

# Transcript

00:00:16 Speaker 1

Hey everybody, this is Matilda Swana from black and brown in bioethics and you are listening to the power and privilege in arcade.

00:00:24 Speaker 1

Media podcast the show that gets together with academics, question academic hierarchies, structures and conventions. Unpack their inherent issues and find solutions together. Today we're talking about anti racism within higher education establishments with Henry Sheed and Princess Manda and.

00:00:44 Speaker 1

Is a medical Doctor Who instigated change by founding a race Equality working group within the University of Sheffield Medical School and wrote a paper on strategies to tackle racial inequalities in medical school. Princess is doing a deferral at the.

00:01:00 Speaker 1

University of Oxford, looking at the intersections of Medical anthropology, Women's Health, social justice, she's very active in increasing the profile of black maternal health inequalities, decolonising the curriculum and is a member of the Institute of Medical Ethics. Postgraduate Student Council will discuss how we define anti racism. Racial disparities in higher education.

00:01:22 Speaker 1

And championing anti racism in academic institutions.

00:01:33 Speaker 1

Thanks for joining us, Princess and.

00:01:35 Speaker 1

And would you like to start with a little bit about yourselves?

00:01:38 Speaker 2

Yes, thank you so much for having me. Well to begin with, I'm an anthropologist, specifically a social medical anthropologist, and I feel like whenever I say that people are like, what does that mean? I'm a medical anthropologist, so I'm interested in health and well-being from an ethical.

00:01:55 Speaker 2

For perspective, but in that in my analysis, in my critique, in my methods.

00:02:00 Speaker 2

I take much more of a sociocultural approach. I'm interested in the kind of social factors, political factors, historical boxes. I guess the kind of quote unquote, soft factors that help determine health inequity, injustice, all those things. And as a socio medical anthropologist, I'm specifically interested in anthropologies of race.

00:02:20 Speaker 2

Racism and anti blackness and the intersections with health, justice and health. Injustice. I'm a PhD student. Probably much of that at my thesis.

00:02:31 Speaker 2

Is currently all about black maternal health in the UK, so for those who don't know, black women in the UK through towns more likely to die during childbirth. Yeah, and really just understanding how obstetric racism in the UK is really all about biopolitics and now bioethics, which leads me to where I am on this podcast. And I've recently joined.

00:02:51 Speaker 2

The Postgrad Bioethics Committee has just done lumber, and so I'm really excited about that as well.

00:02:57 Speaker 3

I'm Hindi. I'm an F1 doctor and.

00:03:00 Speaker 3

I'll be in F2 in August, so I'm almost done a year of being a doctor. So while I was in Med school, I did a lot of anti racism. What I tried to do a lot of anti racism works kind of like looking at the curriculum trying to decolonise in inverted commas and just generally looking at Med students.

00:03:20 Speaker 3

Experiences in Med school and just improving it generally. So yeah, we can go into what we do.

00:03:27 Speaker 3

Good as we get on, I Co chaired the the working group or decolonizing the Med School and EDI stuff. And I also founded B A M E Medic Society. So just a society for students kind of to get together and be represented and have a safe space. So yeah.

00:03:45 Speaker 1

Just wanna add and did.

00:03:47 Speaker 1

Presentation at the Institute of Medical Ethics and that's how we met and I felt really inspired by it last year, just to see it's kind of like, yeah, it's really rare to see a button like what they call like a bottom.

00:03:51 Speaker 4

Hi.

00:03:54 Speaker 3

Ohh thank you.

00:04:00 Speaker 1

Approach where it is really like coming from the students. That was really inspiring. Ohh thanks. And just like we have to throw that in there. So everybody just wanna start with defining anti racism. So I decided to Google Anti racism and the first thing I clicked on was Wikipedia.

00:04:11 Speaker 1

So.

00:04:20 Speaker 1

This was the first paragraph that came up.

00:04:23 Speaker 1

Anti racism encompasses a range of ideas and political actions which are meant to encounter racial prejudice, systemic racism and the oppression of specific racial groups. Anti racism is usually structured around conscious efforts and deliberate actions which are intended to provide equal opportunities for all people on both an individual and systemic level.

00:04:45 Speaker 1

As a philosophy, it can be engaged in by the acknowledgement of personal privileges, confronting acts as well as systems of racial discrimination and or working to change personal racial biases. What are your thoughts about this definition, and how does it make?

00:05:01 Speaker 1

You feel?

00:05:02 Speaker 3

Yeah, I think the main thing that sticks out to me is all that active language countering conscious efforts and liberate actions, that kind of thing. It's about just acting like doing something about it. And I think that's really important cause in our institutions, yeah, everybody's jumped on to this statement of you know, I'm anti racist, but do they really know what that is?

00:05:23 Speaker 3

Actually, it's this actions, not words. Really. It's taking it into every.

00:05:28 Speaker 3

Facet of your life and your professional life. I like the definition.

00:05:34 Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah, I think you know, I I certainly appreciate the part about ideas. Until racism being, you know, an actual philosophy as in like it's it, it's it's a way of actually being and living and doing right as you know.

00:05:48 Speaker 2

It's just not not words. I think that building on what he has said, I think that.

00:05:54 Speaker 2

That that like there's this assumption that racism is it's kind of like exercise, right? And so I think a lot of people have this like, one one time fix all approach where where I think that if they say or do a quote unquote and see racist thing one time, then that means that they have.

00:06:15 Speaker 2

This badge right and that they on that kind of policy basis here it it it doesn't work like that. And so yeah, I I certainly appreciate you know control I guess inclusion of it being a kind of multifaceted multi tiered.

