

TW for "Season Finale!!!!!!:

Racism

Anti-Blackness

Colourism

Islamophobia

Karel Green 0:00

Welcome to the POCsquared podcast. This is our season one finale episode. In today's episode, we talked about many topics including the UK A level scandal, using BAME and POC as unifying terms in EDI teams, the realities of doing a PhD and there was a significant chunk where we just yelled about coding. As always, please be aware that the following distressing topics are discussed: racism, including anti blackness and colorism and we also mentioned Islamophobia. We can be found at pocquared on Twitter and Instagram. That's POC, and then the word squared, you can also email us at POCsquared@gmail.com. That's POC, and then the word squared@gmail.com. And you can also contact us via our website, www dot POC, and then the number two dot co dot UK. We will be taking a break between season one and season two. All of that will be explained in the episode but yes, we are coming back for a second season of yelling. And as always, we hope you enjoy.

Karel Green 1:21

We've done it. We've made it to our season finale. We are better than any other busted white boy who started podcasts and only ever get to episode 6. Okay, we did it...

Pruthvi Mehta 1:35

You know they only get to Episode Two, not even six. They get to two and oh my mate Brad wants us to do this other thing and then they just leave it so...

Karel Green 1:44

Of course.

Sehher Tariq 1:44

RIP white boy podcast.

Karel Green 1:46

I know. I just I don't... They go through so much and they always fail. But I think the number one thing that I want to talk about is that episode four, which is my favorite episode, 'the Athena SWAN charter is garbage' is almost played episode.

Pruthvi Mehta 2:05

Nice.

Karel Green 2:06

Out of all 10, I mean, we don't know what this one we'll get to but so far out all of them it's most popular, which means that honestly, I'm so glad because it means it's resonating with someone

Pruthvi Mehta 2:22

I cannot wait for season two like. The second one, The Athena SWAN is a mess 2: Electric Boogaloo. That's what we're going to be doing.

Karel Green 2:33

Yes, sneak peak for our listeners, it turns out that everybody will lay down their life and take 69 bullets for the Athena SWAN charter to make sure their university has it. But only 15 UK universities have the Race Equality charter. So...

Pruthvi Mehta 2:50

Gross.

Karel Green 2:51

Hmmm... I wonder and you know what, none of them are happy but I do see white women at all stages of the Academy. Like the actual like the dean or something like the high level Dean's of my university, Nottingham, is a white woman. And you know what, there are no blacks or browns anywhere. I wonder why?

Pruthvi Mehta 3:10

It's true. All the all the like white women professors and postdocs I've met not just like, you know, in the collaboration, not just in my university, but like literally everywhere literally have been white... It's I I.... Urgh...

Karel Green 3:25

Exactly. Just start yelling about that. There's no formal talking topic I think that today's episode, I think we're just gonna yell about the stuff we've learned. The things that have happened, what we've gone through to make this work. And what will happen for season two at some point, I suppose.

Pruthvi Mehta 3:45

So... Good idea, so what has everyone learned?

Karel Green 3:49

I learned I was right. And everything we said was right. And this podcast was a good idea because it proves how right we were and that was it. Bye.

Pruthvi Mehta 4:00

That's the end. That's the end of the episode. Make sure to tune in...

Karel Green 4:06

Season 2.

Pruthvi Mehta 4:08

We have transcription and the show notes available on our website.

Karel Green 4:11

I'm gonna put the music in. I did that before.

Pruthvi Mehta 4:16

I know.

Karel Green 4:16

I'm gonna do it again.

Pruthvi Mehta 4:19

I said it's like I wanted you to put it in.

Karel Green 4:23

Don't you worry. That's all I'm going to edit, the rest of this is gonna be raw and I'll add in the music and end the podcast there.

Pruthvi Mehta 4:29

Thank you.

Pruthvi Mehta 4:40

Things I have learned. Well, it's been a long, you know, journey, and I think like Karel said it's sort of reaffirmed that we were right and that the stuff we're feeling all along wasn't just innate to us three, it's something that's a viewpoint that's shared by like loads of people across the country and the world, right?

Sehher Tariq 4:58

Yeah, for sure.

