Hello, and welcome. I am your host, Neil Ward, and I'm grateful that you are taking time out of your day to learn more about design educators' paths to Tenure. I truly appreciate it.

On this episode of Tell It To Neil, we're chatting with Assistant Professor of Art, Catherine A Moore, from Georgia Gwinett College in Lawrenceville, Georgia. Let's listen in.

Neil: Hi Catherine, how are you?

Catherine: I'm great, how are you, Neil?

Neil: Doing pretty well, thank you for joining us on Tell It To Neil.

Catherine: Thanks for having me.

Neil: So, let 's get started. How did you get into Design and Illustration or do you prefer Illustration and Design?

Catherine: Probably Illustration and Design. My MFA is in Illustration; Drawing is kind of the primary basis of my work although I've done some design work, mostly logo design and then also some user experience design as well. Little bit of web design, but that was a while ago, so illustration's probably the primary than the design. I've obviously always been interested in art and my story of kind of how I came into illustration is a little bit of a wayward path because as an Undergrad I didn't Major in any art or art-related field. I took a couple of Art classes, thought, what am I going to do with this? There's no way this is going to lead to a real career and ended up getting a Psychology Major as an Undergrad and was looking at Social Work schools to go to Grad School in.

Neil: Oh wow!

Catherine: And you know, yeah, it's...so...and so I was at the point of finishing up college and deciding what I was really going to do. I was going through all of my notes from college and realized what I had done over the years was a number of subjects I had ended up throwing out the notes before but before

I threw out the notes, I would cut out all of my doodles in the margins of the notes and save those because that was apparently what was really important to me versus some of the content of the classes.

Neil: Love it!

Catherine: Content of the classes was good too; I saved some notebooks. So, I had a moment where I was thinking, well, if I don't seriously pursue this now, you know, what if I never make another drawing again and decided it was kind of the opportunity, I'm, you know, young and stupid enough to try this out and if I want to go back to Law School or something when I'm forty, that's OK, people do that. So I gave it a chance and I'm very lucky that it worked out for me; I think it was definitely the most influential decision of my life to back to Art School when I did, so I ended up going to Savannah College of Art and Design in Savannah and got an MFA in Illustration. I ended up starting as an MA there but knew I wanted to teach afterwards so I ended up going for one quarter, they're on a quarter system there, just was learning and growing so much as an artist within that very brief amount of time, I immediately switched to the MFA and now I am an Illustrator and an Educator, so it's great! Worked out well!

Neil: I've seen some of your illustrations and they're pretty amazing. My favorite being the cast of Arrested Development and then the Jailbirds from Orange is the New Black, so, how long does it take you to do these and what is your process?

Catherine: That's really funny because I've just…I wasn't on the ball for this but the new season of Orange is the New Black is like coming out today, so I just re-posted one of those and it's like very timely.

Neil: Time to binge-watch!

Catherine: Yeah, I know: I don't have time and I really want to! So, the graphite portraits that I do are much, much quicker than some of the color work which I'm trying to work on now. I had an Art Director once say, this graphite is great, but you really need to learn how to do this in color, which took me years and years to do, so now when I get a commission for graphite work I'm like, oh, easy, no problem! I can do it in a couple of hours because it takes so much more time to do color work that graphite's really a

relief. If it's just really a straight rendering like some of the Arrested Development portraits, I do have to draw them fairly large, so I mean, what, two feet so maybe like what is that, like sixteen to twenty-four inches or so, ends up being like the height of a head, and a lot of that is just to get a particular likeness when I do portraiture work I think why it's really effective in part is I do really detailed rendering but I pay a lot of attention to getting the likeness accurate. I have a little bit of a pet peeve where I see portrait illustrators and artists and people say, oh, is that so-and-so? It's like no one should ever have to ask, is it so-and-so; they should know right away and just little intricacies of facial expression and especially just facial anatomy, like someone who has wide-set eyes or close-set eyes, it's like that's part of what really makes them them, and you need to like make sure you get those in the portrait, so that ends up, the likeness ends up being what takes the time...