00:06:29 Speaker 2

Thing. So yeah, so I'd I'd say I I think it's it's a good kind of beginner definition. However and this is me bring things to school here. But I do think I I still say I do take issue with it with this use of like of equality is instead of policy because I think that a lot of times people use equity and equality as as these.

00:06:49 Speaker 2

Interchangeable things, whereas they're actually not that they are distinct, right? And I think that it they do think that this kind of misunderstanding of quality, it's a, it's gonna it's sort of.

00:07:03 Speaker 2

It's also why, in my opinion, a lot of peoples ideas of of an anti racism till we kind of piece meal right like they are kind of baked but it's this image and it was it was like I think I saw it on Twitter first. Ohh I want to say around 2020 obviously with you know the the the.

00:07:22 Speaker 2

The boom of you know.

00:07:24 Speaker 2

And to racist languages, yes, I think I saw around 20/20/2021 and it really to me in touch related mutual difference between equity and equality. So essentially it showed it showed a picture of these people. So. So it was like a tall man, a child and really like and and they were saying it's like it's like a sports game and and then.

00:07:44 Speaker 2

In front of them both steps kind of blocking the site and and it basically showed showed a policy to be everyone everyone receiving the same types like school right to actually got it done right and so and and so then.

00:08:00 Speaker 2

What what occurred was that? Sure, everyone got the missing tool that, but there was still, I guess his party insight, right? It's the the tall man and this and the short child. Right. And then and then it showed a picture of an equity in this picture veteran it was actually I think given short stool and then and and and then like everyone else eventually it seems.

00:08:20 Speaker 2

School, I guess. According to according to to the high, everyone actually see the same, right? And so again and so like I guess like in, in, in my interpretation and my viewing, you know it really so the actual the the actual difference between equity and also equality.

00:08:38 Speaker 2

To be that, the resources given to be the same, but the kind of tailored to, to, to, to eat grasses. So a kind of a kind of on this on on, on this picture, right and this update included liberation, right. And so I guess liberation was portrayed.

00:08:57 Speaker 2

Would be the like fence actually like done right? And so obviously these people didn't need tools to actually see the sports game. And so again, I think that the quality it's it's fine but like.

00:09:09 Speaker 2

It's not. It's not always the most appropriate thing. And so I. And so yeah, I I do, I.

00:09:14 Speaker 2

Do think that.

00:09:15 Speaker 2

Like you know, within our I guess understandings and our interpretations of an of an anti racism, I think that collectively.

00:09:23 Speaker 2

We have to.

00:09:23 Speaker 2

Be more specific and and kind of fine tune what these specific words mean, right? And so like equality.

00:09:29 Speaker 2

Faculty and also liberation. Right, like these things obviously are related, but they're not interchangeable. They they mean slightly different things. So but but so yes, I think the.

00:09:39 Speaker 2

The definition as.

00:09:40 Speaker 2

Far as OK like, I think it's a great like introduction, but I think if we if we you know.

00:09:46 Speaker 2

Want to kind of dig deeper and kind of.

00:09:48 Speaker 2

Want to kind?

00:09:49 Speaker 2

Of correct what? What we kind of understand racism to be. Then we do have to be more specific language used to define and also describe what that means. Looks like what it feels.

00:10:03 Speaker 1

I love this this idea, this equity, equality, liberation.

00:10:08 Speaker 3

Yeah, I was going to say, yeah, I noticed the quality thing as well. And princesses points were great and I know the image you're talking about. It's just I was just our conference where someone used it to explain, you know, the whole, you know, anti racism and equality.

00:10:16 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:10:22 Speaker 2

It's quite off.

00:10:23 Speaker 3

Justice, and I think with the context you know of now, I don't. I'm not sure if you guys know, but I've seen a lot of talk on Twitter in America. They're getting rid of affirmative.

00:10:32 Speaker 3

Action, for example, yeah.

00:10:34 Speaker 3

University applications and that is a way where people can say equality, but it actually be a step backwards in the process of.

00:10:34 Speaker 4

Yeah.

00:10:42 Speaker 4

Yeah.

00:10:43 Speaker 3

Criticism because there there's a reason that affirmative action was needed, and when looking into affirmative action, those found found that white women benefited the most out of it. So in a way, affirmative action was a way of doing the equity bit. But justice would have been maybe removing fees for university or.

00:11:04 Speaker 3

Moving people's names and their backgrounds and stuff from applications, I don't know, but like the idea is like there's more than that. It's more than just ticking

something off a box like Princess said, or making sure that you meet a certain quota because at some point somebody's gonna come along and.

00:11:20 Speaker 3

Actually, that's not equal opportunities. We're gonna take that away and then really suffer again. These people suffer again.

00:11:27 Speaker 1

I think this is like quite topical cause you've both mentioned something. So Princess mentioned 2020 and was referring to what happened with George Floyd and and Hen you've mentioned affirmative action and and.

00:11:40 Speaker 1

What happened recently with the Supreme Courts in the US? So this leads quite nicely into my next question around these definitions and the context in terms of what happens in the US and the UK so.

00:11:54 Speaker 1

When I went on from looking at Wikipedia, I got sucked into a black hole. I then decided to go straight to the reference source that was in Wikipedia, which was the National Museum of African American History and Culture, which is much more detailed definition, and it lists out different categories.

00:12:14 Speaker 1

It defines them and gives an example of each one. So these are individual racism referring to beliefs, attitudes and actions of individuals interpersonal racism. So between individuals such as public expressions of racism, institutional race.

00:12:29 Speaker 1

ISM. So that occurs in an organisation and structural racism. So the overarching system of racial racial bias across institutions and society, so just.

00:12:39 Speaker 1

Thinking about like.

00:12:40 Speaker 1

What we've already been talking about and and this new kind of reference source that I've just mentioned, does racism take several forms and and to kind of what extent?

