

Transcript

00:00:01 Claire

Welcome to the Repair-Ed podcast where we reflect on education and reimagine equitable futures. I'm Claire Neaves, a researcher who worked in education in the city of Bristol in the South West of England for over 15 years. In each episode, I'll talk to educators and thinkers about current injustices in our schooling system and their ideas for creating fairer educational futures. This podcast forms part of Repair-Ed: a 5-year project, funded by UKRI to examine educational inequality in Bristol's primary schools.

00:00:34 Claire

Welcome to another episode of the Repair-Ed podcast.

00:00:37 Claire

My guest today is Meg from The RYSE, which is the Radical Youth Space for Educations.

00:00:42 Claire

Hi, Meg.

00:00:43 Meg

Hi.

00:00:44 Claire

Can you start off by telling us a bit about The RYSE and how you got involved?

00:00:48 Meg

Yeah, for sure.

00:00:50 Meg

So, yeah, so like you said it's Radical Youth Space for Educations and we try and do what it says on the tin and it's a project which I guess came out of a few of us coming together, deciding that a place where we could be doing radical education as young people, for young people, especially that was rooted in community and also rooted in internationalism as an idea, was really missing.

00:01:17 Meg

And we also wanted to have a project that was really challenging mainstream education and the miseducation that we're put through.

00:01:26 Meg

A lot of us had been part of different political movements and we kind of felt that, yeah, there was a lot missing in terms of opportunities to come together and really learn from each other and what was happening in, across across different areas of the movement.

00:01:44 Meg

And it also felt essential to have somewhere that was, I guess, like trying to build up as an institution, like something that's gonna be able to last as a really to kind of, I guess, hold things together as we keep learning and growing.

00:02:04 Claire

Yeah, and what about, I love that it's educations and not education. Can you say a bit about that?

00:02:10 Meg

Yeah, totally. I mean, I think that one of the big critiques that we have of like school and mainstream education is that it's very, like universal, like there's one truth, there's one right answer.

00:02:23 Meg

And so when we, when we're doing education, we're really trying to understand that A, there's multiple things that can be true at once. Also, there's multiple ways to learn things.

00:02:37 Meg

And actually, that sometimes the most effective way of really understanding something is to be able to approach it from different angles, do things different ways. Different things work for different people, different things work in different situations.

00:02:49 Meg

Sometimes you need to be...sometimes you learn best by being at a demonstration. Sometimes you learn best by having an emotional conversation with your mate. Sometimes you learn best by reading from a book from someone who's done loads of stuff in the past.

00:03:00 Meg

So I think something that maybe I should have said in response to the previous question as well is that really what The RYSE is about is trying to do education that's going to help us solve the problems that we feel like we're facing in our community and also like as a generation.

00:03:17 Meg

And like the tagline that we've used is like, 'a home for our generation to learn the art of disobedience.' And I think that idea of like being somewhere that we can be learning the skills, the ideas, getting like resourced in different ways to yeah, to try and solve the problems that we face to, you know, do some disobedience.

00:03:39 Claire

Yeah, great. Thank you.

00:03:40 Claire

So one of the reasons we're really excited about talking to you is that you've got firsthand experience of challenging mainstream schooling.

00:03:49 Claire

So yeah, can you share a little bit about what the problems are with mainstream schooling? Because we've sort of talked about them quite a bit on this podcast, actually, in various different ways. And we've looked at sort of the issues in schools and how inequalities persist in schools.

00:04:04 Claire

But yeah, from your experience, what are the, what are the issues?

00:04:08 Meg

That's a big question.

00:04:10 Meg

I think I guess there's different ways of breaking it down. And one of the ways that we've broken it down before is in the kind of like the way that it treats or more accurately mistreats young people, the way that it operates systemically on like what role does it play in the political systems that we exist in both in like our own country but also globally and then also how does school fit in the like context of like right now and the fact that we see young people need to be... we're inheriting a world where we need to do stuff radically differently and how does school support or more accurately not support that so I feel like

maybe the thing in terms of like mistreatment is something that lots of people who are listening to this will be familiar with so I don't need to go into lots of the ways that school totally fucks up young people and doesn't care for them as full human beings a lot of the time.