(5:15)

The rendering actually, like if I'm in a groove, I can get through it pretty quickly, so I think, I mean I made the Arrested Development ones maybe like six years ago now, it's been a little while, maybe five years, and the one of George Senior maybe took ten hours at the time, eight to ten hours to do. I'd probably render it a little faster now, but that would be kind of the ball-park of what I'm looking at for those. The Jailbirds are a little more conceptual so I was like trying to put together heads with bird bodies, you know, spend a lot more time putting the reference together so that the lighting is consistent on the body and the face. I do that a lot if I'm doing something more conceptual. I need reference, I need a lot of reference; I spend a lot of time putting the reference together and getting that light source consistent is probably the hardest thing to do when trying to compile something for multiple references so that ends up being a little time-consuming, but then the rendering for that would be about, you know the same. Probably longer for those birds because the feathers took forever and I just thought, I am never going to draw another thing with feathers again and then I totally did! It was...took a long time. So yeah, that's a little bit about the process and I've always done graphite rendering, it's always what I was really interested in, I was always really interested in realism. I have this philosophy, because my vision's actually really bad and I think maybe I just like rendering so tightly because I can't really see very well so I want to get it as tight as possible, so...that's my theory of why I do that but you know, in Grad School I was trying out a ton of different styles trying to work in more like comic-y styles and abstract styles and none of it seemed really genuine and this is really just what was genuine to me, so it's kind of...I really appreciate people who do more abstract and conceptual work and mostly my thought is just like, man, I wish I could do that; that I was a good enough artist to do

that, but this is what I'm good at so this is what I focus on and it's also makes it niche in the market for me as an illustrator, rendering realism is still something people need, especially for spot illustrations in magazines; I've gotten a lot of jobs for that because they want a small portrait of someone or just, you know, spot illustrations for something I've gotten a lot of work just for being able to render things realistically, so it's ended up being good for me that there is still a market for what it is that I like to do.

Neil: And that is always the dream, isn't it?

Catherine: Yeah, right, yes!

Neil: So, two questions: where can people find your illustrations online?

Catherine: Website is catherineamoore.com and then handles for everything else are catamooreart, so it's C-A-T-A-M-O-O-R-E art, so that's Instagram, Twitter; actually I think the Behance is catherineamooreart, so yes, but all of them linked from my website, so I'm still like a website purist. Now Instagram is people's website and that really annoys me! It's just, now I'm like, oh, do I need to erase all of this process work from the past? I don't know...

Neil: No, don't do it!

Catherine: I know...well, now you can archive which is you can save it for yourself and bring it back when you need to but yeah, it's like people don't even go to your website, now it's like I've so carefully curated my website and my Instagram is a mess! I don't know what people think of me if they go there, so...

Neil: So, you mentioned a little bit about your work during your MFA degree, so what was your thesis project about or did you have a project in lieu of thesis?

Catherine: I actually wrote my thesis so you had an option at SCAD to do a thesis show or you could write a paper and I actually wrote a paper. I think at a certain point of Grad School I was, you know, after going to Undergrad for four years and doing almost all writing and then I went to Art School, was doing all art, I needed to balance it out again and start writing! And I had so many reflections on my Grad School experience that I really wanted to write a paper, so I wrote about illustration education,

and I think it's a really fascinating topic. At the time I wrote it, there was an article, I can't remember the first name of the guy; his last name was Poyner, and he wrote about how illustration education really doesn't have a canon of knowledge that is being consistently taught across different institutions or schools. The question is, do schools need to have that canon of knowledge that are taught across schools? Should the programs be completely unique and distinctive? Are there certain things we need to focus on? Should programs be focused more on skill or on concept? Should they be based more on just business practices which I definitely wish I'd gotten more of in Grad School and I had some fantastic, fantastic professors at SCAD and I also had some classes that I wasn't happy with so I wanted to know what is happening in other programs and how is this as a field being structured…

(10:43)