00:12:50 Speaker 1

These definitions be applied beyond the African American context.



00:12:54 Speaker 2

Next.

00:12:55 Speaker 2

Yeah, great questions. Well, let's see. Yes, we've known this.

00:12:59 Speaker 2

For a long.

00:13:00 Speaker 2

Time and you know for, you know, the world's basis. It doesn't look one way, right. Like, you know, even though racism is very much a global phenomenon, it does, you know, it it it it.

00:13:16 Speaker 2

I do think those kind of take slightly forms and different contexts of the world, but yeah, I do think that when it overall we can say that you know that it does. It does exist there. These kinds of ways and maybe all right, what else?

00:13:29 Speaker 2

Yes, 100% it's, it's not just one thing, it's not just neutral. You know what I mean? It is structural, it is institutional, it is political, it's social. It's in terms of the wage that you know it's it's, you know it's just it's just it's just intersectional thing. So 100% you think like one one thing I I think they they're thinking about a lot recently.

00:13:50 Speaker 2

Well, to be honest, not like not recently really since starting my degree. So we started my degree in 2016, right. And thinking about racism even, even though it wasn't, you know, this whole like language of racism just did not exist. But what did exist?

00:14:08 Speaker 2

Books this kind of transmission of these ideas about about race and also racism from the state. And I think that there's there's such brilliant work and and brilliant language and just really thinking coming from the state like this. I know I I do think that especially here the UK we do need to be careful to not just apply to the just import and apply.

00:14:28 Speaker 2

Without without, you know.

00:14:29 Speaker 2

They're tailoring, you know, and without, you know, kind of trying things relative to to context. And also Hudson's histories. Right. And so I think I think 100% have no arms or no trouble with this particular thing. But like that, these quote unquote Mexican American, we we we have to like take care.

00:14:45 Speaker 2

Firm.

00:14:49 Speaker 2

We have to target. Yeah, I think we have to flesh out which things about race and blackness and identity and politics, oppression, historical oppression, are kind of, you know, a part of the.

00:15:00 Speaker 2

Quote lots subjects identity and in this quote unquote like post colonial world versus things which are specific to the American Times. You know what I mean.

00:15:09 Speaker 3

Yeah, for sure. And I think it is important to name them because you know when we're having these conversations, if if we talk about racism, I think the majority of the public still thinks racism is being called a slow on the street and that's it. And if they don't do that to you?

00:15:24 Speaker 3

Then they're not part of the.

00:15:25 Speaker 3

Problem if they don't use these slurs, that means they they're not, you know, racist or engaging in racism or any or any of that stuff, and to kind of speak from my own experience as a Muslim woman. So for context, I am visibly Muslims. I wear a hijab and I believe it's one phobia is racialised because not only Muslims are victims of Islamophobia.

00:15:46 Speaker 3

If you wear a turban, for example.

00:15:48 Speaker 3

On your Sikh you can be a victim to Islamophobic hate crimes and and things like that. So growing up, yes, I did experience some individual racism, but it pales in comparison to interpersonal racism. You know, growing up and being on the Internet, especially Post 911 and just seeing the absolute hatred and.

00:16:08 Speaker 3

The the violence with which people spoke about Muslims that had affected me way more so, you know, that does kind of feed into the institutions because these institutions are made-up of people and our systems, our structures are built from colonialism, so.

00:16:22 Speaker 2

Uh.

00:16:25 Speaker 3

There's just no escaping yet and and being able to name that just helps in in dismantling these things. And in terms of how it can be applied beyond the African American context like, you know, going off what Princess says so important that we look at the great thinkers from the black liberation movements in America and apply it here. But.

00:16:46 Speaker 3

We have to look at the British context as well and how that is different and I think.

00:16:50 Speaker 3

For example, this is such a random example, but I remember seeing in hospital county it was Black History Month, so they first of all did a lot of things where they changed up the menu and used like W, African and Caribbean food on the menu. But then they also had the display of historical black figures and they only had people from the black liberation.

00:17:12 Speaker 3

Movements in America, so black Americans like you know, Martin Luther King, et cetera. Of course they didn't have Malcolm X, but it just, I think stress, especially in the UK of seeing anti racism and and, you know fighting against anti black racism is something that predominantly comes from.

00:17:29 Speaker 3

Marco, or talking about it in the UK from an US.

00:17:33 Speaker 3

Context allows people to just act like it doesn't happen here, that we don't happen like that bad that it's not an issue in this country as much as it is in the US. It's like at least our police isn't doing what they did, but they are. But they are doing, they are. They are killing people on the streets in the.

00:17:47 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:17:51 Speaker 3

OK. In France, I mean there was a 15 year old boy that was just killed in France by police should be everywhere and it's not everywhere because the majority of the world was colonised by Europeans and the other part where the Europeans that did the colonising, there's not many people that escaped this or we're not a part of this.

00:18:12 Speaker 3

So every institution is based on that colonisation that resulted in racism, and there's I can't, I can't even remember who said it or who's, you know? Like what? Who who coined this, you know, idea. But a lot of the injustices in the world come from three big systems. Patriarchy, capitalism.

00:18:32 Speaker 3

And colonialism.

00:18:33 Speaker 3

And and I think we can't dismantle 1 without dismantling the others. Yeah. So how things are, you know, they seem like they're big forces that can never be broken down. But if we do start talking about the different ways that they're that they exist and and the different context and then also have collaborations between people, you know, US and the UK, there's a lot. And.

00:18:51 Speaker 2

So.

00:18:53 Speaker 3

And you know, in Africa and in Asia like, there's a lot of things that we can talk about between diaspora and.

00:19:00 Speaker 3

Natives in in countries that were and still face the ravages of colonialism, the things that we're we definitely need to share ideas and, you know, join each other in our liberation movements. And these things have existed for a really long time. Like for example, I remember, I think it was 2021 and so a year after the.