Pruthvi Mehta 4:59

Like we've been to conferences and meetups to do with decoloniality. And we've seen whole ass groups with like the same mindset with regards to how whitewashed and colonized and racist academia is, right. And it's just, it's really nice to know, there's like a network of people out there that feel the same way. Especially because of how some topics are super, like sensitive and hard to talk about, like, we've literally cried in the presence of other people with the same, like mindset as us. And like, it's just been like a very, it's not it's not been like an academic journey of me learning and researching stuff about this. It's been like a sort of reevaluating, and sort of feeling my way through and navigating those feelings. Um, and that's what it's been like, for me, basically. I don't know about everyone else.

Sehher Tariq 5:50

Yeah, I, that was probably the point I would bring up as well, is that from when we started doing all this stuff, and to now, it's insane how much confident I feel all of us have become in expressing these view points. Because at the beginning, I know definitely, for me, I was kind of apprehensive about talking about this stuff, even though it needed to be talked about it, I was very apprehensive to do that. Because obviously, race is like a taboo, it's just trying to make changes like this. It's just very, it's very scary when you have to go up against people who have that kind of power over you. But now, I definitely feel that, especially with you and Karel, like you're actually you've gone to different universities now and you're actually doing stuff within your departments, and you have that kind of you have that braveness of going and talking to people about decolonial your work, and you're actually working with these departments. And although I know that is probably going to, there's still going to be some sort of like pushback on on it, it's still really great to see the confidence. And, and I am yet to do that in the like, in like, my field of work.

Pruthvi Mehta 7:24

Yeah.

Sehher Tariq 7:25

But for me personally, it's kind of less hard. Because in my team, it's like majority women of color now. We've we've brought new people into our team, and it's our team is majority women of color and it's like, well...

Pruthvi Mehta 7:40

I'm so jealous.

Karel Green 7:42

Yeah. Like, what does that feel like?

Sehher Tariq 7:44

It's so unusual, considering that in like the financial world, it is most of time it... you see like, white people on top, but seeing my team as it's like women who look like me, it's, it's really, really great. And I feel that, you know, you need to this, this needs to, it needs to carry on, it's a really good feeling that, you know, when something happens, you can talk to somebody, and they can relate to you and your experience. So having that change in academia would just make the whole academic experience for people of color just a lot more calming, relaxing, comfortable. And if someone feels like that in their place of work, then they're gonna produce better work.

Pruthvi Mehta 8:38

Exactly, exactly. Like I've often wondered about, you know, what if when it's all even if it's like, when I leave academia, like, you know, it's all been... exactly, like halfway through this PhD, and I'm just like, let me out. Let me out... Um, but yeah, like I like I've often thought about, you know, what is the culture? What is it gonna also gonna feel

like, once I'm out of here? And I think one thing I won't miss is like, how pervasive like, white systematic, like racism is, right? Like, obviously, it exists in like, other spheres, you know, obviously, exists outside academia, but it's like, it feels like there's certain areas where it's more malleable and more prone to change than academia is because of how rigid and entrenched and how like how much of a like a ladder academia is both like in terms of like, you know, the minds that people have, and also the ways you progress in it, right, which like, leads itself to elitism and therefore, white supremacy and all of that. Whereas outside it, it feels a little bit more shifty, and I kind of like, I'm wondering what it feels like when I get there basically. Um...

Karel Green 9:46

That's really good and it's like, there's something to be said about, you know, not that I would literally have perished had I not had like the decolonial groups that I've been in and stuff like that, but just to have your like regular Job, you're not like BFFs with these people, but just to like, have a regular your nine to five or wherever it is, and then have it actually diverse. Like, it's so different because we never get to experience that just like going into work. We didn't set up this business together so we could work with like, either black or brown people, we just happen to work somewhere that's actually diverse. And everybody is just happy like I just knowing what that feels like, it's just what is... what is she? Where is she? And it's like, yeah, it's like I um, there are lots of reasons why I think I will probably end up leaving academia. Yeah, there are lots of reasons why, you know, the main one is the, you know, entrenched white supremacy. But lots of other actual practical reasons as well. But it's just like, yeah, like to see somewhere, like you said, Pruthvi, that's like, easier to change, they're not going to act like they're literally gonna pass away if they you know, hire more than one Brown. Like, it's just, Oh, god, they're so overly dramatic and busted in universities and in academia, in general, just like crying every step of the way, like, be quiet.

