

TIA Episode 2: Marina, Megan, and Liz

Behind the Scenes with the Editors of "To Improve the Academy"

In this podcast episode of "Centering Centers," host Liz Norrell is joined by Marina Smitherman and Megan Robertson to discuss the evolving landscape of scholarly publishing, specifically within the realm of educational development. As members of the editorial team for the POD Network's journal "To Improve the Academy," they explore the challenges and innovations in peer review and the excitement of being at the forefront of creating a more humane and rewarding system.

Key topics and insights include:

- The changing nature of publishing and peer review.
- The personal journeys of the editorial team members to their current roles.
- Strategies for managing the workload and prioritizing tasks within the journal.
- The importance of mentorship and community in academic publishing.
- The emotional aspects of delivering disappointing news to authors.
- The idea of "no apologies" for being human and fallible within their team dynamic.
- Expansion plans for the editorial team, aiming to introduce structured, scaffolded mentoring through new assistant editor roles.
- The anticipation and urgency in launching these new roles as soon as possible to better distribute the workload.
- An open invitation for others interested in contributing to reach out for discussions about potential involvement.

*Episode summary generated by GPT 4

Transcript

[00:00:00] I thought you were going to veer into an apology there and I would have to bring up my no apologies button. But I think you're capturing that, that approach of humility, respect and care that we really tried to share in all that we do. I couldn't agree more with both Liz and Megan. I think publishing is changing.

I think it needs to, and I think we can be on the forefront, which seems hugely exciting. We hear a lot about how peer review is dead, and I think, I don't think peer review is dead, but I think peer review is broken in many places because of

what we're talking about. And I like to think of us as being on the cutting edge of creating a better and more humane, rewarding system.

Welcome to Centering Centers, a POD Network podcast. I'm the host for this episode, Liz Norrell. I serve as the Associate Director of Instructional Support at the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at the University of Mississippi. I also serve as [00:01:00] Associate Editor of the POD Network's flagship peer reviewed journal, *To Improve the Academy*.

In today's episode, I'm joined by my colleagues from *To Improve the Academy*'s editorial team, and we're going to talk about an exciting new opportunity for people to join the editorial team in a brand new role of assistant editor. We're grateful for this collaboration with Centering Centers and The Journal to reach POD members interested in publishing scholarship on educational development, and we hope you enjoy this episode.

Marina Smitherman: Hi, I'm Marina Smitherman. I am the Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Dalton State College in Northwest Georgia, and I'm currently serving as Editor in Chief here at TIA.

Megan Robertson: My name is Megan Robertson. I'm an Educational Developer at Simon Friesen University in British Columbia, Canada, and currently I'm an Associate Editor

Liz Norrell: with TIA.[00:02:00]

And I'm Liz Norell. I'm at the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at the University of Mississippi and serve as an associate editor at the journal. Okay, so the next thing I want to ask is just how did you get here? How did you find your way to working on to improve the academy? So we'll go into the origin story, and Marina, you get to start.

You have an interesting journey.

Marina Smitherman: Yeah, thanks. Thanks, Liz. Yeah, so I often ask that myself, that same question. So it started really with an invitation to guest edit a special issue during the pandemic. So teaching educational development in times of crisis. And I got to work with then Editors in Chief Lindsay and Michael.

and really loved the experience and it was like a nice bite sized opportunity to just test the waters and really see if I liked the work and there were lots of

aspects of the work that I liked. There was a lot of structure to it, getting through the peer reviews and making [00:03:00] decisions and I really enjoyed also the conversation.

of, what best represents the vision we had for this special issue. And so that was a positive experience. And then a couple of times I thought about applying and it just wasn't the right time. And eventually, as all good POD things are, I was heavily encouraged by several great POD colleagues that this would be a fit for me.

So heavy encouragement from my POD colleagues would be my answer.

Liz Norrell: And so you joined as an associate editor.

Marina Smitherman: That's correct. Yeah. I joined in the January of 2023 as an associate editor. And that was actually in result to someone stepping away because it was not the right fit for them at that time.

And so I stepped up to fill a gap.

Liz Norrell: Megan, how about you? How did you end up here?