00:19:20 Speaker 3

Resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement when George Floyd was killed, Palestine was under attack. Like really heavy attack by Israel.

00:19:28 Speaker 3

Handle on Twitter, there was a lot of collaboration where Palestinians were getting tips and giving tips on black protesters in the US about how to avoid tear gas and how to like, protect yourself from cameras and things like that. And it was, I think, social media really has helped us so much and.

00:19:37 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:19:48 Speaker 3

We're gonna start to see a big.

00:19:49 Speaker 3

Attack on social media because.

00:19:51 Speaker 3

Of the way that it has helped.

00:19:52 Speaker 3

Us in these.

00:19:53 Speaker 3

You know, collaborations that we're doing because.

00:19:55 Speaker 3

When I was a child, when I was, you know, a teen and I was getting into these reading and learning and and and talking to my friends and knowing about all these liberation movements, it was within our little context. But then now we we feel more confident talking about our and we've got the language, so we can the violence that we experience.

00:20:13

Mm-hmm.

00:20:15 Speaker 3

Every day in our lives, the way that we never did when we were in schools.

00:20:19 Speaker 1

I mean, this is such a big subject and we didn't even touch on social media in the beginning, right? Like, I mean, where I found these definitions, I went straight to the Internet.

00:20:29 Speaker 1

So even the where I had this, I don't know if I would have been able to go into a library to find the definitions that I found on the Internet to start this conversation. To me, I don't know if Princess, if you have anything that you wanted to add, I saw you nodding along so, but I just didn't wanna move this on. You had things that you wanted to say.

00:20:51 Speaker 2

Yeah, I mean, I I just, yeah, I think, Henry, it's amazing. Amazing point. So yeah, specifically it was just.

00:20:57 Speaker 2

Kind of thinking through and talking of the devices and just raising all of these, you know, violences and kind of forms of oppression. It's so infant we like and it's not because we don't have very figures here. It's not because people don't wanna do the work. It's because, you know so much. Racism stifles the progression of offensive racist scholarship or to racist thought of anti racist living. And so you know, so I think we're.

00:21:19 Speaker 2

For us, like we are stuck having you know. So even in kind of thinking through, you know, applying these these definitions from here and stuff like that like like I think you can actually.

00:21:29 Speaker 2

Like doing that like we're we're probably gonna be incredibly slow and just, you know, kind of hold back because we we don't even don't even have the the real space to to kind of think actually imagine how how applying these definitions here and you take it to the look like and feel like you know like we we like racism and is it just kind of.

00:21:48 Speaker 2

Like what's? What's the word?

00:21:49 Speaker 2

My English is not englishing today, but you know it's like it's kind of like switching, you know, and kind of really slowing down any real intellectual and like social and.

00:21:59 Speaker 2

Approach. So I just I just you know and so so I think in terms of kind of thinking through how how this is that actually exists here in the UK and like how how we we can lend, borrow and also relatively apply these these like ideas and also technicians from America they they think we need to do some work to actually prove to actually.

00:22:19 Speaker 2

Repair our soil, our otherwise these seeds won't touch right. Like like, like these things won't grow into big trees like they will either.

00:22:29 Speaker 2

Die or they will kind of grow beets. Sponges. You know what I mean? Like, I'm talking right here. So one of my favourite African American thinker, she is a physician and scholar. Her name is Kamara, Philip Jones. And so a lot of her work is actually to do with, with, with, like, explaining racism. And there's this article she wrote a few years that and I stumbled across it.

00:22:49 Speaker 2

When I was in my third year and it's called the gardener's tale, and you didn't know who was listening, but you have to.

00:22:55 Speaker 2

People immediately like like it's something. It will really transform and helpful. We imagine, like what? Racism or anti racism looks like because she she uses these allegories and stories actually really explain in in really fascinating what ways, how, how, how this is.

00:23:17 Speaker 2

We can transform that can actually intensely racism Jones, the goddess, the godless tale. Read it, sites it. Show her some love, OK.

00:23:26 Speaker 3

Yeah, we saw her lives speak live as well.

00:23:28 Speaker 2

Jane, we will.

00:23:29 Speaker 2

Running we were studying. Ohh my go auntie pulling it. She's amazing. I just have so much.

00:23:34 Speaker 4

She remembered the Princess. You saw her identity.

00:23:37 Speaker 2

It did. It did.

00:23:38 Speaker 2

But I just, yeah, she's amazing.

00:23:41 Speaker 1

Racial connection. A link in the notes to this.

00:23:45 Speaker 2

Please do. Please do. Please do. Yeah, I'm. I'm just really quickly. I think the second point I wanted to make was was linked to to, to to social media. So specifically on Twitter, I like, I don't know if it's still a thing right now, but like in the past few days, like has has basically and there's this like.

00:24:00 Speaker 2

Doing well, I think like people who like don't pay, like take steps. People who don't have the take are limited to actually seeing 600 tweets a day and then people will going to take I think that 6000 or something and it's not it's it's not just you know a kind of random thing that's Twitter and now kind of stifling like your tweets especially.

00:24:22 Speaker 2

Under the, I guess like social media, phones like like are actually used for for, I guess, like mobilising and sharing.

00:24:29 Speaker 2

And and and like, it's actually a resource for environment and fighting back and talking. And so yeah, 100%. I think that social media like plays a real integral, right, you know, in terms of how we, I guess like protest of how we speak up and also of how we actually were you know, I mean of of how we communicate of how we find mobile communities. You know what I mean?

00:24:50 Speaker 2

You know? And so, yeah, I I do think that social media has to be, I think 1 respected more especially within the circles. I think that a lot I won't name names.