…So I just went to the Icon Illustration Conference in Detroit last week, two weeks ago, and it was fantastic and there's a whole education symposium now there that apparently started maybe…four, six years ago and a lot of people are starting to talk about this exact same topic that I was talking about in my thesis ten years ago, eight years ago. So I was really happy that this is being talked about, expanded, there's more text books coming out about illustration but the thesis was great because I got to interview a lot of famous people, which was really fun, who were illustrators who were very prominent in the field, but also educators and I actually ran into a couple of them at Icon when I was there which was really satisfying and kind of compiled what are the main people in the field who are educating, talking about in the classes and had a great set of interviews and kind of pulled out these points that were consistent throughout the interviews. And I'm kind of interested in updating that, at some point, to see what has changed now with technology and marketing and digital illustration, web illustration, animation in illustration, so that's what I ended up doing my thesis on and I'm glad that that's definitely still relevant to what I'm doing now with education and what's relevant to the field today too.

Neil: So, what were your findings with your thesis project?

Catherine: Oh gosh, I'd have to review it!

Neil: OK!

Catherine: Yeah, I think the emphasis on business was definitely stated by multiple people and emphasis on concepts. Steve Brodner was someone who I interviewed and his whole thing is concept. It's like he doesn't even think about that he's this exceptionally skilled caricature artist and he kind of just brushes that aside. But his concepts are remarkably strong and made stronger by his skill which I think he should acknowledge, but the idea of using concept to drive your illustration, thinking about real world applications of how this is going to be used in different publications, using illustration as an answer or solution to a problem or question, those were consistent things that were coming up in the interviews. I got a lot of education on skill I think...

Neil: Sounds a lot like design.

Catherine: Yeah, right, right, it's just problem-solving! You'll hate if I say this about designers; I'm going to make a lot of people mad but illustration is like design but harder! Because then you have to like render it all. It's like you do all the design work: you're thinking about color and layout and it's like balance and all of that, but then you also have to make pictures! I'm so sorry, I don't mean it!

Neil: All questions and suggestions can be sent to Catherine Moore through her website!

Catherine: It's fine: I actually...I never...I always get away from layout actually, I just do single-focus imagery!

Neil: So, during those interviews and whatnot, did copyright infringement come up at all or how people might take those illustrations and trace them and transform them, like ten per cent and call them their own?

Catherine: Not in those interviews but that is a subject that fascinates me and I think definitely should be emphasized in illustration education because a lot of student work ends up being very blatant copyright violations; you're just copying someone's work to practice a skill or you kind of learn the way they work or something like that. Yeah, I've gone to a couple of talks on copyright and it's just fascinating because the whole internet is copyright violation! There's...

Neil: Yes!

Catherine: I don't know if you know about DragonCon in Atlanta: it's this big kinda like pop culture comic book convention and there's an Artists' Hall there, so I went a couple of years ago for the first time and all these people have these booths and it's artwork based on movie characters, Disney characters just like, and I'm looking round, I'm like, oh my God, like, all of this is copyright violation. And it ends up being...it only ends up mattering when someone sends you a Cease and Desist letter; it's like is someone paying attention enough to care about it? And it's just, it's like a...

(15:34)

Neil: Good point!

Catherine: Yeah, so it's like if a teenager posts a picture they copied of like Beyoncé on Deviant Art that is a copyright violation because they are sharing it in the public sphere. It's not even if you sell it, it's if you share it in the public sphere, and so that's...and that's it and so everyone's breaking the law. Everyone is, and maybe this happens a lot more in illustration than design, although I've seen a lot of examples of how you could take the skin of a website basically and copy it into a design of another one but you know, photo reference is another thing. I've been increasingly more aware in my career if I'm doing a straight rendering, I get permission to use the photo reference and I think that's something that needs to be emphasized to illustrators. I don't know anyone I think personally that I can think of off the top of my head who's had to go through copyright violation ordeal but I wouldn't want to go through that. That would be a loss!

Neil: No, it sounds awful, actually.

Catherine: It sounds awful.

Neil: You should listen to Rion Huffman's interview on there. He talks a lot about Creative Commons and how he is getting certified to teach the principles of Creative Commons.

Catherine: Oh, very cool, yeah.