Megan Robertson: Yeah, my journey to Associate Editor, Liz, when you asked us to think about this, my first thought was, where do I start? I've always had writing as a big part of my professional identity and I was relatively new to educational development.[00:04:00]

When I took this role in 2021, come from roles where writing development, my own writing, Teaching others how to write, supporting the writing process was really important. And that's an important point because when I was hired as an educational developer that intersected with my supervisor Zoe Morris.

Highly recommending joining POD. And I thought, okay, I guess this is what professional association is in this field, and attending that online conference in 2021, in the height of the pandemic, and being amazed at the kindness, the thoughtfulness. The criticality and the creativeness that was really evident in this organization, even in this online space.

My entry into the field of educational development has involved a lot of transition. I have been at a CTL that continues to be in a big time of transition, and my supervisor, again, When I brought this opportunity to apply for the Associate Editor [00:05:00] position, I said, Oh, I'm thinking about doing this.

I miss having that writing piece in my professional life. And she said, Yes, go for it. I will entirely support you because My skills and those things that I'd honed for about 15 years related to writing, I didn't really have a chance to use them in the CTL in its current iteration as it continues to transition.

But this was an opportunity I saw to use those skills. And the other point I wanted to mention, it really stands out in my mind you do interview for these roles, but it's more of a conversation. And that conversation took place while I was taking a really quick weekend trip to Washington, D. C. So I remember, always remember having my interview with the editors Michael and Lindsay from from an Airbnb in Washington.

And it blew my mind that oh wow, these people that are on the other side of the continent are willing to engage in these conversations and make space for people like me and to welcome me in to this space.

Liz Norrell: I love that. So just to be [00:06:00] clear, you said you started your position in 2021. And I spent a moment thinking like, wait, has Megan been doing this for three years already?

You meant your professional role, not your editorial role.

Megan Robertson: Correct. That's right. So in terms of educational development, formally, that's 2021. My associate editor role, that was summer 2023.

Liz Norrell: I really did think I've been working with Megan for almost a year and I had no idea she'd been doing this for three years.

Like, how did I misunderstand that? Yeah, so I have a similar path to Megan. When the call for associate editors and contributing editors went out a little over a year ago on the POD email list, I I hadn't even started working in educational development yet, but I had a job offer and I was going to.

And so I applied to be a contributing editor because I thought that seems like a good entry point. And then I'm pretty sure it was Marina who emailed me and said, Actually, we'd really [00:07:00] like you to apply to be an associate editor. And I thought that's kind. And surprising. And so I emailed the person who was going to be my boss, who is my boss now and said, what do you think about this?

And he said, if you want to, sure. So I agreed to be put forward as an associate editor candidate and did the interview and Megan said, I saw it as a conversation, a really fun conversation. And I was delighted to be invited to join the team. So I started last June, 2023, along with Megan, for sure. So the next thing I want to ask is just what does it look like to be a member of the editorial team for TIA?

So what kinds of tasks do you do? How does this look for you? And how do you prioritize these tasks?

Marina Smitherman: Yeah, thanks, Liz. I saw this prompt and laughed. What does the typical work week look like at TIA? And the answer is there is no typical work week. You never quite know what your [00:08:00] TIA time is going to be spent on.

The simple message to me about how you prioritize it is you have to set a schedule each week of this is my time. And you never quite know what you're going to be doing with it, but it's a sort of accountability of here's your time, this is what I'm going to be spending my time on. So what can that look like?

Gosh, it can be anything from going into our publishing system and looking for reviewers for a new submission, giving it a quick look over, making sure it fits the scope of the journal and would interest our readership and represent something innovative. So You could be, it could be anything from taking a quick look at new submissions, deciding once they're blinded to send them out to peer review.

It can be reminding reviewers. We have to do that from time to time. Hey, you said you'd do this. We do still need the review. Liz is an expert at that. Cause she's got a great way of saying, Hey, we just need one more to get this manuscript on its way. So anything from that at managing communications, people reach out to TIA over [00:09:00] a variety of things.