00:25:00 Speaker 2

You know, really and truly I think, especially amongst the older generation of the gals, I think they look down upon social media and kind of see it as just the place where, sure, people just share their opinions. But no, like Gen Z, especially shout out jealousy, shout out jersey especially has has has has reimagined what social media can actually do and be as as the.

00:25:19 Speaker 2

Tool, you know.



00:25:20 Speaker 2

And so yeah, I think that, yeah, we just have to really respect social media. Yeah. And I think there's that. There's a lot to be explored in terms of.

00:25:29 Speaker 2

So we can continue utilising it in order to, I guess like do do more and actually in that and see racism in in practise and also for, for for, for various but also related struggles, first of all. So yeah, that's all small points they wanted to share.

00:25:48 Speaker 1

I mean, that's what we're here to do to share. So please carry on sharing.

00:25:53 Speaker 1

And I think now I'm actually going to go into institutions like racial disparities in higher education. It is generally accepted that Russell Group universities in some respects provide better prospects for students and non Russell Group universities. Yet black students attend Russell Group.

00:26:13 Speaker 1

Universities in much lower numbers. Why do you think this happens? And and how can we question why the number of these students varies at different types of universities when they say black students, this data has been looked at over years. So in the past.

00:26:29 Speaker 1

Everybody who was non white was classified as as black so so this haven't been separated out like kind of pre the the different classifications. So this is like over time so it could it could actually be different amongst like different racial groups but we don't have that data.

00:26:37 Speaker 4

No.

00:26:46 Speaker 3

Yeah, I mean, I guess that goes down to what it takes to.

00:26:50 Speaker 3

To get in, you could start with private school. If you go to private school, you you're a higher chance of actually going to a Russell Group University or university in general. And if you go.

00:27:00 Speaker 3

Private school. You probably have enough for your family. Has enough disposable income to be able to do that, so again, finances that. That's like one of the biggest things that will affect how likely you are to get into higher education and then also how well you do because university is expensive and it's not, you know, just because you get a loan, does it mean like there's not other expenses and there's?

00:27:20 Speaker 3

Not other things that you.

00:27:21 Speaker 3

Say well, there's lots of people that still need to have part time jobs and that means you spend less time, you know, studying so you don't end up doing as well and you.

00:27:29 Speaker 3

I'm getting into universities one thing but doing well in universities are a whole other thing, and especially like if I talk on Med school perspective, disproportionately black students and brown students end up having to resit a lot more, end up dropping out a lot more. And it's it's interesting because it's really obvious.

00:27:33

OK.

00:27:50 Speaker 3

If you know each other so you know if you're in Med school and you know your friends are in that group and they look around and they see other black and.

00:27:52 Speaker 2

Well.

00:28:00 Speaker 3

Brown students that aren't like, you know, failing or having to.

00:28:03 Speaker 3

And and then and then when you go to the staff and you say, oh, this is a problem that we should look into this and I didn't know this and it's, you know, it's like what what are you living like? What are you looking at like, what's happening? Like, there's things going on and these people are not. They're not dumb. They're not like incapable of being doctors.

00:28:22 Speaker 3

They very can do it and and do, and once they graduate, they become amazing, do amazing things, but they just unsupported. They might not have had as many mentors as many opportunities, you know, in Med school I had been struggling for five years to even get a mentor, and I would quite an ambitious.

00:28:43 Speaker 3

And I know what I want to do, but these opportunities aren't open and just knowing like after I left Med school knowing that, for example, if you went joined certain societies like rugby or like hockey or whatever these these little societies within Med school there.

00:29:00 Speaker 3

Older years would give you exam prep stuff that they wouldn't give.

00:29:04 Speaker 3

To anyone.

00:29:05 Speaker 3

But in order to even be accepted into that and feel comfortable going most time, you'd have to be right. We'd definitely need to drink. And if you're a Muslim and you didn't drink, or if you didn't drink for any reason, or if you just didn't like those, you know environments you had no chance of being in these groups.

00:29:20 Speaker 3

Leaving Med school, you know, we realised we just didn't have as many resources like they were hugged. So that was like the thing.

00:29:29 Speaker 3

And then also you know the money thing not having enough money to pay for the extra textbooks or the extra like exam prep help or not having the connections to be able to get research published or get those little extra things on your CV or or, or having to just deal with more stuff in life and that just holding you back.

00:29:45 Speaker 4

Hello.

00:29:50 Speaker 3

Then.

00:29:51 Speaker 3

People not helping you, other stuff not helping you. I've had friends who were told by so I had a friend. I have a friend who was told by one of the alumni on sorry, not alumni one. Say one of the staff members that deals with is head of department and tell her when she basically had to reset a year because she was going through depression.

00:30:11 Speaker 3

He told a, you know, medicine is a machine and you're just a small cog and it's just gonna go on without you. So you know, if you if you leave, it's not gonna really affect anything you don't have.

00:30:21 Speaker 3

Why would you say that? Just somebody who has just suffered with depression and it is affecting them to the point that they couldn't their exams.

00:30:33 Speaker 3

Like how does like? It's cruel like when you talk to more students, the way you realise the way that they have been. You know, if if you struggle in any way.

00:30:42 Speaker 3

Mentally or financially or, you know, life issues get in the way. The cruelty with which you're dealt with is ridiculous, and it's proportion and it's black and brown. People who go through that stuff. When I was in 4th and final year, I was doing this work with anti racism. And then one of the biggest points was well, people aren't attaining like the the attainment.

00:30:50 Speaker 4

Mm-hmm.

00:31:02 Speaker 3

App is huge. You know people aren't doing as well in exams or they're not getting as many opportunities cause not just exams. It's like, you know what you get published, what you you know what you extra curriculums you've done cause those things are gonna help you get into specialties and it ended up being there looking back after I graduated. How many?