Neil: Yeah, so workshops; workshops; workshops! So, you went from your Bachelor's Degree to an MA to an MFA and then you graduated, so at what point during that time did you get the a-ha moment that you wanted to be an educator?

Catherine: I think the a-ha moment came while I was in School. It was after that first quarter when I was signed up for the MA program and I switched to the MFA program specifically so that I could get a teaching job after School and there was a practical component to that where I knew I would be able to have a much steadier income as an educator but it also comes from a very genuine place of where I like teaching. Teaching is fun, teaching is creative, teaching is social; it's an opportunity to share your inspiration, work you find with others and I knew I wanted to do that pretty early on and then coming out of Grad School, I didn't realize quite to the extent of how hard it would also be just to get a teaching job as well!

Neil: Yes!

Catherine: So, I ended up really getting pretty lucky. I moved to Atlanta from Savannah pretty much just because it was the closest large city and the school I teach at now I got a part-time teaching position at maybe about...I started probably about a year and a half after I'd moved to Atlanta, got hired maybe a year after I'd moved to Atlanta and it's a pretty unique school because it's only twelve years old, I think about twelve years old; it has twelve thousand students already and it's the first four year public institution to open in the State of Georgia in over a hundred years. So they were hiring in mass when I was applying and I think I'd applied actually about it was the third time I'd applied when they actually brought me in for the part-time interview; I think I'd applied to like full-time and part-time positions there and when I was...and then I taught part time for a while and eventually got hired full-time. When I was hired full-time, my class of people I was hired with because we go through the same orientation together, was over fifty people which is kind of unheard of for new hires at an institution.

Neil: That's a large class!

Catherine: Yeah, it's just a large number and I was really just in the right place at the right time. I definitely earned my chops as a part-time teacher. It was definitely the right sort of institution for me. It's a teaching college where you do have a research requirement but the research is my writing a paper for the conferences I was already going to, working on my illustration publications, that all counts

as research, so not having to do, you know, publish books right away going into that job was fine because I could really just focus on what I liked doing which was teaching; it was definitely the right place for me. There's a lot of creative freedom; there's a lot of flexibility; there's no Tenure at this School and so there's not a sort of competitive atmosphere that everyone else I've talked to in academia seems to experience at their School. Everyone is very collegial; I'm friends with the people I work with, I collaborate with the people I work with; it's a low pressure and I just have creative control over my classes, so all of that is great!

(20:25)

...And...oh, but here's of course the caveat of that is that there is no actual Art Department at my School because the classes I'm teaching are Design and Art classes for Digital Media Majors and Film Majors. The Film Major is technically called Cinema Media Arts and Production; for some reason they had to name it that, but it's a Film Major, so I can teach students who are going into related fields design and art skills that they can use, which I think is a great thing to get more design education into people in multiple fields so that they can use that and I've got a lot of really great motivated students and a lot of students who just really wish there was an Art Major at the School and really appreciate the classes because it's something that is fun for them, creative for them, something where they can express their own voice more and then they can take that and use it in the fields that they're going into. And then a bunch of them transfer, but can also help them!

Neil: Yeah, so how is your design or your illustration education, how has that translated into your classroom because I heard, or as we've been talking, you've been doing illustration work, you've been doing a little bit of UX work, so how is all that translated to the classes that you teach?

Catherine: I think probably in a lot of lose ways and others in a really tangible way. I taught a User Experience in Visual Design class for Digital Media Majors last semester. It was offered as a two-credit special topics course and I was able to get someone from the Digital Media Department who was also very enthusiastic about the subject, thought the class should be taught and we were able to get a good number of students into that class and I had done some UX work and just basically wanted to teach myself it, so I was doing a lot of volunteer projects and got really into these ideas of user experience design, was reading a lot of books on the subject and when I get excited about something, I really want to share it with other people, so being able to teach this class was a really direct result of me just being

interested in that field. So, and the students ended up getting I think a lot out of it from what they wrote in their reviews and I was a little nervous starting to teach that class because I had really done volunteer work and hadn't done professional or paid work in the field but certainly knew a lot more than what they did, so they thought it was great because they were like, I wish this was a three-credit class because the amount of information presented was way more than what a two-credit class was and I was like, oh, sigh of relief and then also: oh no, I'm so sorry I put you through that because they apparently had a lot more work to do than what they were expecting.