00:05:11 Meg

And I think, but yeah, in terms of those other two points, I think that we really look at school like as a political actor. And I think a lot of the time people are encouraged to not like to see school as apolitical...

00:05:24 Claire

100%

00:05:25 Meg

...and it's really not. Even in lots of, I think increasingly, but in a lot of... when I first got involved in politics, I felt like lots of people on the left weren't talking about school as a political thing. They were just like, 'oh, well, of course exams are a bit too much' or whatever.

00:05:38 Meg

But it wasn't like, actually, what role is this playing in the same way that people might look at the role that the media's playing or stuff like that. What is it actually doing systemically?

00:05:49 Meg

And I think that a lot of that sent me personally and a few of us into a lot of research, a lot of understanding, like the origins of mass schooling, not only in this country in the way that it's really tied to the industrial revolution and getting people into the factories, and there's lots of parallels between like factory bells and school bells and all that, but also the way that it was exported across the world, like the Western schooling system was exported across the world and used really explicitly to like violently separate young people from their communities, to indoctrinate people into Western supremacy and capitalism.

00:06:26 Meg

And I mean, there's loads more. There's a really good documentary called *Schooling the World*, which was really impactful for us I think. You can just find it on YouTube, so anyone who's listening should have a look.

00:06:36 Claire

Yeah, definitely.

00:06:37 Meg

Yeah. And then the last thing I think we just talk about a lot is how much school, basically all of the skills and all the things people need to be able to create change, think differently, challenge the way the world is, are so stamped out in our school system, that when we're young people who are talking about, wow, we need the world to be a different place, we need the world to be a better place, what's in the way?

00:07:05 Meg

And people often look at, oh, the way the police are in the way of this thing, or oh, the way the law is in the way of this thing, or whatever. But actually, if you look at the fact that the vast majority of every generation is going through a system that's like, killing their curiosity, killing their ability to work together as a team, pitting them against each other, making them accept authority, killing their critical thinking, that it's like, that's such an enemy of change. Like school is an enemy of change is one of the ways that we talk about it.

00:07:37 Claire

Yeah, I love that. I think it's... It's a really, really succinct way of putting it to say like education is a political actor.

00:07:45 Claire

And I think we've we've talked on the podcast before about politics in education and like how teachers have been told they need to be apolitical and the challenges that brings when trying to talk about justice in the classroom. And we had a classroom teacher talking about that and how she talks to her year six class about ideas of justice.

00:08:06 Claire

But I think we've kind of focused less on how education is in itself a political actor. And we, yeah, you're absolutely right. We all just take that for granted. Like when the left talk about education, they talk about things like we need more funding for education. They don't talk about fundamentally changing education.

00:08:27 Claire

And yeah, I wanted to come back to, you talked a lot about the ways in which the world needs to change and your generation are focusing on the ways in which you can change because change is needed. So I know it may seem obvious, but what are some of those changes that are needed?

00:08:48 Meg

Well, lots.

00:08:49 Meg

I think mainly when I'm saying that I'm kind of coming from the perspective of like both that literally, I guess I feel like I was brought up into a world where there was a level of violence and disrepair in communities, people in themselves, and then obviously on a global level as well, that was totally normalised.

00:09:13 Meg

And I think part of me saying that is like a rejection of this idea that like, there has to be this level of violence in the world. And I think a lot of what I've come to understand, and I think that as a project, we talk about is like imperialism as the one of the root ways of understanding a lot of the violence in the world um and so I think I think there's that I think there's the inheriting of that world and looking at that and being like actually a lot of the things that I've been told to see as normal here actually really don't feel right and then I think the other another part of it which is hugely linked is just the fact that we're looking at a planet which can't actually sustain this, can't actually sustain this society.

