number of our students, particularly those from that first gen backgrounds who are just trying to find the financial aid office and let alone find a mentor, those feel like valuable opportunities for digging a little deeper. Jane?

Jane Greer (29:59):

Yeah, I love your passion, Ashley, when you talk about that and how important it is and how it's connected to conversations about equity and the important to be intentional even while we might honor sort of the ways in which human relationships can't always be engineered in tidy ways, but I think that conversation about how hard it is to define mentorship or to solicit its characteristics sort of points toward the importance of more research and that we need to know more and more concrete ways about how people form mentoring relationships. We need to know about why mentoring relationships fail and the cost of that to faculty and to students. And I think this challenge of defining mentoring and setting some boundaries around it is absolutely critical. I hope our research writ large in the field can help bring some intentionality to the process and can inform the ways we might be intentional about it.

Matt Wittstein (31:00):

I think what you all shared aligns with some of the stuff that my research group in the most recent Center for Engaged Learning research seminar learned was that those very organic natural relationships are actually still really important, but they usually didn't rise to that level of mentoring for the students themselves. So I think it's interesting that going into that research question, I definitely thought that these things should happen organically, that they should be natural and it should feel warm and fuzzies as you're having this stuff. But going through the process of learning a little bit more about it, we actually see that the more formal programs are actually where you do address things like inequities or ensuring that the students that need the more structured mentoring get the more structured mentoring because the students that thrive without the structured mentoring, quite frankly, are going to thrive without it. So it really aligns with some of the stuff I learned over the last few years.

Jessie L. Moore (32:09):

Well, and I think that that's interesting to also think about where students are in their own development and where they are in their college journey. We've done some institutional studies here at Elon where we did some surveys with first year students, and we did some surveys with fourth year students and surveys with alumni, and the type of mentoring that most resonated with them changed over their time at Elon. So first year students really identified formalized structured mentoring where their mentoring was assigned as a key part of their mentoring experience. By the time they got to be seniors and alumni, they were identifying more of the organically developed relationships. But I think that the underlying factor there that we need to name is that there's a relationship rich environment that is including some structures early on to help more students develop relationships over time, whether they are a continuation of those formally assigned mentorship relationships, or if they are that they're finding more ways to meet and continuously interact with faculty and staff and peers who are then becoming the less formally, more organically identified mentors in their lives.

(33:36):

And just really quickly, we also have done some national surveys of recent college graduates who are typically about five to 10 years out of college. And what's interesting to me, I get so immersed in the institutional data, but in that survey, we ask our participants how many of them had zero, one or two or more mentors in college? And 30% of the respondents in our most recent survey said that they had not had any mentors in college. And so that stat speaks to the need for that formalization, for that systematic development of a relationship rich culture and some structures to help students learn what it means to identify mentors, to develop mentoring relationships, to develop reciprocal mentoring relationships with people who can support their goals, their life interests, their identity development and so forth. So just

throwing in both the institutional perspective and then a national survey perspective on the need for a balance there.

Jane Greer (34:41):

I love this, and I love when you talk about the difference between what the first year students need and then what the juniors seniors, advanced students, how alumni alums might look at their experience. And I'd love to hear your thoughts on both of you on this, but one thing that I find sometimes hard in using the research conversations about mentoring is when mentoring is kind of writ large, and I am in my own work, I'm particularly looking for those more specific studies. If you're mentoring first year undergraduate researchers, what does that look like? What skills do you need as a research mentor and how is that different from mentoring the student who's a junior or senior and has a pretty clear idea of the desired career trajectory or what's the difference in mentoring students in biology versus students in the humanities or whatever. So sometimes one frustration or one sort of need I see in conversations about mentoring is starting to break it down and offer those much more specific, not here are 15 characteristics of outstanding mentors, no matter what your context, but what do these different student populations need? What does mentoring look like in different disciplines? And then sort of thinking about the specificities of what students needs, and then thinking about do faculty need to develop those abilities to meet students where they are and what are the advantages to faculties or how are faculty stretching and growing and working with these different kinds of student populations and mentoring?