Neil: That seems to be the case in any web design UX course; there is a ton more work than what students are typically expecting and that's just the field.

Catherine: That's what you have to do, yeah. We had a lot of tech issues with that class which was difficult because the students have to have a laptop to be a Digital Media Major but it doesn't have to be a Mac laptop so they didn't have Sketch on their own computers and there were computers on campus that had Sketch but the version was outdated and they had recently added the ability to prototype directly in Sketch without a plug-in and so we weren't able to use that unless they went and paid for it so we ended up using Adobe XD which wasn't really industry standard and I learned that more and more as we were going throughout the class but it was still good that they were getting a lot of experience with an Adobe product because that just translates across the board and they can use Illustrator and Photoshop and there were some good advantages about that but yeah, it was something where you not having a Design Department was really grating on me because not having control over what sort of technology we have accessible to us; yeah, that was a challenge!

Neil: In technology, yes, it is always a challenge! Then your transition from Graduate School to your full-time teaching job, that was pretty easy then for you? You just went from SCAD to Gwinnett then?

(25:00)

Catherine: Well yeah, with a whole bunch of time in between where I was…I didn't…no, I Adjuncted at a number of different colleges. I taught at…

Neil: Tell me about that experience

Catherine: Oh gosh, I don't know! I thought you said don't speak negatively of any places? There was this high school; I won't mention it by name. I don't even know if it exists any more, but it was a private High School that was outside of Atlanta that had maybe you know thirty, forty students in it, so there were some really unique students that were, for instance, in a band that traveled and had to have like a non-traditional teaching schedule and so they could only come to school sometimes. There were students who had health problems where they couldn't have a traditional teaching schedule or school schedule. And then there were just a bunch of like students with drug problems who were also at the school, so it was the most unique mix. This was the first teaching job I got out of School. It was a doozie and I'm still friends with a number of people who taught at this institution, which is accredited as a high school and it was…it was not run…now, you can't put this in the podcast any more because I'm negatively speaking of an institution, can I do that? It's not named! It taught me many, many lessons and actually gave me really good teaching experience because I came up with a lot of material that I could use in future classes. But it was…

Neil: There we go, there's a positive!

Catherine: There's a positive, absolutely; I learned a lot about classroom management; I learned a lot about dealing with students, so it was definitely educational for me, but it was a difficult road until I got the part-time at GGC and getting part-time at GGC was a huge relief for me, to work with a professional institution that cared about its students, that managed its staff and Faculty well, provided resources for the Faculty staff. Compared to things I'd done prior to that, it was a sigh of relief and I was just really happy when a full-time job came up that I was able to step into that, so I'm…yeah, happy with whatever road it took to get there! You can edit that as you care to!

Neil: Well, I feel that there are similar experiences that happen with other educators getting into academia. So, you're not unique in that experience and for me, I think it's really, really good to have that contrast, right? So you could really see what is not a…one place may not be a stellar teaching environment and you can realize what is not stellar about it and then when you find a job then you can appreciate, oh this is actually really awesome!

Catherine: Yeah, I think the thing that was getting to me as well is I was hired for a number of jobs prior to GGC. And actually when I was working part-time at GGC I did have other part-time teaching positions at other colleges but I would get hired for stuff that I was completely unqualified for. And in

the end would like, crash-course; I got hired for an Art History position on a Thursday for classes that started on a Monday and I'd taken two Art History classes in my life. And they were desperate! They were desperate to find anyone who could teach this. I learned a ton about Art History and in the end, I got pretty good reviews for the class so I was like, OK, not bad. But it was just amazing to me that there were institutions out there that were giving students, like the school had a Minor in Art History. I didn't have a Minor in Art History and I was like, can I get an honorary Minor in Art History from teaching scores? It was bizarre to me how these institutions ran and so it's like when I got into a professional, legit institution I was like, yeah, again this is a sigh of relief to realize what's out there and it's just amazing to me that those institutions are able to, you know, mostly private institutions are able to exist, so when you talk about issues now with private school defrauding of students sort of thing and it's not like these institutions were really at that level, but you can see how it can kind of get there because there's no real regulation of some things there and the idea that they just really needed part-time labor, because they're not going to pay for full-time for anyone means they're hiring someone on a Thursday that starts on a Monday, and that's...that's how it works so yeah, it's fascinating to know what's out there!