00:10:01 Meg

And I think that was really impactful for me as well in terms of school, because going through school is so much about the future. It's so much about what you're gonna do with your future, what's your career gonna be, what's the world gonna be like? And I was being taught all of this stuff. And at the same time I was getting radicalized in...like being part of, like the school strikes for climate and that kind of stuff.

00:10:23 Meg

And I was like going out on the street and learning these things about the actual, the real potential of societal collapse and ecosystem collapse and all these things which are, I'm actually not very good at like climate science myself. Like I'm not the person to quote those kind of things, but yeah, we're in a really bad situation and looking at the future made me feel like I was being lied to by every adult in my life pretty much.

00:10:49 Claire

Because there was no acknowledgement that like, it's going to be really, really hard to get to that future.

00:10:54 Meg

Well, just almost that there was like, like, because it's not like school doesn't mention climate change, but it mentions it in a kind of like, I mean, I also haven't been in school for the last five years, so I don't know what's changed in that time, but it's like, there's a weird, sometimes there might even be acknowledgement of some facts, and there's acknowledgement of also like the violence and disrepair in the world right now, but

00:11:19 Meg

It's also then like, but you should go and become, you know, you should go and have this individual career. You can go and do this, get enough money to buy a house, you'll have a pension. And it's like, who knows whether the financial system will exist in a way that means I can have a pension?

00:11:35 Claire

Yeah.

00:11:35 Meg

Because of the way that the world is going. So it was, yeah, this weird like difference between what kind of future it is like was presented to me through school and what actually when I was using my own...when I was out in the rest of the world, what it looked like was coming.

00:11:52 Claire

Yeah, thank you.

00:11:54 Claire

So yeah, thinking about kind of disrepair and futures, I guess, like, so our project, Repair-Ed, is examining injustices in the school system in Bristol, looking at things with the theory of reparative futures of education.

00:12:12 Claire

So, you know, we're thinking about repair and reparatory justice and yeah can you kind of share whether you see what you're doing here with The RYSE as linked to reparatory justice?

00:12:28 Meg

Yeah 100% and I think you know we've been privileged enough to spend time both myself as an individual and also us as a project working alongside and learning from the Pan-Afrikan movement a lot and one of the places that I've you know grown a lot of my

understanding of reparations of reparatory justice is in the like International Social Movement for Afrikan Reparations and one of the key understandings that I've taken from that is that reparatory justice at its core is it's about repairing the... well, it's about repair it's about repairing the harms in the world and that that is so much broader than what we're like, you know, in the mainstream conversation about reparations, it's very much financial, it's very much like-

00:13:21 Claire

Yeah, for sure.

00:13:22 Meg

You know, focused on kind of almost like, what's it called, like transactional, like, oh, I did this to you, so I'll give you 20 quid kind of energy, which actually, when you put in that context, it's obvious that like, if someone beats up your brother and then they're like, oh, but I'll give you 20 quid, like, doesn't make it okay. And obviously, that's a very simplified example, but I think this idea that repair is much more, I'm gonna use a wanky word now, holistic, like than a lot of the time, yeah, it's we're taught to see it as.

00:13:54 Meg

So I think that's one thing where it's like really holistic and that a really important part of that is, there's a concept called planet repairs, which comes out of the International Social Movement for Afrikan Reparations largely.

00:14:07 Meg

And it's about the idea of like, you have to twin reparatory justice also with environmental justice and also with cognitive justice and cognitive justice being, I mean, a massive concept, but a lot of it to do with, yeah, a lot of to do with exactly what we're talking about here about the, I guess, undermining this idea of like, there's one truth, it's the right truth, it's the truth that you're taught in Western universities, it's all other forms of knowledge, you know, whether that's indigenous or other community knowledges aren't legitimate and that also just the idea of like suppressing the truth in general.