00:31:19 Speaker 3

Opportunities I missed because I was spending so much time doing anti racism stuff and basically talking to a wall for nothing really like nothing to change. And then so it's like those extra stresses that people have, how that affects you and you just end up like just not doing well cause you're not you're not.

00:31:29

Yes.

00:31:39 Speaker 3

You haven't got the same amount of energy.

00:31:42 Speaker 3

As somebody who has a lot of privilege with Med school, I guess it depends. There's the there's kind of like the management staff, so that will be made-up of sometimes they are physicians, sometimes they're not. And yes a lot of them are white. You have the odd people of colour, but mainly brown actually looking at it. I don't think that we did have.

00:31:42 Speaker 4

Well.

00:32:02 Speaker 3

Any black staff that were on management level, if I'm gonna be very honest with you and it came down to talking about racism the most.

00:32:10 Speaker 3

Victory. All I heard was from some of the Brown staff. You know, it was. It was. They would just be totally against, you know, doing anything about, you know, these issues because it's not about. This is something that's going around where we're talking about the white snowy peaks of the NHS management. And The thing is that, yes, there are people of colour on those, you know, at at the high levels of management.

00:32:31 Speaker 3

But they get there for a reason, and sometimes because they're willing to compromise on certain things and you start to.

00:32:38 Speaker 3

You know, argue. They'll just be like, keep the peace because I made it. It's fine. Just keep the peace. So that that's one thing. But then we also had, like, a lot of lecturers and the majority of them, yes, were were white male. I remember one time I was very excited because I saw, like, one of the lecturers was black and hijabi.

00:32:58 Speaker 3

So she's like I'm Muslim. I I was just. I was like, amazed because that was the only time that the only time it was ridiculous. Like we never saw like women of colour. We never saw like even men of colour like we it was it was so rare that they would get those lecturing positions and I.

00:33:15 Speaker 3

Not to be, you know, rude, but like lecturing in medicine. Does it need you to be very good at teaching because we had a lot of lecturers who were just really good at what they did and then they just turn off for an hour and then you get nothing out of it. So you know, it's not about like, not being in the right, you know, not having enough qualifications or not whatever it's it's it's not about that. It's just about like who you know or who.

00:33:37 Speaker 3

Has access to those opportunities. Who gets told about this opportunity?

00:33:40 Speaker 3

Entities you know when you actually get on on placement and stuff. You know the consultants will it depends what specialty I guess, but the consultants will be a you know, a bit more, there's a bit more diversity, yes, but it depends on where you are. So for example cause cause I'm interested in surgery. I'm sure you guys know it's a male dominated field, there are women.

00:34:01 Speaker 3

So in terms of women of colour, I it took me a really long time to find a few.

00:34:05 Speaker 3

And it it just paled in comparison to how many were right in so is the problem with representation as well, depending on what you want to do in medicine because it's not structured the same way as other courses, I guess other healthcare courses will be the same because you've got the placement aspect, the management aspect and the, you know, lecturing and teaching aspect. But yeah, it's the higher positions.

00:34:25 Speaker 3

And to be people who are white or OK with structures that protect whiteness or white privilege, or it will be the general issues with NHS being that like certain specialties who are traditionally like male dominated.

00:34:40 Speaker 3

Stay that way.

00:34:41 Speaker 2

Yeah. So I'm Zambian, lady. And so my experience, I think from from from 6/4 to undergrad to masters to now doing a PhD I think is really indicative in learning ways of what brought student space within Russell Group University. They agree with him that like it's not always about what you know.

00:35:02 Speaker 2

You know, so even if we aren't, even if we are chatting, even if we are ambitious, even if we are bright and brilliant, your knowledge is not enough.

00:35:11 Speaker 2

Because we simply don't. The the the battle who don't know, people who know, we don't know who, who can open certain doors. But I mean where to even begin. Like there are so many, so many intersecting reasons I think why black students either don't even want to attend lots of universities that take you know which you.

00:35:31 Speaker 2

I when when we absolutely alter, there's such a huge attainment, I will say another plug Oxford, Oxford has recently begun this new research projects. I think one of.

00:35:45 Speaker 2

Principal investigators is is called Elizabeth Vaughan. She's amazing. She taught me in one of my classes modules last year. First term. So she is. She's a proposed this project actually look into the the, the, the, the attainment undergrad students with parents, which I think you know, she she and her team are doing amazing.

00:36:05 Speaker 2

Very concerning about the, you know which who I talked to like, which studies and which initiatives I I support when, when, when looking or expresses how people because not everyone.

00:36:17 Speaker 2

Who claims to to kind of care about or disparities is actually genuine. You know, there's a lot of, like, saving reason. There's a lot of, there's just a lot of lots of symbolism. OK. So I think the best way I can one of the best ways I can kind of maybe highlight the you know just the the real struggles of black students and train across grouping own experience.

00:36:37 Speaker 2

Criminal contacts and working class now like lower working class and from the North of England from Sheffield they went to school separate school in my like you know, it's kind of within the quote in their in their city.

00:36:51 Speaker 2

I love my teachers, but you know, like I, you know, it it wasn't. And so then when it when it came to your loving and I was looking at the top and so and so even back then I

knew that like in terms of getting into higher education and I I'd have like a greater chance if I did 6 full instead instead of college right and so obviously.

00:37:11 Speaker 2

Ended up getting into this six form which away by bus each way from and so it was super buggy, super middle class as in like like I think I think in my I actually discovered that one of my moms.

00:37:30 Speaker 2

Consultant. Like. I'm like I'm sent his son there as well. And so like my mum's a nurse. Right. And so. Yeah. And so a lot of my classmates were children of of consultants, you know, making Bank of lawyers of doctors of, you know, economists and just, you know, very like middle class. Right. And it just wasn't.