Neil: Always! So, so your position now, do you teach a three-three load?

(30:05)

Catherine: Yeah, I teach four classes a semester for three credits each; sometimes, rarely, I think I take an overload. What it ends up translating to is ten face to face hours a week; it can be frustrating with Art and Design classes because they're...there is no idea of a studio class at my school because there is no Art Major, so everything is blocked out into either one two and a half session once a week, two one-hour fifteen minutes twice a week or three fifty minute classes a couple of times a week and there are some teachers at my school who have to take those fifty minute blocks, which is impossible to teach; for instance, you know, with Drawing One, you can't do it, and we've been able to really advocate that those like at least, those two classes have to at least be in the hour fifteen-minute blocks. What I try to do is I teach all of my classes in a row, so students can basically just stay after or come early and use the space and we do have an Open Studio time as well so students can come and then use a little bit of extra time there, so a lot of it is just they need the work time and they need the structured time out of their day, a lot of the students are working or have family obligations and it can be a real relief to them

to get work done in class, so I try to structure that as much as possible with the limitations of the school schedule.

Neil: So, are you in control of setting that schedule or is there a Department Chair that you have to run that through?

Catherine: I don't get to control when the blocks of teaching are but I do have control over which ones I get to teach and we have maybe five full-time people now and a number of part-time instructors so it ends up being that we basically all take the same schedule every semester and it works out well for us so it ends up being pretty easy to schedule personally but within that structure of that two and a half, hour fifteen or fifty minute blocks, we don't have a lot of flexibility there.

Neil: Gotcha. But that's nice to have that predictability of those certain classes, or those times every semester.

Catherine: Oh yeah. Yeah, I really can't complain about my schedule at all. I'm able to teach or go onto campus three days a week which are all Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, so I have the long weekend flexibility which can be nice and...

Neil: Yeah, I'd say so!

Catherine: And all of our meetings are also always on Tuesday and Thursdays so because I teach on Tuesday and Thursdays, those are just really, really long days and not that I'm complaining about that but I'm able to fit it all into one day. I live pretty far from where I teach so it ends up being very convenient for me to be able to just go there and do all my work on a few days a week and then I can be class planning, grading, all that sort of stuff on the Monday, Friday weekends and it ends up all working out.

Neil: You mentioned that there was a research requirement there. Is there like a ratio or, how high is that expectation of research?

Catherine: Yeah, I'm trying to remember what the ranges of percentages are. I believe for teaching, because it is the focus is teaching at the College, you have to have that be at least fifty or sixty per cent

of what you're evaluated on. Then we have Student Engagements and then we have Research and Creative Activity and then Service, so it's those four components that end up being part of our year end review. I think everything beyond teaching has to be between like ten to twenty or ten to fifteen per cent, so you can really put research pretty low and I tend to do that, not because I'm not constantly creating creative output; but it's because I do a lot of Service and serve on committees and do a lot of work with Student Engagement, getting students involved with art on campus. We have an Art Committee on campus so we're able to do a lot of Student Engagement through that, because I'm putting so much effort into that, I just, the research tends to get knocked down as far as the hierarchy in my percentages. So we have to send those in maybe a few months before we're evaluated, maybe in December and then we get evaluated in usually like May or June, right after the semester starts, so again, the real focus is on Teaching; Research can be what you want it to be. I think it's between ten and twenty per cent of your final evaluation score.

Neil: Is that how you're recommended for another year's worth of a contract teaching there, or are you kind of locked into a five year contract at the beginning, or how does that work?