Karel Green 9:51

I do... I do think I need to point out though, is that the the CEO of our company, he is an a South Asian man. So it's, you're going to have more of an appreciation, have an appreciation for having different people from different walks of life, if you yourself from that background. So obviously, I think what, when it comes to academia, it's just so obvious with the white people just being at the top all the time, they're not going to have this appreciation. So you just you need people in those positions of power, who are minorities who can understand where we're coming from. So I think that's probably why it's such a good situation for me, because I have people who are in these top positions in this company, who are South Asian, like me. And so they, they understand that there needs to be diversity. And that, you know, there's that bit, there's that understanding within the company.

Karel Green 12:23

I think that's a really good point. And again, it's like, yeah, you want to you need that to happen more often, as well, because they're as much as BME are more likely to

have an actual appreciation for that, I just think we are human first. As we always say, there's always like a spectrum, and I'm thinking of like, idiot black conservatives. And like, and like P***i P****I, even though I'm gonna bleep out her name, and you can, I will, I'm sorry, that was, that was a slur, I'm getting rid of it. You know, and those people are human also, which is really upsetting. And then, so like, if they're at the top of the Academy, they're not gonna do anything. So like, you actually have to just have more and more, because a majority people, people aren't like them, especially like BAME people, they have a brain cell and aren't stupid, and it just makes things a lot better. And I'm looking at the show notes that we do have for this episode and one of the things that we talked about, because there's a lot of stuff in here that I forgot about. So we will go through them, I think it's how it's that university of like sites of power. And it's talking about how like, every university has the hall of principles. I remember the one in Queen Mary, there's the one in my uni, in Nottingham, and they're all white. And there are white women as well. So white women Be quiet. Like, you're so right, because these people right at the very top, in universities, especially are like very, very white. And there's no way to change that. I don't know, just like, you know, I know how to start a business, but I don't think you can start a university. Like that's something to think about. Like, if you wanted to, like how would you start a university? I don't think you can, like, I don't know, I'd have to Google that.

Pruthvi Mehta 14:13

And not even a matter of how do you start a university, it's how did you get it to the level the universities that are here, you know, the established ones are sort of like on the same level as them right? Because I don't think that's even possible to be honest. Like you can't, it'll just be written off as like a poly or like, you know, some random whatever university that no one cares for.

Sehher Tariq 14:32

Like an academy or something.

Pruthvi Mehta 14:32

Yeah, exactly.

Karel Green 14:34

Oh, gross. I just googled is how to start a private university in the UK. No, okay. No, it's like opening a university technical College is the only gov.UK thing that comes up. Yeah, you're I don't think you can.

Sehher Tariq 14:51

Yeah, so I think like the main thing that you're going to have to do in terms of making it better is just proper institutional change. Yeah, and as it has been said in like past episodes, that usually comes from, like, grassroots movements.

Pruthvi Mehta 15:09

Yes.

Karel Green 15:10

And I'm looking in again, in our show notes, one of the thing about that is that student activism, because they're the only BME in the academy, like, you know, obviously, we literally are student activists, and we do all of this work, because we like to. But, there are things that happen, like burnout, it puts students in vulnerable positions, it makes them do double the work than they should be doing. And then it leads to like, long term effects like BME, dropping out of academia, as we probably are, you know, mental health issues, and then those can feed into the quote unquote, attainment gap, which is BS, as we know, from our episode. Yeah, we're going to do an episode on that even, that's season two sneak peak. It's just like it proper institutional change, listening to grassroots movements, but the bulk of the work actively being done by those at the top is what would, like, fix it. And that's, you know, is that going to happen is, you know, Karen and Cheryl, who are the Dean's...

Pruthvi Mehta 16:13

Karen and Cheryl!

Karel Green 16:15

Are they gonna do that. Yes, or no, find out in the comments below.

