

PodMag Week 21

Date: 14 May 2014

Karen:

Ah, well digital story telling is just going so well Dave, isn't it?

Dave:

I had a great time. It was brilliant to see all the students again.

Karen:

I know.

Dave:

It's so engaged.

Karen:

I know, they're fantastic, they're doing such a brilliant..., I can't wait to see their finished videos.

Dave:

No, the videos will be brilliant, I'm really happy with what we've done today. Ahh, I'm so tired, but do you know what? I think we should go for a drink.

Karen:

Well, do you know what? Before we do that we have to record the PodMag.

Dave:

Really?

Karen:

Yes

Dave:

We could record it in the pub?

Karen:

The PubMag didn't work so well, do you know Dave, I'm..., why can't we just find somewhere proper. I mean it is a bit silly now.

Dave:

Yeah, you've never been here before have you?

Karen:

No

Dave:

Well, I've got a bit of a surprise for you.

Karen:

Have you? (*Excitedly*)

Dave:

Yeah, you're gonna like this a lot!

Karen:

Ooh

Dave:

Follow me.

Karen:

Ok

Dave:

It's down these steps.

Karen:

Right

Dave:

Like it?

Karen:

Umm, it's a bit dark.

Dave:

Hold on.

Karen:

A bit overgrown.

Dave:

Yeah

Karen:

I'm not sure about..., just watch my jumper on that tree.

Dave:

It's ok, it'll be nice, right, see this building?

Karen:

Yep

Dave:

This is..., nobody knows about this.

Karen:

Right

Dave:

This is one of the oldest buildings in the University.

Karen:

Looks very old, is it still used?

Dave:

No, and that's the beauty. Do you know when we were in the Library doing the PodMag?

Karen:

Yeah

Dave:

Well...

Karen:

And that didn't go so well.

Dave:

No, but, when we were hiding.

Karen:

Yeah

Dave:

I was hiding in the old Geography Department.

Karen:

Right

Dave:

With all the old maps, and I found the original blue prints for Walton Hall.

Karen:

Wow!

Dave:

The whole original blue prints. Amazing, it was all fields and everything around here.

Karen:

Yeah

Dave:

But do you know when the OU first started?

Karen:

Yeah, yeah

Dave:

They worked really closely with the BBC - well we still work closely with the BBC.

Karen:

Yeah

Dave:

But the BBC actually had a studio here.

Karen:

Really?

Dave:

You're standing outside it!! (*Karen gasps excitedly*). If we just go down these steps now, I'll show you the studio. I haven't been in here yet.

Karen:

Ok

Dave:

Ok, just pass me those bolt cutters will you?

Karen:

(Laughs) God, everything with you has got to have a drama

Dave:

What?, no just doing my nails (*filing noise in the background*). Ok, so, right let's just open this door.

Karen:

Right

Door opens

(*Sound of door opening*)

Dave:

It's just down here.

Karen:

Ooh

Dave:

Look, if I brush – be careful now, don't fall!

Karen:

Ok, oh, I wish I hadn't worn high heels.

Dave:

I keep telling you about that. Look, if I just wipe off this sign – look at this? (*excitedly*)

Karen:

Ahh, the BBC. Dave, have you finally got us a job at the BBC?

Dave:

Yeah, well, sort of, sort of, anyway...

Karen:

Ah, brilliant.

Dave:

Look, look, if we go through this door here...

Karen:

I've always wanted a job at the BBC.

Dave:

Right, were going through this door here.

Karen:

Yeah

Dave:

Look, look at it.

Karen:

*(Gasps in excitement)*

Dave:

This is the original BBC Recording Studio.

Karen:

Aww, wow, that's amazing.

Dave:

Hey, I don't believe it, look at all this equipment, they've left it here.

Karen:

It's a bit dusty.

Dave:

Oh, that's just a bit of dust, I'll get that off. Right, so what I'm going to do is...

Karen:

Wow

Dave:

I've just got to find out how to turn it on. Umm...

Karen:

I'm going to have to redecorate.

Dave:

Right, well you think about redecorating whilst I find the switch.

Karen:

And this is ours, right?

Dave:

Well nobody knows about it, that's why I had to get those chains off the front.

Karen:

Right

Dave:

Right, now then, this is going to be brilliant (*excitedly*)

Karen:

It's fantastic.

Dave:

The PodMag is going to be really professional.

Karen:

(*Gasps excitedly*)

Dave:

Right, now I've just got to get this switch here.

