00:01 [IP Casts music, a soft harmonic resonance, builds to a crescendo]

00:06 Tim: You're listening to IP Casts.

00:13 [IP Casts music fades out]

00:14 Jessica: I think the heuristic really captures the complexity of analyzing a social media platform or any networked technology platform that is used for composing because it captures what people do with it, but it also captures the technological side of things, too, what's happening computationally. It captures kind of both sides of that, and not only what's happening in the boundaries or the parameters of the tool but how that activity is connected to other technologies, and other spaces, and other users across the web. So all of those relationships in that network of activity are very complex, and so the heuristic requires, if you're analyzing a particular composing activity or particular technology, it requires that you parse out those details and those attributes of that activity. So, I think it's useful: as a digital rhetorics scholar, I would use this heuristic just to help me understand the full complexity of that environment.

01:25 Tim: I think this is both what's tricky about the heuristic and maybe what the value of it is, too, is it embraces that messiness. Instead of really digging into one of those nodes, which we tend to often do as scholars—[for example,] getting a really rich view of circulation—[we might ask] what is the relationship of circulation to a specific kind of content [inputs], or to the operations that various users can make as they are interacting with that piece of content, or metadata, or data that has been entered by some type of user in that platform. There is a lot of complexity, as you noted, but also this messiness which is tricky and makes it daunting in that way, but much of the activity we do as humans is messy.

02:14 Jessica: Yeah!

02:15 Les: Definitely! I mean, I love that about it. I love that it's complex; I love that it's messy because that's what it is—like you just like you said, Tim. But that's so helpful for research because we're not just going to get a finite answer and understanding of this and walk away and say: "Ok we've looked at that, that's done." It [the heuristic] gives it room for the platform and the kinds of interactions and content that [are] being authored to evolve and grow with the platform. It gives it [authoring practices and platforms] space to change overtime and not just limit it to just one place in time, which can be sort of troubling about digital rhetorics research, right?! If we look at some type of interaction that's happening, in five to ten years that platform might not exist anymore and that research is dated. But, if they are using this heuristic and [accounting for] the complexities there it enables people to go back and go: "This is great! But I can actually track the changes that are occurring now."

03:14 Tim: I love that idea. It gives us a way to account for how platforms and variables [of platforms] change as platforms evolve.

03:24 Jessica: I was also thinking that the heuristic itself can aid students in having more agency. The heuristic could be used as a teaching tool in the classroom with students. They could apply it to analyze different social media technologies that they use for composing, but also to analyze ones that they're being asked to use in particular ways in class. And so, that analysis of the tool—even the decision making process of how will we apply this tool toward our learning goals—could be collaborative. And so, you could have students engaging in that process along with instructors. So, as I was reflecting on the heuristic more recently, I was thinking about how that tool could be applied in that setting to give more agency to students, so that maybe requiring them to use it [educational technologies] in a certain way might not be the best approach. You might want to engage them in that decision process as well, so it's not just compelling them to use it, but having them to think critically and make an informed decision as a class on how to apply that technology.

4:40 Tim: Yeah! A great example of that would be—making collaborative decisions that are distributed within a classroom that are more agentive that bring students into the decision processes—you might not be able to change the fact that it is a click wrap agreement in terms of how you opt in or don't opt into the system. It might be a [educational technology] system that's been selected by administrators for your school or your program to use, and the educator might have made a choice as well. But we can still have discussions about that permission process in the classroom. And this tool becomes a, you know, framework for thinking a little bit about that and to start that kind of discussion. So, I love that idea, Jessica!

05:23 Les: You can kind of use it as checklist when you're looking at platforms or how people are interacting on a specific platform. I'm just thinking like social media, and what ways it could be useful for them [students, teachers, and administrators] to think about not only their role, but the ways sort of the platforms and third parties and all of the enactants of these operations are creating that experience and…in what way stakeholders are creating content or authoring.

06:02 Jessica: The heuristic is useful not only to analyze a tool at large, but [also] particular uses of a technology. If you're using the technology as a decision making tool: Should I use this tool? And should I use it in this particular way? You can kind of follow the path of the writing process and the content and the data that are generated through that [composing] process and come to a decision about whether or not that's the path you want your students to take or not. And will change depending on how you're going to use it. So, the decision might not be should I use this tool or not, but should I use this tool in this particular way or in a different way. How can I make it work for my purposes.

06:57-07:08 [IP Casts music, a soft harmonic resonance, builds to a crescendo, then begins to fade out]