Pruthvi Mehta 16:22

I think like one thing that's, I've really, like, had to, like, learn and process about this entire thing is that, you know, the, like, like, you've all mentioned sort of the shift towards believing in like yourself, your ideas and the ideas of other students, as opposed to the ideas of like, top down institutions, right. Like, it's really hard as someone who's like, gone through, you know, pretty much like a lot of academia now. And, you know, work your way from the bottom of like food chain, to, like, let go of the trust of power that comes from the top, right, because you're sort of reliant on it, right? It's your work. It's like, you're told to do this problem sheet, do the problem sheet and it's graded by people who think you know, better than you. Right? And it's like, it's, it's like, a process, when you have like, parents, and you have to, like, when you grow up, you realize that they also like in like, you know, they also have flaws and stuff like that.

Karel Green 17:17

Yeah.

Pruthvi Mehta 17:17

Like, like growing up, like a lot of this process is in learning to critique and, you know, and in a massive way, looking at the failures of institutions that we are meant to put our trust in. And that's a really hard thing to do. Like, it makes you like, realize that students should also be treated as academics, and that our learned experience is just as valuable as like, whatever experience people get from age and working their

way up the chain. Right. So like, yeah, your, your as much as an academic as a person teaching you. Right? And you're just your input and feedback is just as like, as important to the entire, like, learning process and academic process as theirs is. And you are like you also a scholar, right. Like, it's not like you're more of an academic, the higher up you go. Right. That's not, that's not how that works. But that's why I felt like especially as an undergrad. Yeah. And it's just, it's been a whole process, like just inverting that on its head and realizing it's not true.

Karel Green 18:21

Yeah, it's the understanding that it turns out that learning isn't hierarchical. Even though universities and schools are built hierarchically, by the fact that you progress year to year based on your age, and how well you do apparently, but it's... Yeah, yeah, it's been a learning experience. I still remember right at the very, very beginning, at the end of our degree when I was like, going to like careers appointments and stuff, just, you know, go to literally anyone I could find to talk about this and see what I could do. And them saying that, like, Oh, do they know more than you? Do they? Like I bet I'm betting they don't also like there's no way, there's no way that they don't know more than me, there's got to be you know, some kind of form that we could fill out and get this fixed and... There is no form they don't know anything. Mediocre white boys have gone through their entire lives doing nothing. Like it's it's insane how far they get. And it's just Yeah, like...

Pruthvi Mehta 19:23

Exactly like fake it till you make it a thing is something that like a law of academia has really like imbued you know, I mean, and sort of like, it's like why putting so much faith in their knowledge when they never put their faith in their in their own knowledge to begin with, and sort of like scam their way into where they are.

Karel Green 19:41

Exactly.

Pruthvi Mehta 19:42

I that's why I hate the whole fake it until you make it mentality in academia because it's just like compounds imposter syndrome, right? Like it doesn't actually make you feel any better by your own work. It's just like you're continuously hoping that no one finds out how bad you are in your own head. You know, like, that's, that's a bad way of doing it. Basically. I think something else that I've had to also realize is the way that like misogynoir and like things to do with particularly women of color versus men of color have sort of like, made themselves shown. Right. Like we've I think I mentioned on the podcast about how like, like men of color have sort of are more, due to like the whole toxic masculinity that sort of perpetuates itself. In you know, in certain cultures, it's sort of they feel more compelled to sort of embrace the sort of systematic racism status quo.

Karel Green 20:38

Stupid black joy thing you sent me, I literally blocked your Twitter account.

Pruthvi Mehta 20:43

Oh, yeah.

Karel Green 20:43

Let's talk about that whilst I find it I'm so... I can't believe you did this.

Pruthvi Mehta 20:49

Is that the, is that the documentary I sent you?

Karel Green 20:51

Put documentary in the biggest quotes possible may I add.

Pruthvi Mehta 20:56

Yeah, this isn't like, like, exactly academia related. But it's just something I saw on Twitter where you had like, it's a show it's documentary by I think, a channel 4 something called Black love. And it has like, it's just a... It's like a load of it's meant to show black couples, but in reality, it's like dark skinned black men with with light skinned black women or mixed, you know, women. And it's like, this is not this is not a representation anyone asked for.

Karel Green 21:22

Exactly.