00:14:45 Meg

And yeah, there's a quote that Esther Xosei, who's one of the, yeah, kind of leaders in the ISMAR movement is, says is, "education is preparation for reparations." And I think we, we think about that a lot.

00:15:00 Meg

And that, yeah, especially from people in the context that we're in, you know, in a kind of majority white rural town in the UK, that actually, we're a really long way away from genuinely being part of a global family where we're all kind of united and fighting together.

00:15:19 Meg

And so much of that is because, yeah, we've been miseducated into believing that we should all have this role of like, yeah, I'm gonna live my individual life. And yeah, it sucks that other people don't have these opportunities, but like, go me and you know, that kind of like, yeah, lie of the white picket fence kind of idea.

00:15:38 Meg

And so, like to undo that miseducation, amongst all the other things of it, obviously, like that, yeah, that education is preparation for that, like the rest of the reparatory work. And it obviously can't be separate because, you know, there's also people that like to talk loads and just sit in circles and feel good about themselves. And it has to be connected to other forms of action 100%, which is like really important to the work we do.

00:16:02 Meg

But I think...Yeah.

00:16:04 Claire

For sure.

00:16:05 Claire

And I think it's really important to highlight that when we say like education is preparation, we're talking about education, not schooling, and especially not schooling in the UK.

00:16:16 Claire

And I think too often we're kind of...We see those two things as totally synonymous. So when we talk about the power of education, people are like, yeah, that's great. That means we need to invest everything into schools. But, you know, schools aren't education. There's so much that goes on more widely.

00:16:37 Claire

I wondered if you could share like a couple of things like maybe like moments of joy or connection or learning which kind of exemplify what you do here at The RYSE?

00:16:44 Meg

That's a nice question.

00:16:46 Meg

I think one of the things that we have had the most positive feedback on and that I think like has been really impactful part of our work is the kind of like educational culture that we have, like the kind of basically the vibe of the sessions and the spaces that we create.

00:17:07 Meg

And I think it sounds a bit wishy-wishy almost when you put it like that, but just the fact that most people's only experience, especially younger people, like their only experience with educational settings is in school.

00:17:23 Meg

And for most people, that's like, a really bad experience basically and it's a really negative experience and I think that we managed to create spaces where we're genuinely inviting people to actually bring themselves, to bring their own ideas, to feel comfortable, comfortable to yeah be curious to get things wrong to you know have a... to do educations like in a way that's much more than just reading something from a book I think is really yeah been really impactful and I don't know like I want like I think an example of that is we've actually had we've had some individuals who like come through this space and then they start using a different name and whether that's like they start using their, like either that's to do with gender.

00:18:16 Meg

So it's someone who's like feeling comfortable to use a different name that's much more corresponds actually to their gender identity rather than what they've been forced to in the world, or people who have been using like anglicized names who then come back and use their, the names of their cultural background in the space.

00:18:37 Meg

And I think that's kind of a funny example in some ways, but it feels like it highlights this thing of like people being able to be more themselves.

00:18:45 Claire

Yeah, for sure.

00:18:46 Meg

Rather than how they're squished into boxes in other places. And that's been really powerful when people are like, 'actually, no, call me this.' And you're like, 'okay, cool.'

00:18:54 Claire

That sense of not needing to comply, but being able to be really honest to themselves, that's really lovely.

00:19:01 Claire

What are kind of some of the other successes or sort of good things that happen here?

00:19:06 Meg

I think that we've, well, I mean, having a physical space right now is a massive success in terms of really being able to give people a place that you can walk into and feels, A, feels youth owned, but also feels, yeah, just feels very different to a classroom, feels like a youth centre. And I think that that's been one of the massive successes is being able to access this.

00:19:29 Meg

And yeah, we've, I think there's been a lot of, there's been a lot of journeys that lots of, you know, we've been in Stroud now for almost five years doing The RYSE and yeah, there's people that we met when they were 14 who have been coming along to our stuff and we've all been on such a big journey together and learnt a lot alongside each other and I think that's been, yeah, you know, that's less of a tangible win than some other things I could pick but I think that's feels really important.