Another thing that we do is. Work with POD members, encouraging people who want to submit. So we recently started accepting queries if people are interested in submitting a manuscript, but we want to make sure that they're on the right track before they actually go to the trouble of building a manuscript.

Working with authors and more recently, we've started to really think intentionally about how we recognize the reviewers for the work that we do. Because without reviewers we couldn't keep Things moving to publication. So there's no typical work week, it can look like a variety of things.

Megan Robertson: Yeah, my week with TIA looks a lot like Marina's. One thing that I really enjoy is we have a weekly editorial team meeting. It continues to blow my mind that we're able to Meet once a week in our different time zones, but this has been really valuable to talk through different things that are coming up for the journal, keep on top of those administrative things that are really easy to fall through the cracks when this is not a full-time job [00:10:00] for any of us.

I'm also really appreciative of our Slack channel, which keeps us up to date. on tasks that are coming up. Preparing for board meetings, working on action items that we've brought to the board. Really recently, we've done a lot of work around a budget request to go to POD for funding, so that took a lot of time, but we were really able to shift quickly.

and devote quite a bit of time to working on that. So I think the tools that we're using lots of things in the Google Drive, that's what makes things work for us right now. I really appreciate it's, I can do this in time that works for me. Staying connected to the rest of the editorial team helps make sure we meet those deadlines that are really important.

Liz Norrell: Yeah, I'm glad you mentioned that, Megan, because I do think that we each work at very different times, in different ways, and at different speeds, and it's nice that we have these asynchronous communication tools, and we have that [00:11:00] weekly check in. And, sometimes there are weeks where we can't all meet or nobody can meet or we meet for less time, but pretty consistently we get together once a week.

And I enjoy that just because it gives us a chance to talk about what's going on and feel like we're in community with each other. We're getting to know each other and that's really lovely. And I think that's an ethos that we bring to all of the work we do, where we're trying to create relationships between the editorial team members, our authors.

The reviewers, the editorial board and POD members as a whole, as well as the entire discipline. Yeah, I, I don't have a typical week either. I know that I always feel like I should be doing more and I could easily let journal work take up exactly as much time as I wanted to give it. But it's really lovely to get.

It's, I see it as a privilege to get to shepherd these ideas into publication and into a broader audience. So it's really [00:12:00] fun. And that kind of leads me into my next question, which is, what are the things you love most about this work?

What has surprised you, perhaps that you didn't know to expect when you signed on for this?

And let's be honest, not everything is awesome. Sometimes there are things that we don't like doing. So talk a little bit about the favorites and the less favorites in this work.

Marina Smitherman: I think you already, I'd like to echo what you already said, both of you, both Liz and Megan, because for me, the number one is getting to work in this team.

We've worked really well collaboratively together and I'm always. So excited. I feel like we, we have an agenda, but we never quite know where our team meetings are going to take us in terms of those discussions. And it's a really rewarding opportunity to work with both Liz and Megan in this way.

I think we've got balanced skill sets and interests and visions for what we can do. And that comes together in just a wonderful way. I was, I think about it a little bit like, We've got our own little channels. There's a little water working its way off a mountain. [00:13:00] Individually, working diligently to get our own pieces of the work completed.

But when we have that team meeting, it's like all those three channels of water form a beautiful waterfall. And it's just, we've co created something different together. And so I think that's been a huge piece. And along the same lines, one of the incredible opportunities in this work is to work with our editorial board.

So we have amassed a board of people with Way more expertise in this field than us. And they are there for advice on how we can continue to develop and grow the journal, which is just invaluable. And these are wonderful people. We recently had to ask them for feedback, relatively short notice on a budget as Megan said, and also changes that we're making to the team, people jumped right on it and I was so grateful because these are, big names and busy people and.

The fact that they were willing to provide that advice to us was just absolutely wonderful. So for me, the team and the editorial team are the huge highs. I also love the idea of the thought leadership and the big vision and, educational development has [00:14:00] had a huge shift in the last few years and the way that we work and I think the view of the importance of the work as well since the pandemic.