Ashley Finley (36:14):

Jane, you sparked something in my own thinking as you were saying that, and I wonder if, I don't even know if it's the other side of the coin, but I wonder if a companion piece to what you're talking about is as we think about mentoring happening in specific places and specific points in time, which are valuable to understand because I'm also sitting here wondering about some of the holistic advising programs that are out there or maybe what we might consider feeding into. I think those programs are very much developed because they believe they're developing kind of mentoring relationships as part of what a holistic advising program looks like. Bringing in multiple mentors, really thinking about what a constellation looks like and thinking about where mentoring happens at a point in time, but also how it happens as a continuum and our ability to, I'd love to see a piece of research that actually takes on the actual developmental trajectory of a student who's followed a holistic advising model from first year in a traditional four year plus model, but really develops that over time and how particular skills are able to deepen, much like other kinds of high impact practices that we might envision get deeper and more robust and more transformative for the student as they're able to engage in them over time at different points in time.

(37:38):

So thanks for helping me think through that.

Jane Greer (37:42):

I just follow, just in terms of research methodology, would you consider that a longitudinal study, that ability to track students from first year to second year to third year? There's lots of conversations in my field about trying to follow students longitudinally, and there's so many challenges.

Ashley Finley (38:00):

I do think that, and I know Jessie in our lit review, we do have some longitudinal studies, but I guess I'm wondering about, and part of what you're describing, Jane, is so hard is when you have panel longitudinal studies where you're actually following the very same people over time, it's both resource intensive. It's hard and complicated. People drop out and you've got to keep them engaged. So those add their own complexities. But yeah, I think I am thinking about something that would look like that, but also a very clear tracking of outcomes over time, not just the people and maybe how the relationships have changed, but actual those, the developmental outcomes that might come with that.

Matt Wittstein (38:39):

So I've loved this conversation. And the last bit I'd like to know is where do you think this scholarship needs to head in the next five to 10 years?

Jessie L. Moore (38:51):

I think the conversation we were just having is certainly one space that it could and should head of tracking mentoring relationships over time and how students navigate the development of relationships. I was going to jump in and say that Elizabeth Wardle has done some interesting work with students and with one student in particular of tracking that student's writing development over time. And I wonder if that is a method that might be transferable to a mentoring study. Liz and her student collaborator, they were actually texting and letting the student mark when she was feeling like something important was happening. And so in some ways, it was leaned into that reciprocity that we were talking about earlier, that it's not just from the researcher's perspective or the mentor's perspective of when something important is happening, but trying to find ways to capture from both the student's perspectives and mentor's perspectives of when the relationship is evolving in new ways when you've navigated new parts of a relationship. That's still very messy to me to think about, but I think that that would be an area to go next is to think really intentionally about partnering with students to do that longitudinal study over time and how they're experiencing the development of their mentoring constellations.

Jane Greer (40:25):

I love that answer, Jessie. And I think another maybe slightly different, something we haven't talked about yet, but which is really something that I'm trying to think deeply about in my own mentoring practices, is the complexities of mentoring students in ways that just don't reproduce existing structures, but empower them to change structures. I'm thinking of work by Beverly Mul and Jutta Liturgy who talk about mentoring as a decolonial, transnational feminist practice, and the importance of not just professionalizing students into systems of inequity or institutions that are deeply implicated in histories of racism, sexism, heterosexism, et cetera. So really trying to think about what it means to mentor in ways that are going to give people the tools they need to make a better world,

Ashley Finley (41:23):

Better world. And I would add that two quick things. One is as we think about mentoring, where we ask students to put together their learning from those experiences, mentoring is I think that practice that we know is transformative. We know it's effective for students when all goes well, but we don't have the same kinds of outputs. We don't have the same kinds of ways to help students concretize that those reflections other than if we ask them to do a survey or something. So where is, for example, a portfolio of learning and reflection where those kinds of outputs might come together. I'm also curious about how, as I hope higher education becomes a little less insular in who's able to be a mentor, we're a little more effective at capturing what alumni mentorships look like, career mentorships look like with community or business leaders or those internship partners. How might we just continue to take seriously what it means to build out students social capital?

Matt Wittstein (42:29):

Ashley, Jane and Jessie, thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate the conversation.

Jessie L. Moore (42:33):

Thank you, Matt, and thank you for bringing us together so we can chat with Jane and Ashley again, fun conversation, all of you.

Ashley Finley (42:42):

Such a pleasure to be here and be with you all and have this conversation. Thank you.

Jane Greer (42:46):

Yeah, I feel like I just learned so much from Jessie and Ashley and from you, Matt, so I'm very, very grateful to be part of this today.

Matt Wittstein (43:01):

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