Karen:

And we can stay here forever?

Dave:

Forever and ever.

Karen:

Brilliant

Dave:

You can have a hammock in the corner if you want? We'll have Sainsbury's delivered each week

Karen:

(*Laughs*)

Dave:

Of course, I should point out there are other outlets. Erm, right, I'll just pull this switch and we'll be up and running.

Dave pulls a lever

(*Electronic boom sound in background*)

Karen:

Oh

Dave:

Oh, I didn't expect that to happen.

Karen:

Umm

Dave:

Umm

Karen:

Look

Dave:

Well it will be ok.

Karen:

Dave...

Dave:

Don't look like that.

Karen:

Do you know what? I'm sick of this. I'm going out into the sunshine and I'm going to interview some students.

Dave:

Oh, ok.

Karen:

I'll see you in an hour.

Dave:

Right, ok, and I'll, I'll - this will be lovely when you get back.

Karen:

Yes, I expect so.

Dave:

I'll clean it and everything.

Karen:

Thank you.

Dave:

Ok, I'll... God, I wasn't expecting that to fly across the room like that.

Karen:

Hmm

Dave:

Ok.

Karen:

Right, I'll see you soon.

Karen leaves the room

*(Sound of door closing)*

Dave:

She's gone off, I'm on my own now, but I'll soon have this sorted. Oh, she will love this, this is going to be brilliant. Right, I'll just, just erm... these two wires, if I just put these together I am sure it will make everything work.

Karen:

Right, so I'm talking to Amy today. Amy, you've come to the Digital Storytelling event. Can you tell us what you expected before you got here?

Amy:

I'm Amy, I'm from Leicester. I've been with the OU since 2008, which seems like a really long time when I say it like that, and in a way it's gone really quickly, and in a way it seems like a life time as well, because I feel like it's all I know now (laughs). Well, I'm really happy to be asked, really happy to be here and I'll be honest from the beginning and say that when I first found out about it from Dave, I didn't really know at all what it was until he explained what you guys were doing, and it was pretty amazing when he kind of said what it was, because all of these issues that you are looking at the moment, I completely agree with, you know the students, participants, everything, and I also have a really big interest in kind of, you know, digital media production and online presence and using this in course materials and distance learning as well, so it's kind of this for me was encompassing a lot of my main interests at the moment, so yeah, it was just a bit strange how it all happened.

Karen:

Yeah, and how do you feel now that you are here? Were you nervous coming?

Amy:

I was a little bit nervous, in the sense that, you know, meeting other students and I thought, oh, are they going to be from the same Faculty as me, or are we going to have things to talk about and stuff like that, but I was more excited just kind of really wanted to come to Milton Keynes, I've never been to Walton Hall before, so it's nice to be on campus if that makes sense, just to kind of see what's here and things like that, and it's nice to meet everyone. I think you don't get to meet fellow students in the flesh very often, apart from at tutorials, where again not everyone always goes, so I think that's a really, really good opportunity to be able to meet with other students and talk about experiences and see if we're having the same issues or if we have the same experiences of stuff, yeah, really good. So no, I wasn't - nervous is the wrong word. Erm..., excited, probably.

Karen:

And can you tell us, like, being involved in this project – do you feel that gives you something over and above your experience as an OU student, in terms of the curriculum and the modules that you are doing?

Amy:

Yeah, absolutely, because, you know, even though the OU materials and things are really diverse and you get to learn about different things, you don't get so much practical, so coming here and doing this with all these different people I would consider a very practical thing to do, you know it's hands on, we're actually doing it, we're here at the cameras, we're here having a face-to-face conversation, we're learning how to do these different things, and sitting at home and doing your distance learning study online from a book, whatever, it's not the same, so yes, absolutely, it's definitely above and beyond the usual realms of OU study.

Karen:

Brilliant, thank you, that's fantastic, absolutely brilliant (*laughter*)



Amy:

*(Laughs)* All right?

Karen:

Thank you very much.

Karen:

We'll I'm here with Brandon, and can you tell us a bit about how you've experienced this digital story telling project so far?

Brandon:

Well, I'm Brandon Lavery, I'm an OU student and this is my final year. I've been doing DD307 studying Psychology, so it's pretty interesting. Well, it's been very interesting, very exciting, I'm actually having these 8 people, well 7 other people but having them all here and actually seeing that they are all from different areas and different parts of the OU, different courses and they are actually able to come together and chat and almost like we sort of know each other before we actually started because we've all got one thing in common. You know, it's very good, very easy to talk to, I think this event is going to connect people even more.