And so I think for me that thought leadership of, okay, our roles have changed, people are busy in educational development and we need to think intentionally about whether it is feasible for someone to commit four years to a very, fixed idea of what this can look at. So I think that we've been able to, as a team, think through that.

more fluidly about what this work could look like. And another high, I'm a positive person, so I'm going to focus on the highs, is thinking about different avenues for representing the work out there. There are lots of different ways of knowing and doing in our field. And we're starting to look at different ways that we could publish up until now.

We've had practice articles and research articles, but I think we're starting to look at, what does scholarship look like in this day and age, and how can we meet our readers and our authors where they are? So that is hugely exciting. Gosh, the lows. I think trying to decide when I've got TIA time and [00:15:00] I've had, several emails that need to respond to, and I've got to send reminders to authors, I've got to make a decision.

I think that for me, it's all important. And so I do find that. the decision on, how best to spend the time. For me personally, I think that's difficult and you never quite know what's going to happen, so responding to change everything for all of us.

Megan Robertson: I'm gonna flip your prompt a little bit, Liz, because you started with, it can't all be sunshine and rainbows every day of the week, and then you followed with, what do you like a little bit less?

I'm gonna start with things I'm less fond of. And I was thinking about this, and one of them is when you see a manuscript that could be a really good piece of writing, but it's not a good fit. So sometimes for me, that means reading something that could be a really well written review of a program. And I think, wow, this is really interesting.

And it's about one program at one institution. And I don't know if I can bring this [00:16:00] to the wider field of POD readers, because I think we're, as educational developers, you're always thinking about your individual context, yes. So it's sometimes a little bit rough to think oh, this was a really cool program.

And I want that author to take the next step to tell me about how this relates to the field. And one thing that we've talked about being intentional and reaching

out to authors and not only in an email, but I've done this a few times is say, Hey, let's get a zoom meeting. And that opportunity to speak in person with authors is something that I think has been really valuable because as a, as someone who has published and tried to publish, I've been on the receiving end of some.

Seemingly unkind emails from editors, maybe? And that might just be template language, and that might just be because they're working, again, off the side of their desk. So I think being really thoughtful about the generosity that we've received from the board, from previous [00:17:00] editors, and continuing to extend that generosity to authors and reviewers, has been something that's really important to me.

And to think about yeah, I can decide. I don't just have to rely on email. Like I can decide how I want to communicate with people and build relationships.

Liz Norrell: I want to play off of what you just said because I think what impressed me from the start, like my first interview with, for this position, was how relationship centered the team was, and how important providing kind of mentorship, support, developmental feedback to authors.

How important that was to the ethos of the journal. And that has made it really easy for me to embrace the work of everything that we do and some of the challenging things because I know that we're doing it with a very open heart and a strong commitment to helping people do the best work that they can.

And so I definitely think that's my favorite part. It's also [00:18:00] surprised me because I've been engaged in scholarly publishing either as an author, reviewer, or for a short time in graduate school as like a, an editorial assistant. And I just saw how rural people could throughout my career. So far.

And so I am surprised daily by the generosity of spirit that infuses everything that we do here. The things that I find a little harder to get motivated to do are the things where I have to deliver disappointing news. And I try to do that in a way that's as kind and generous as I can, but that's really hard for me.

And I know it's hard for the authors as well. Thinking about the,

Megan Robertson: it's not really a low, but something I've maybe noticed is sometimes we make, or there's jokes about reviewer number two. So this reviewer number two has had a bad day and they've woken up and decided to take it out on your paper. I feel like in TIA as an editor, I have never [00:19:00]

encountered that reviewer number two who is just trying to bring someone down.

On both ends of the spectrum, I feel we might have the reviewer who gives so much of themselves and provides so much detailed feedback that my job as an editor is to shape that a little bit for an author so they don't feel overwhelmed. And then on the other side would be the reviewer who maybe has absolutely no time and is really working hard to get something in and says, yes, this is great.

I really enjoyed it. I see how it would be immediately applicable. And I think, okay, so how can I pull what they've offered there to the author? So I think, again, this community of folks that is a part of POD and is a part of this journal is really conscious of how what we say matters and how we interact with people matters.