00:37:49 Speaker 2

You know, you know it was not. It was found that even even like planning to planning to, to actually hide to uni were such a struggle because they had never experienced.

00:38:00 Speaker 2

Kind of white middle class environment before and so even just doing that in terms of trying to increase my chances of higher education. It may look cost me like when I tell you I've done at the time I did this thing which could be done in 2014 to 2016, the topic of Minister Child was just beginning to kind of enter the the, the, the kind of discourse.

00:38:20 Speaker 2

It wasn't. It wasn't, as nearly it wasn't nearly as as as that I did the crippling anxiety. And now I understand. And those people, anxiety and also dancing.

00:38:29 Speaker 2

For those two years, you know spices for my life. Every day the time feels like. Why do I feel like crying all the time? Why do I feel on edge? Why?

00:38:35 Speaker 2

Do I feel?

00:38:36 Speaker 2

Like, I'm not feel so tired. Like methodic. Like, hey, there's something like something has is has gone off psychologically and I don't know what I'll explain you know and and and just being in that environment and nearly it nearly as in generally.

00:38:49 Speaker 2



Not even being the matter. It really killed my chances of actually getting into higher education. Right. And and. Yeah. And so. So when I was, I think in in like late you're over like early years.

00:39:00 Speaker 2

Team and we were preparing.

00:39:02 Speaker 2

Education. So I think it's like our our guidance counsellor or like our career person and kid, you know, she, she, she essentially told me to like, aim lower in terms of my choices and that like these Russell Boots I was applying to or rather like planning to apply to. I just I wasn't smart enough to to actually get in. And yeah I heard you but.

00:39:21 Speaker 2

This is not a lie, you.

00:39:22 Speaker 2

You know that mean finished me, you know. And so I. So so I mean, so obviously I do think it's so big.

00:39:29 Speaker 2

Eventually I have the crusty. It's OK, it's OK anyway. So I think in terms of understanding the actual disparity and also we need to, we need to start actually acknowledging like to score in the kind of time where we are you know like actually doing applications etcetera etcetera because I didn't know that like it's it's so beautiful and.

00:39:49 Speaker 2

And obviously it it does like where people get in and also right and yeah so much and what I mean so much I mean so much experience with the various issues.

00:40:00 Speaker 2

About student space, and again, we can talk about it for a long time. So like, yeah. So. So yeah, I think like 3 you need is it is a crucial time to study I think in my experience when it comes to the attainment gap, complex student even staying within you need and and also.

00:40:20 Speaker 2

The achievement potential, there's a lot of, there's a lot of interpersonal racism into weapons from fellow students and also members of staff. OK and then.

00:40:29 Speaker 2

And actually also in terms of finances, in terms of loans, in terms of just these additional expenses where?

00:40:35 Speaker 2

A lot of us, like we, we we are constructed from our work, you know, because we are have to to to kind of we have the how to live the paying right. You know what I mean? Like like legit you know. And so a lot of these financial stressors kind of exacerbated by enterprise progress. You know the wider kind of.

00:40:55 Speaker 2

Institutional City gets like teaching.

00:41:00 Speaker 2

And also a lot of like like black mounds of stuff etcetera, etcetera. You know as in like our our environments when we do our degrees it's it's so it's so hostile it's so toxic it drains and so again I think I think in these conversations about attainment and about and about the the like that.

00:41:20 Speaker 2

Students, including that it is really complex and it's multi layered and in terms of research in terms understanding it will take time to learn what people to really understand.

00:41:29 Speaker 2

Extent of like everything we face and the the complexities and and you know, and the really deeply embedded in justices give faith which which I guess like from even trying you know never mind actually achieving or potential grades or degrees. You know what I mean? Yeah, like there is just honestly look like this.

00:41:49 Speaker 2

It's a bit tough it it. It requires it so.

00:41:52 Speaker 2

Because it's that. That's a lot. And what I've shared now is just the ability to surface.

00:41:59 Speaker 1

I think that like both of you have touched on on kind of like different experiences in terms of mental health as well, which I I think is something that's not really talked about. I I could talk to both of you forever. How do you know which battles you're going to fight and which battles you won't be fighting?

00:42:07 Speaker 2

No.

00:42:18 Speaker 3

It's such a good question and I think it's something that I've had to learn a lot because I just I do end up fighting every battle and the problem is, is that I I do need to be a lot more selective.

00:42:30 Speaker 3

I have been thinking about this a lot to be honest. I guess it depends on what's motivating me at the at the point, not proud to say this, but a lot of my motivation is like anger. You know, if I if I'm angry about a situation, it makes me wanna stick do something about it pushes me to stick with something a bit more. So I guess it depends, you know.

00:42:50 Speaker 3

If it makes me more angry, I'll probably fight that, even if I don't think about it too.

00:42:54 Speaker 3

Much, but it's like.

00:42:56 Speaker 3

Thinking about, you know, what is the outcome? Like what? What am I gonna gain from having this conversation? What what's gonna happen like, is anything gonna change?

00:43:06 Speaker 3

I think if.

00:43:06 Speaker 3

We start to think about it that way. Is anything gonna change? I guess it depends. If you're a pessimist, it might just demotivate you. But again, if if you are an angry, stubborn person.

00:43:17 Speaker 3

You might just fight every battle and then burn burn out like you know, I think having little circle of people you trust, people who are in the same fight in the same boat as you, that you can talk to about it.

00:43:31 Speaker 3

Is really important and that's the way that I have dealt with these things. I have, you know, close friends that I will talk to about these situations or we'll be doing the work together and then we decide together cause we can talk about it, be a bit level headed

and give each other advice. Is it worth fighting this battle? Is it worth or what's the way that we.