Karen:

Yeah

Brandon:

With the OU, you know, so...

Karen:

And so you're studying Social Psychology and I guess for you, you were saying that it's very interesting how people connect. When do you think in this project you felt a connection with people?

Brandon:

I think very early on. I think from when I actually met face-to-face there was more of a connection but the online environment sort of introduced people and then I was able to come and I've seen a few people like Carly, Jack and I think Cathy was on as well and Dave, and it was like meeting people face-to-face instead of voices on the screen, you know it's very good, like.

Karen:

And can you tell me something about how you've experienced that online environment, like a lot of people say well it's not the same as meeting people face-to-face and things, but I sense for you there was still a connection there in that online environment. Can you say something about maybe how you've experienced that compared to this?

Brandon:

It is different, I mean there's no doubt about that. It's very strange with the computer because the voice has to come from a person that's coming from a speaker so it's almost surreal because you're in an online environment with people but there all there, but it almost feels like it's a screen, it's very strange but there is still an

interaction, it's still quite good talking but obviously face-to-face is more personal, you obviously never get the same type of interaction but you know it's still good.

Karen:

Brilliant, excellent, thank you very much, that's perfect.

Karen:

Could I have your name, what you're studying and what you're hoping to do?

Lucy:

My name's Lucy Beech, I'm studying DD303 which is Cognitive Psychology. I've done a degree in Psychology, I started in 2008, so it's been quite a long journey so far. I've really enjoyed it and probably want to go on to do something maybe with the more social side of psychology because I find sort of real life kind of aspects of it really interesting, like I really enjoyed the London riots as part of the psychology, which is probably going to sound perverse (laughs) but yeah, so I really like the way people tick and doing a job that kind of uses that would be really great.

Karen:

Brilliant, lovely. And could you just finally say something about being involved with this Conference? Is there anything like coming to the Activate workshops, is there anything that you can sort of say has been important to you about being a participant?

Lucy:

I think it's really important to meet other people because I think the OU experience is really isolating and you know that there's this OU building but it's kind of a bit like way off, way out there and actually being able to see it and be able to meet other students and actually sort of say "Ah yeah, we all find TMAs a bit of a struggle sometimes" and kind of actually meeting people to think there are real people out there who are also going on the same journey as I am is really important, because when you are just in your bedroom or you are looking at a study book and thinking "arrrr" (laughs) a TMAs coming up in a few days and I've only done the first paragraph you're thinking "arr" (laughs again), I must be the only person in this boat but you actually find out that you're not.

Karen:

Is there something different going to a tutorial and meeting other students and actually coming to Walton Hall? You've mentioned location a few times.

Lucy:

Yeah, definitely, because a tutorial it's kind of like another college it just feels almost like a little tea party (laughs) but coming to Walton Hall it's like you see the 'Welcome to the Open University' and it's like I'm actually here and it's so different because you kind of don't really have any expectations and then suddenly there's this huge campus and loads of people and that is sort of really special, it's like totally different to any of the tutorials or any of the other things you can kind of do really, so it's really exciting the Conference.

Karen:

Brilliant, thank you - that was fantastic, absolutely brilliant.

Dave:

Oh, hi Karen.

Karen:

Hiya Dave (*sighs*), oh I'm feeling much better now. I tell you what, you know, whenever I'm feeling really down and miserable, and I'm having a really bad day, I always find that just talking to some students makes me feel so much better, anyway...

Dave:

Well, I'm gonna make you're day better.

Karen:

Right, it does look a bit cleaner, yes.

Dave:

Well I've given it a bit of a dusting.

Karen:

Uh huh

Dave:

Which I, oh, here's your cardigan back by the way.

Karen:

(*Sighs*)

Dave:

You'll soon get that stuff off it, anyway, I found the power switch – the other switch was the wrong one.

Karen:

Right, ok

Dave:

Ok

Karen:

So you've sorted it.

Dave:

It's sorted, we're gonna have a professional studio so we'll get it all up and running and we can record this week's PodMag.

Karen:

Fantastic

Dave:

Ok, so here we go, are you ready?

Karen:

Yep

Dave:

Do me a countdown – this is so exciting!!

Karen:

Ok, three, two, one.

*(Music plays in the background, followed by an explosion)*