00:20:06 Claire

But this space is great. So like for our listeners, it's, I don't know Stroud very well, but it feels quite central. We're on a street with, you know, lots of shops and then this is, you know, one of the buildings on that street and...I walked in and it just feels really, yeah, really welcoming, really friendly, really cosy.

00:20:25 Meg

Quite maximalist.

00:20:26 Claire

Yeah. There's lots of stuff everywhere, like posters, t-shirts, flyers, fairy lights, you know, but it's, yeah, it's a really, really lovely space.

00:20:35 Claire

You know, you kind of, you feel straight away when you come in what kind of space it is. To me, it kind of feels similar maybe to somewhere like the BASE Anarchist Centre in Bristol in Easton, you know, it's the same kind of vibe when you walk in.

00:20:50 Meg

Quite DIY.

00:20:51 Claire

Yeah, DIY and you know what the space is about. And it's, yeah, I was kind of, I was quite shocked that it was like just right here on, you know, a street in the middle of Stroud, like just down from like coffee shops and, you know, all the other streets and all the other shops in the street.

00:21:12 Claire

Yeah, what are kind of the challenges with running RYSE and yeah, being here, maybe particularly in Stroud, but maybe more generally?

00:21:21 Meg

Yeah, well, lots of challenges, but it's not an easy environment to try and do things differently. A lot of time it feels like, I think one of the challenges has been...resourcing ourselves is a massive challenge.

00:21:38 Meg

Like being able to do this work, like most of us are volunteers. We have some money that we're able to give out to people who are part of the project in a kind of like needs first way, but no one's able to be paid at the moment. And there's not... Yeah, it's very, it's a lot of hard work that a lot of people are giving a lot to. And I think that's...Yeah, and all young people as well, largely, although we have a lot of support from older members of the community.

00:22:05 Meg

And I think it's been a massive challenge to toe the line, not that it's necessarily a line, but like balance the kind of overtly political work that we're doing with also doing work that, yeah, like also still engaging with areas of the community that are either going to be actively like against that political work or people that just haven't come across it before.

00:22:30 Meg

And there's different challenges in those different places. But you know, we've we previously, for example, ran a campaign called School is a Crime Scene. And, you know, within a month of us running that campaign, the schools were warning people in assemblies like not to come and get involved in our work, which obviously was the best advertising we possibly could have had.

00:22:50 Meg

But I think that like, those times when we've really fronted with something that sounds more radical, sounds more scary, there's been a lot less positive reaction from certain authorities, which sometimes we don't care because screw them, but sometimes that really matters because, you know, if the council starts getting on our backs or that kind of thing, it can make it much more difficult for us to do the work that we're trying to do as well.

00:23:13 Meg

So I think things like that, and then specifically in Stroud as well, it's challenging because lots of young people leave. There's not enough jobs for people. People want to move to the city. The kind of Stroud to Bristol pipeline is very strong.

00:23:28 Meg

And yeah, it feels like a lot of the time we kind of have people in their kind of early 20s that are like really getting their teeth and stuff and then they're off. And that's obviously people want to leave their hometown and that is totally legitimate. But a lot of the time people are forced to. And there's also not enough here that is like drawing people here and bringing them back. So I think it's definitely like being in a rural setting is difficult in that sense as well.

00:23:56 Claire

Yeah. And who, who engages with The RYSE? So I'm really interested to know whether like the young people who come here, are they young people who haven't attended school and who've been kind of in various unschooling or home educated setups or are they young people who've kind of been to school and have realised the harm?

00:24:19 Meg

It's really a mixture I think it kind of depends which we've got a lot of different strands of work basically and I think that the especially because we also do work nationally and that brings in a kind of different that's kind of more with people that are already like doing political organising.

00:24:38 Meg

In terms of locally we've had quite a lot of the biggest, maybe like demographic, if you want to do that kind of thing that we have through the door is like neurodivergent people.