(35:00)

Catherine: They have five year, three year and one year contracts; most people are on three year contracts and the evaluations are used primarily for promotion. Because we're a State School, the State gets to say when we get merit bonuses so if the State of Georgia says, you get some extra money this year, those are the, the numbers are used I think pretty directly from the evaluations as far as who's getting those merit bonuses and then those of course come into play with promotion processes.

Neil: Talk a little bit about the promotion processes. So, that's going from Assistant to Associate?

Catherine: Yeah. and I've never gone through that process, so I can't speak in too much detail for that, but I believe you have to be there five years full-time before you're able to apply for promotion to be Associate. I'm not sure how long it is to apply from Associate to Full, maybe something similar to that if you come in as an Associate. But then you're putting a whole portfolio together on that. I got distracted because I realized I didn't answer one of your previous questions.

Neil: No, no, it's fine!

TELL IT TO NEIL

Catherine: I don't know if I can say that not a lot of people get fired from my School, so usually people are re-hired; there's lots of gossipy stories of when it doesn't happen but that is a rarity and I don't necessarily think that's a bad thing because a lot of my colleagues are really, really good teachers and they put a lot of effort into the School. I think, you know, Faculty morale is pretty high in comparison to what I've heard from people working at other institutions and again a lot of that I think comes from the creative freedom, focus on teaching, collaborative feel of this School so you would have to mess up to leave, is kind of the...but it's a young institution and I don't know how that's going to change in the future. I don't know if someday we'll end up getting Tenure in the future. It's really meant as an experimental college that's supposed to be very forward thinking, very collaborative, very inter-disciplinary; these were all goals that the College, when it was founded, so that's, yeah, so that's kind of how that works! But the thing is, if you're not...but it's not the pressure of Tenure because if you don't get Tenure, it's like you don't have to go find another job; you can stay at a school that you like teaching at without having that huge pressure of research and when I got my MFA in Illustration, I took workshops in Education, but I wasn't taking classes in Higher Education; I was basically going to a Tech School and I entered academia but I'm not researching to the level that like a Sociologist is researching or a Biologist is doing research; the focus on publication is not something I have a lot of background in and I am glad to be at a school where it's not the focus because that would be something I would have to put a lot of effort into in order to learn the process and just, I mean, there aren't illustration publications; they are very few, it would be very difficult for me in my specific field to be regularly publishing unless I was writing books and that's a huge endeavor to do. So...and I have colleagues who write books and good for them, but I prefer to make the art and get that published in popular media and press and have that be thing that's counting towards my Research, which it does, and I can volunteer for doing design within the Atlanta community as well and that counts towards Service but also towards Research because I'm working within my field, so yeah, it's that flexibility of not having those specific Tenure needs. You'd need that for promotion; like if you want to get promoted you should probably be working on a book or something to that degree but because the Art and Creative Faculty are such a small component of the School I'm not sure how they end up promoting that. And I'm not sure if they know how they're promoting that because I don't know how many people who've had an MFA have gone through that whole promotion process. There are a few people, some of the Film Faculty have MFAs; there are English Faculty who have MFAs in Creative Writing, so we all have something kind of in common because we're not Doctors, even though we're called Doctors, it's like, the easiest five years I ever saved in my life!

(40:00)

Neil: Yeah, really!

Catherine: It's like the students call me Doctor, and I'm like, well, thanks! That's a great promotion. So it's...we're not treated any differently as far as pay goes, but I'm not sure how much experience the School has with going through the promotion process for those creative fields. Which is something they're probably still working out.

Neil: And will continue to work out! Are there other avenues that would be considered Research? So you talked about publishing in popular publications and creating work for clients and whatnot, but is there any other avenues that would be considered Research?

Catherine: Yeah, I'm trying to think of everything that I end up listing. It's...a lot of my illustration work is done for packaging, advertising, editorial, so it's published in whatever manner that is. I usually write about one paper a year for SECAC...wait, I guess it's not South East College Art Conference any more: SECAC, whatever the acronym conference, and I end up just, I just publish those on Medium where they get a lot of views and people are reading them which is what's important to me is that people are reading my stuff and what else do I put in there? I think any other art shows like gallery shows is something they understand. I think a lot of the Research information comes from the other State Schools that would have Design Art programs, so like UGA, Georgia State, there are Design Faculty there. I don't think there's an Illustration program at any State School in Georgia and that might not be true but I'm pretty sure there's not, so I don't know if they'd necessarily know; I think the Design programs would probably closest match as far as what would be considered Research. I'm curious to know what other people are evaluated on in that field as well who are in Design.