00:43:50 Speaker 3

Can do it. Where?

00:43:51 Speaker 3

At the end, we don't end up suffering because of of picking this particular fight, and I've seen a lot of people just, especially with racism in.

00:44:00 Speaker 3

Base of racism. Deciding not to fight that particular battle, especially in the situations where it's interpersonal and especially when it's from a teacher or someone who's higher up someone who's lower down and deciding just not to. Not to pick that fight. And you know, people could say, well, if you don't pick that fight like nothing's gonna change.

00:44:21 Speaker 3

But at the end of the day, you have to put yourself 1st and sometimes the institution is so bad you know, if you if you go through that whole thing, it will just make everything so much worse for you. You will experience much more racism in the process of complaining, and that's something that a lot of people have experience.

00:44:37 Speaker 3

In you know, in academia, in, in, in the NHS, in you know, for what whatever institution that you're in it you experience much more gaslighting and more of the racism or the the misogyny or whatever it was in the process of complaining than you did at the start. And it's awful, but I guess.

00:44:58 Speaker 3

That is 1 battle, but another battle you could pick is the sort of the the longer war, if you will, in terms of making sure that if you if you do complain it's not you know, you actually listen to and that those things are happened in the.

00:45:12 Speaker 3

Place and I I guess I felt I had the stamina to be able to to do that, so when people couldn't complain rather than making them complain, it would just be something that or convincing them to to to complain or do like, take it further, it would just transform into what can we do to make it so that this.

00:45:33 Speaker 3

You don't feel this way. It's just changing. Kind of what the battle is sometimes, but yeah, it is. Is really is really important cause yeah, you have to balance your own mental health and you can't blame people for not picking certain battles if you're willing to do.

00:45:47 Speaker 3

It great but yeah.

00:45:49 Speaker 3

Yeah.

00:45:51 Speaker 2

Recently, I'll say just just just keep it real. I still don't know. I'm still figuring figuring it like I'm very much a person is like, you know, especially when it comes to injustice or what I think is injustice. That's not necessarily good advice. What I will say is that our supervisor, Thomas Cousins.

00:46:10 Speaker 2

When we had our very first supervision, he gave me a good piece of advice, which.

00:46:15 Speaker 2

Never love. His advice was to trust my guts like he told me to trust. My gut was the first time anyone in this life had ever told me that, you know, he told me to, you know, one thing about this diesel journey, whatever is to trust with that. And so I think when it comes to figuring out which bustles we we, we will fight in which battles we work, which says we we will pack, rise on and on which.

00:46:35 Speaker 2

We will confirm and so think it's important to trust.

00:46:38 Speaker 2

You know this, and for me that that is not the head and the gut is not the heart. So it's not a case of just going with your head go with you know that that you feel like there's there's such an instinct which is so innate it's not told it's not necessarily. So it's just within us when we we we know you know. So yeah if if there's if your guts.

00:46:58 Speaker 2

Just telling you you to to kind of choose to go to, to fight or to to choose peace or to compromise. You think we should listen to that.

00:47:06 Speaker 2

I think I would something something my primary supervisor has done in the past. You know, one obviously reading my work and giving feedback is, yeah, is to is to.

00:47:21 Speaker 2

Ask me about.

00:47:24 Speaker 2

You know, imagining.

00:47:27 Speaker 2

And just like a kind of more hopeful future.

00:47:30 Speaker 2

And this, you know, doing the imaging is even possible, right? And so I think you know, I'll, I've definitely been inspired and and and really challenged to not just I guess in one sense have like tunnel vision and to not be designed to, to thinking that everything.

00:47:50 Speaker 2

It's like hopeless and and that things can't improve because I think they they they 1000% can't, you know, holding up to and holding on.

00:47:59 Speaker 2

To, you know, a kind of improved future is, in my opinion, a part of the work of challenging racism and and violence. And so I think to the the next guest, I would definitely ask like.

00:48:15 Speaker 2

What kind of futures are you imagining and are hoping for? In what ways do you think that they are achievable?

00:48:23 Speaker 4

Yeah, I think that's a great question. Great place, Selena, thank you so much for being on this podcast.

00:48:30 Speaker 2

Because of having me.

00:48:32 Speaker 2

Tired braid of mine, but yeah, it's been fun.

00:48:36 Speaker 1

Conversation has been so enriching. Thank you for giving up your time for being just honest and sharing.

00:48:44 Speaker 1

In answering the questions so thoughtfully as.

00:48:47 Speaker 3

Well, thank you so much for having us.

00:49:03 Speaker 1

In today's podcast, we talked about quality, equity and liberation, social media we compared.

00:49:13 Speaker 1

Definitions of anti racism in the US and if this can be applied to the UK context, we then went through examples of individual interpersonal, institutional and structural racism with hen and Princess sharing their personal experiences in Russell Group universities in the UK we had such a rich discussion.

00:49:32 Speaker 1

Unfortunately, there was so much we couldn't include everything in this podcast, but it was such an enriching and insightful conversation. I'm so grateful to Princess and Hen for their time.

00:49:45 Speaker 1

Thank you so much for listening to the power and privilege and Academia podcast brought to you by Black and Brown and bioethics. Be sure to visit [blackbrownbioethics.blogs.bristol.ac.uk](https://blackbrownbioethics.blogs.bristol.ac.uk) to listen to more of our podcasts, follow our work, and connect with our network.

00:50:03 Speaker 1

Credits. Thank you to the Centre for Ethics in medicine at the University of Bristol and to the Ethos Centre at the University of Oxford. For all their support.

00:50:14 Speaker 1

Thank you to Doctor Kasim Ashra for providing intro and outro beats.