00:24:53 Meg

And I think there's a lot of, especially when we were doing the School is a Crime Scene work and some of our other recent campaigns, a lot of people who are having a hard time at school. So a lot of people who are at or have been at mainstream school, but having a hard time for a lot of the time that's to do with like disability or gender or yeah, kind of things along those lines. We have a lot of young people coming into the space with those kind of experiences.

00:25:24 Meg

Yeah, some people have dropped out of school and and then some, I think some of the other sessions, especially the more like intergenerational sessions we do, we definitely get more of the kind of young people that are in the like already kind of in like political stuff or maybe they're kind of involved in kind of alternative things.

00:25:43 Meg

There's quite a lot of like arts and music stuff that happens as a child so some of that crew as well come through. But yeah, it's also it becomes an interesting thing to work out how to keep a space feeling like safe for certain people, especially people who don't have lots of other places that they feel like they can be safe or call their own. But without that, it then becoming like, like overly niche on just like a space that then just feels safe for certain people.

00:26:18 Meg

So that's maybe also been one of the challenges that I would say we've definitely faced.

00:26:22 Claire

Yeah.

00:26:23 Claire

And do you have I mean, you talked about this a little bit with the assemblies, but how do schools engage with you? Like, do you get do you get a lot of pushback from them? Or are you kind of kind of so separate from that setup that they don't really interact?

00:26:36 Meg

I think the most of the times we've had pushback is when we've like, been actively provocative towards them. So I think it's generally like the schools don't engage with us that much.

00:26:49 Meg

Yeah, there's been times when we've kind of pushed a bit and then we've had some negative reaction. We had one experience where there was a, one of the teachers' strikes and we went to the picket with like freshly baked cake and stuff and got shouted away by some of the teachers there because they didn't, we were the only people that turned up to support on the picket and we got shouted away.

00:27:15 Meg

And that's, yeah, was an interesting experience. And not, you know, some of the teachers were interested to talk to us, but I think there's definitely tensions there.

00:27:23 Meg

But also, yeah, a lot of the time we just don't engage. We've actually had like one student come and do work experience with us and the school was just like, yeah, cool. So it's also, it really depends also on different departments and that.

00:27:36 Meg

And I think we also now have relationships with quite a lot of, you know, we've got a relationship with the MP, with lots of the councilors, which also, yeah, kind of slightly placates the tension a bit, I think.

00:27:52 Claire

Yeah, that's really interesting. I mean, yeah, I'm just reflecting on what you said about the striking teachers. So like, even within that kind of politically active group of teachers, there's still maybe suspicion or you know, push back and I guess, do you see any kind of overlap of like your ideas? Like, are there, you know, are there people working within schools who agree with you that school is harmful?

00:28:24 Meg

I mean, I think definitely, I think that we work with a lot of ex-teachers, so teachers that have left school. I think that in terms of teachers, that are still within. I mean, I think there is massive overlap because one of the things we were having in that conversation with this teacher who really didn't want to see us was like, at the heart of it, we care about the same things a lot of the time.

00:28:47 Meg

But it's, it's a lot about approach, I think that people find difficult. And I think we've sometimes been accused of being like, yeah, too provocative, too like, angry, too, I guess, like, not you know mincing words about things that people have then found hurtful when they feel like they're doing their best to do things better as well and you know I think it's yeah sometimes people take what we say personally and yeah I can understand why when you're I mean we're all trying to do things differently right and then for someone to say, 'but it's not worth it the way you're doing it,' it's hurtful like it's the same in the different in the different ways around and...

00:29:31 Meg

I also think, yeah, it's just a case of like, you also have to, things reach different people differently. And the thing that mainly had really pissed that teacher off was that they'd read something we'd explicitly written for students. And so it wasn't very focused on compassion for teachers because it was specifically speaking to a student experience.

00:29:50 Claire

Yeah.

00:29:51 Meg

And yeah.