Marina Smitherman: Yeah, I just think that's such a valuable point and it reminds me why it's so awesome to work with this team. I think that what, one of the things I found really difficult is [00:20:00] when an author has worked on one or two sets of revisions and either not, quite achieved what the reviewers were really recommending they did with the manuscript, and at that point we're saying it's not ready.

And I think as a team we're really good about saying, it's not ready yet this version isn't ready yet, but we would love to have a conversation with you about how we can get it ready. So I think that's always a bit heartbreaking if people if authors have worked on one or two sets of revisions and it's still, it doesn't quite meet what reviewers and we as editors are hoping for the journal.

So I think that's definitely something. So

Liz Norrell: well, the reason I've called you here today, I'm going to shift into that, is that we have We are finally ready to talk about expanding our editorial team. To do this, I'm going to ask Marina to talk a little bit about how we got here, and we'll talk about what this new role will look like, and how we see it fitting in with the rest of the team.

Marina Smitherman: To a certain extent, I alluded to [00:21:00] this earlier. This was born out of my own experience. I loved guest editing. It was so fun. It was just a few months of work with a great team. And when the opportunity a couple of times after that came up to apply, I was like, can I really commit four years to this?

What if I don't like it full time, right? What if this was a very different, one off experience and there are more aspects of the work that I don't like than I do and so the way that the team has been structured has been pretty fixed, right? You serve in this role for two years and as an associate editor and then the editor in chief role for two years.

And to me, I was always like, oh gosh, am I ready? Am I ready? Do I have the skill set? Will I really enjoy investing that much time? And I think there's a lot of moving in and out of different roles now in our field. We've seen that a lot. We have a consortium of teaching and learning directors.

here in Georgia and we see a lot that changeover and that moving of different positions. Liz even herself said, I wasn't quite in a job yet but I was about to move into one as she joined our team. So I think taking [00:22:00] into account that and also the fact that we've had a couple of people who were in the role just you know, have to step down either because of work commitments changing or because they didn't have the time to invest in it or maybe it just wasn't a fit for them.

So we wanted to take that into account and I will say we were heavily encouraged by the POD exec as well. Shout out to Stacey Greeters alongside our editorial board that, that maybe because of that, we needed to think intentionally about the structure of the team. So when I came on in January of 23, I was stepping into a vacant position in a team of four and then we had someone step down in the September of 23 and so that left us as a team of three with Liz and Megan joining new and as we started to have discussions about what would be sustainable for the journal in the long run we started to think about the idea that to a certain extent jumping in as an associate editor levels that's intimidating and hard so we had in [00:23:00] March of 23 advertised for both contributing editors and associate editors and laughed in hindsight that no one wanted to sign up for the longer job, right?

Everyone really was thinking, okay, I'll be a contributing editor first and see how that goes. And I think Liz said, we encouraged Liz and Megan to consider serving in this role and they graciously accepted. So that, that led us to think about How do we intentionally structure pathways into this work where someone can suck it and see, try it for a little bit and see if they like it.

If they like it, they can keep going. And this came as a result of in depth conversations we had as a team at the POD conference in November in 2023. The idea that if we stratify and structure pathways in with mentoring at every

level, it would give, people who feel that they're not quite ready for an associate editor role or an editor role to just try it.

And so we've developed a pathway up to leadership that starts with our contributing editors who do in depth review [00:24:00] and then moves through to an assistant editor role. So that people can try it for a year or two. And if they like it, they can move up to an associate editor role. And if they like that, they can move up to an editor in chief, but at every level, we're working with each other to make sure that people feel sure they have the skill sets and the confidence in their own abilities to succeed with that.

Liz Norrell: Megan, do you want to talk a little bit maybe about why we think creating this newer kind of position, this assistant editor position, might help somebody acclimate to the work of the journal?

Megan Robertson: Yeah, that assistant editor role, I think, is a really nice stepping stone between something like contributing editor, and I realized I'd forgotten, yeah, I applied as a

And then was asked to apply to be an associate editor. And again, it was my supervisor saying, yes, go for it, do it. And when I came in, I [00:25:00] thought I know how to give feedback on writing. I know how to communicate well in writing. That's what I had going for me. And I'm extremely thankful. for Liz.