Neil: You'll have to listen to the rest of the podcasts!

Catherine: I know, I will! I'm motivated to do so!

Neil: So when you say that you post things on Medium, what is that?

Catherine: Oh, it's a...I don't know, what is Medium? It's a blogging platform but it seems to be at a slightly higher quality than just a blog. I think a certain amount comes from you're kind of pushed higher up from the more people read you and it seems like a lot of people put professional-style articles on there; it's not just you know, someone talking about their cat! But I think it's been a pretty great platform because it gives you a lot of analytics back on how many people are reading your things; people can follow you if they're interested in what you're writing about and I even had a BBC reporter contact me from a Medium article and interviewed me for an article that I wrote on emojis because they were writing an article for BBC on emojis and I was like, well this worked out well, because, you know, that doesn't happen if you just put something into an academic publication and academia just annoys me because if you're just writing for people who are reading these journals, I think, you know, Art and Design is something that should be in the public sphere that everyone should be reading about and learning about and I am happy to put my work that I'm already doing out there so people can read it and then it was just great because I was able to get people to contact me that wouldn't have been able to read that otherwise, so that was all a good thing!

Neil: Absolutely, and congratulations!

Catherine: Yeah, it was pretty cool; they called me like, I quote, "emoji expert" and I was like, whoa! What a moniker!

Neil: You'll have to put that on your business cards!

Catherine: I will! Catherine A Moore: emoji expert.

Neil: Well, we're almost kind of at the end of our interview, so do you have any parting thoughts or any upcoming projects that you would like to talk about?

Catherine: Yeah, upcoming projects: I'm working on a Visual Literacy and Communication class which is going to be a requirement of the Film Major at my School and that's really exciting because I was able to write the class when the Faculty who were, they were proposing this Film Major and I was able to write a class that was going to be a requirement of that Major which is another thing that speaks for my school as far as creative freedom you have that they're a Faculty who are motivated to propose a new Major for the School and they invited the Music and Art Faculty to say, please write some classes

because we want to involve you in this inter-disciplinary field of Film. So I was able to write a class, it's now every Film Major is going to be going through this class in Visual Literacy and Communication and I can really make it what I want to; I've taught Art Appreciation for years as a part-timer and I kind of think of this as Art Appreciation 2.0 plus like a lot of 2D and Visual Design going into there, because those Film Majors are going to be learning how to frame shots, learning how to work with color, story-boarding, all of these sort of things that have a lot of background in Design. I teach 2D Design as well, which is another requirement for that Major, but this we can just go way more in depth with cultural context and how that matters, so I'm really excited about that and again, just very happy I have the creative freedom to do that...

(45:30)

...And then for my SECAC paper this year, I'm on an Art Appreciation panel and I'm thinking of this is this like love letter to all the Art Appreciation classes I taught because I really love teaching that class because you can just get someone to fall in love with Art in that class whose really not had that much exposure to it and I think that's such an awesome thing, so it's kind of my little goodbye to Art Appreciation which I don't teach any more because I have all these studio classes I'm teaching, so I'm excited to write that too and then just continuing to work on some more visual illustration projects as well.

Neil: It sounds like you'll be watching a lot of movies and films!

Catherine: Well yeah! I'm hoping that the Film Professors are teaching most of the film-related aspects of that; this is...it's offered as an Art class, not a Film class, so I'll refer to them but it'll be...grounded in static visuals!

Neil: Well again, thank you very much for taking the time out of your day to talk to me and get interviewed.

Catherine: Yeah, thanks so much for having me on the show and reaching out. This has been really fun.

Neil: Good, I'm glad to hear it. And I hope to see you at the next Conference.

Catherine: Yes, I will see you then. Thanks a lot.