00:29:52 Claire

I think that's something that we...we struggle with in our work, sometimes we're kind of trying to kind of overtly critique education as a political actor, like you said earlier, or, you know, schools as institutions and systems, but without necessarily, like, directly criticising the people who work within it, but encouraging them to kind of realise the ways in which they may have become institutionalised, and I know that was a massive that was a massive learning thing for me when I came out of teaching, just, you know, I wasn't uncritical of schooling when I was in schools, but when I came out, I kind of I realized just how institutionalized I'd become.

00:30:38 Claire

And I think it's difficult sometimes to see that when you're in it and you're working so hard. And, you know, we do acknowledge that, like teachers are working really hard and, you know, doing, doing their best.

00:30:49 Meg

100%. And sometimes doing above and beyond so many things that they should be expected to do.

00:30:54 Claire

Yeah, for sure. Yeah, but when you're not, you know, when you're still working within a system, there has to come a moment maybe where you sort of question your own complicity. And I think that's really confronting for people, isn't it? And that's maybe why you get some of those like quite defensive reactions.

00:31:10 Claire

But yeah, so what's next for The RYSE? What are you currently working on, or moving on to?

00:31:15 Meg

Well, we are continuing to try and run REDZ as a kind of youth educational political centre in the heart of town, which has been a big learning curve like you said it's very like central, it's a lot of work to manage a building as well as try and run all the other stuff that we do and yeah we've always had a bit of a like tear, like always been a bit torn, not like ideologically, but like practically between local work and national work.

00:31:50 Meg

And so that's one of the things. And then we're also doing more work building internationalist links. So kind of like working with communities in other parts of the world who are doing similar things who, you know, are in different, very different situations. Some of them where like mainstream schooling is like still quite new in certain places or different communities where they're like practicing local education and what you know we can be learning from each other there so I think yeah it's exciting and we're just kind of continuing to try and like build up as an institution try and have our um you know we've got a bit of a habit of like doing stuff and then not documenting it like moving on from it and then someone's like, 'oh can I have that workshop plan?' and I'm like 'oh crap sorry we didn't write it down!' so a bit of that like actually also yeah, I guess like putting stuff down on paper so that it doesn't just happen once and then not again.

00:32:49 Claire

Great, thank you.

00:32:50 Claire

And let's move on to our final question now, which is the same for all guests on the podcast. What would a just education system look like to you?

00:32:59 Meg

I think the main thing for me is an education system that is supporting young people to solve the problems that they're facing and that their community is facing. And, you know, give people the tools, not just practical tools, like also like, yeah, like the critical thinking tools or the teamwork tools or the self-reflection tools to be able to face the challenges that they're presented with.

00:33:31 Meg

I think a lot of the time in alternative education spaces, there's a lot of like conversation about what education should look like, where lots of people have done lots of incredible work and research on like, yeah, I don't know, different ways that education can happen that is much more beautiful and treats young people like full human beings and all of this and that.

00:33:53 Meg

And I think that's really important. And I also sometimes feel like it is outside of the context of right now, where we're not, in my opinion, in a situation where we can just focus on what would be ideal, but we also need to focus on what is needed to basically support the next generations to be prepared for the battles that are facing them in terms of, yeah, I mean, literally like the survival of like flourishing humans on this planet and fighting the, yeah, the powers that want to keep things the way they are.

00:34:34 Meg

And I think it's like, yeah, so for me, really just education is really about: how can we honestly prepare young people for the future they're facing in a way that is about intergenerational support and I don't know empowerment is a word that people use all the time but empowerment to actually be the best version of themselves and the best version of themselves as part of the community not as kind of isolated individuals.

00:35:03 Claire

Great thank you so much.

00:35:04 Meg

No you're welcome thank you that was great.

00:35:07 Claire

Thank you for listening to the Repair Ed podcast. Please take a listen to our other episodes and if you'd like to be a guest, get in touch. Our e-mail can be found on our website: www.repair-ed.uk.