And I hope that in this assistant editor role, there has always been the idea that there's going to be multiple people come on at the same time. So you have that peer partnership. And for the senior leadership position, like for Marina as editor, there are different responsibilities that she has. So I'm really appreciative that I can sometimes message Liz and be like, Hey, in terms of this operational.

thing that we're maybe dug into. What do you think about this? And that, I think, is a really good use of our time. And the same thing, hopefully, at the assistant editor position, that they can work together with the support of the whole team and find what works so that we can have a really robust community that supports not only authors and reviewers, but supports the [00:26:00] I think the previous model is that you move through, become editor, and then buy on your way, how to become a member of the board.

This model that's being introduced allows for movement, so that if, for example, maybe next year Marina becomes president of the college, and she says, you know what, I am not able to continue my work as, editor in chief, then we'd say,

okay, Marina, understandable, but we really value your knowledge and your experience.

And it would be great to have you still a part of the team. So this movement that allows for things that happen in people's careers and people's lives, but still as a way for people to be involved with something that can be really valuable.

Liz Norrell: I think it's very important that we highlight that even though she was muted, Marina laughed heartily at the idea that she would become president of her college.

Having worked with Marina for a year, I can say she does not have time for that and better not say yes if they offer it. [00:27:00] Yeah, so the, the idea here is that we would build a kind of pathway into the editorship of the journal through structured, scaffolded mentoring, right? So very much like academic job titles are assistant professor or assistant lecturer and then associate and then full, an assistant editor would be someone who is getting the benefit of some mentoring and working in partnership with another assistant editor or associate editor to understand the processes a little bit better and then once they've had some experience with that can move into the associate editor role where you're working more independently and have we can take the training wheels off so to speak and then you know decide if you want to move up into the editor position.

It's important to us that people feel like they can make a decision that's right for them without putting the leadership or the stewardship of the journal at risk. So if one of us did take a role like president or [00:28:00] something else and not have the time that we wouldn't be leaving the rest of our colleagues in a lurch.

And so we want to develop that. a kind of bench and the assistant editors as an entry point into the editorial team. In addition to our contributing editors and our board and our managing editor and all of that, this is just a way to provide those pathways so that people can make choices that are right for them.

Marina Smitherman: Yes, I'm not going to be president of my college anytime soon. We have a brand new one and he's awesome. Yeah, I think that because we've had two people step away in the middle of terms, it has put undue burden of the work on everyone else. This change to the team structure does provide people the opportunity to see whether they like it.

If they do, great, they stick around, but, and continue to serve in different roles, but not feel stuck in a sense. It's just that, it's not something that fulfills your

purpose and reward in this role. And so I love the idea of a bench. I just have we've got people on the bench who are ready to step up if needed.

I [00:29:00] think that's one of the things we realized when we were a team member down, of gosh, there's a lot of demand. We've got, good engagement in TIA from POD members and beyond. And we didn't want to let anyone down as a team of gosh, there's a lot going on. How do we keep all of these balls in the air as a team of three?

And so obviously. Many heads are better than one. I've always believed that collaborative work is the best kind of work. And so I'm excited to see, to welcome a couple of new people to this team, to help us, help us achieve the future for the journal as we're going exciting places at the moment, which is great.

Liz Norrell: All right. So one last question, as we get ready to launch these new editorial roles. When do we expect that this might happen? Like we're agitating. We're so excited to get this rolling. Marina, will you talk a little bit about the timeline here?

Marina Smitherman: Yes. We've been a team member down since September. So essentially as soon as possible.

So be on the lookout for an email that'll come [00:30:00] to the POD listserv, hopefully towards the end of March of this month, that's 2024. So essentially as soon as possible, this has been a great time. A good team working together, but we definitely have a workload that we could use to divide by with extra people.

So yes, essentially, as soon as we can make it happen.

Liz Norrell: All right, so let's go ahead and wrap this up with any final thoughts. And Megan, I'm going to go to you first. Anything you want to share with listeners about the journal, the work, maybe other ways people could be involved, even if they don't want to join the team?

Megan Robertson: Yeah, I would say be in touch. You'll find all our contact information on the TIA website. And right now we've got the queries that people can put questions in. We are happy to receive emails. If you want to chat to any of us about ideas, we are absolutely available for that. And one thing that I wrote down for myself, I need to mention that this editorial team is a space of no apologies.

So I think sometimes as three women that come into this space, we [00:31:00] sometimes default to saying, Oh, sorry, or Oh, that's my fault. Sorry. And to remind one another, hey, no apologies. We continue to work in unprecedented times, and we do our best. And I'm hopeful that can be reflected in the work we do that It's a place of no apologies and it's a place of accountability and responsibility and looking forward to new folks that are excited to join this team.

Liz Norrell: It's so true. We will not apologize for being human and for being fallible creatures who have needs.

Marina Smitherman: Yeah. That's been hard for me as a Brit. I've had to apologize for apologizing so many times since we all started working together. But I think following up on that. I think it's hard to make a choice as you to engage in this work, being uncertain about what it is.

I think I made a lot of assumptions about what this work would look like and whether or not I would enjoy it. And I think that there are so many, there's not, there's no one right way. And to a certain extent, we're really trying to reenvision what the journal could look like. And I think that [00:32:00] everyone, I've ever worked with in the POD network has different skill sets and different things to bring to the table.

So I would say that if you're interested in this, reach out, as Megan said, reach out to one of us to have a conversation, because with there being no one right way, each new brain on the task allows us to create a very different, but probably even more beautiful waterfall. So I think if you have something, if you're questioning it, just Give it a shot and see.

Liz Norrell: And I do think as educational developers, we are often trying to amplify the voices of others versus being in the spotlight ourselves. And maybe I'm just projecting here, maybe that's just me, but I definitely have this feeling that we are so aware of how hard it is to know that we may not feel like we have what we need.

to be competent in this job. And what I want to say is, it is a genuine pleasure to get to read Research in Progress. I feel like so much more informed about the work that's happening in this field because I [00:33:00] get to read it before anyone else. Like it feels very special to me and to get to work with such talented people.

Kind and generous people. The other thing that I will say is that, we talked earlier about norms of scholarly publishing and peer review, and I have really enjoyed getting to challenge those norms with the work of being on this panel team, and trying to model a different way. So one of the things that I often say in emails to reviewers is when you submit a review, it often feels like it's going into a black box and you have no idea if a human actually read what you wrote, if what you wrote had an impact on the article, the decision, or the authors.

And That to me is just, it's really unfortunate because it makes me less likely to do a peer review myself. And so I can't do this for every reviewer and for every article because honestly, I could, but I don't. And then I feel guilty that I haven't, and it's been several months and sometimes I just send the email anyway, but I really [00:34:00] try.

to acknowledge particularly thoughtful reviewers and everyone who takes the time to engage. And I want to believe that can make a difference. So I see this role as an opportunity to challenge the norms of academia, especially around peer reviewed publications. So that's, that's what I have loved and what I continue to love and why I choose to do this work.

Any last thoughts? I think you just ended really beautifully, Liz. And I thought you were going to veer into an apology there and I would have to bring out my no apologies button. But I think you're capturing that, that approach of humility, respect and care that we really tried to. to share in all that we do.

Marina Smitherman: I couldn't agree more with both Liz and Megan. I think publishing is changing. I think it needs to, and I think we can be on the forefront, which seems hugely exciting.

Liz Norrell: We hear a lot about how peer review is dead, and I think, I don't think peer review is dead, but I think peer [00:35:00] review is broken in many places because of what we're talking about.

And I like to think of us as being on the cutting edge of creating a better and more humane rewarding system. It is a privilege and an honor to work with both of you. This has been so much fun, this conversation and the work. And I hope that in putting this out in the world, that we will be drawing nearer to us future awesome colleagues who will be excited about changing the nature of peer review, which sounds very grandiose, but that's what we're doing, right?

Thank you both. Thank you so much, Liz. Thanks, Liz.

Lindsay Doukopoulos: Thanks for listening to this episode. Centering centers is a podcast produced by the digital resources and innovation committee of the pod network. If you would like to get involved, please email us at d r I at pod network dot org.