Pruthvi Mehta 21:24

And it's a mess. And like, you see that mirrored like where academia works, which is like, men of color are more likely to sort of conform to a sort of a standard of you know, what academia should be, even if it works against them, right? Like, they're less likely to speak out when there are racist microaggressions, they're less likely to speak out, even happens against them. I've given a example before, like a, the only South Asian academic in the department who had a, like, now retired, like, racist, white professor, say something to him. And even his white colleagues were like, hey, speak out about this, we'll have your back if speak out about this and he didn't do anything.

Karel Green 22:09

Yeah.

Pruthvi Mehta 22:10

Right. And it's like, not to victim blame here. But also, like, you can tell, you can see how they're not willing to buck the standard, they're not willing to speak out a lot of the time, because they don't want to jeopardize their position or their pay. And like, it always comes back to how this sort of speaking up and doing a lot of diversity work always falls on women of color shoulders, because men of color are like either

willing to just ignore it, or just literally just don't see it as a problem. It's just it's really, it's really like, that's really... This entire process brought a home to me that there is a difference between how men of color women of color are treated in academia.

Karel Green 22:47

Yeah, exactly. I completely agree. And just what people are willing to do, like, again, not to victim blame, or anything like men of color do experience racism, but a lot of like, legit like white people who have like, done more and put more on the line, in my opinion, for like, true diversity than like the majority of men of color who've done stuff and it's just like, what people have done to actively unlearn their own privileges and things that aren't, like speak about things that don't affect you personally, you can't just ignore stuff that doesn't affect you. That's not how activism works, sweetie, and it's like, um, yeah, I mean, like, we have it highlighted in our points here. I think it's like a really good thing. It's like, what do you actively give up when you say you're anti something? What would white people give up when they say they're anti racist. And it sucks that you have to wait until you're, you know, quote, unquote, like double oppressed by being you know, a person of color, who's also a woman, and stuff like that to like, hit home. But there you go. And, you know, it sucks. But we are getting through it I guess. I also... So, yeah, something we have here as well, which I think could be good for another Sneak Peek, we're gonna do an episode on the how to actively decolonize lectures because people can't seem to use their singular brain cell and apply what we've told them to their own work. But it says here, how we have the idea of like, the way we reward people is like really bad, in that, you know, a significant transformation should not be treated less than achieving, you know, the top grade. So yeah, people come in with really low grades due to like whatever circumstances they've had, and worked really hard and got like a 2:1, but they're still treated as quote unquote, worse than somebody who's gone to like a private education and got first like, Let's have a talk about that.

Sehher Tariq 24:52

This is so relevant as well to what's happening at the moment with A levels and GCSEs

Karel Green 24:57

Yep.

Sehher Tariq 24:58

It's just that situation just made me so mad.

Karel Green 25:02

Oh, so I'm so angry about that engine. Well, let's talk about that too. I'm ready to absolutely yell. I cannot believe the Tories. And you know what, like, if this was a Labour government and I don't I don't know if it would have happened under a Labour government, okay. But if it was a Labour government people be like speaking out and calling them out so much more but the Tories are just getting

away with it. They made an algorithm based on people's like area and income people.

Pruthvi Mehta 25:29

Horrendous.

Karel Green 25:30

I'm yelling a lot, let me let me actually explain what's happened for people who aren't in the UK and aren't keeping up. So we have a Tory government, which if you don't know what that is, it's like the right wing government. It's like the equivalent of the republicans in America, for example, I don't know any other political parties outside of the UK in America. And they have so in the UK you go to college before you go to university, and A levels are the qualification you get out of that. And they are used to determine like, what university you could get into, you know, you can get whatever ABC grades you get in your subjects and then you go to university, right. And universities have a minimum entry requirement. And because of Coronavirus, they can't sit exams, you can't social distance in exams, everybody was working from home. And instead of using teachers predicted grades, because you know, God forbid, the human beings who have trained to teach people and have years of experience and understand the curriculum that they literally taught, and therefore can accurately predict for the most part, what a given student would get in their best scenario, right? They instead made some gross algorithm, I fear to call it algorithm because I really don't think anybody who made this could code. So I don't know what it was. And it was based on like, student's income, and the area that they lived in, and stuff like that. So there were people who were predicted A*s, but came from like a poor area, and got officially given by the government like Cs and Ds and Es. And it was horrific. And they literally had to, like have protests and things literal students are out here protesting against grown adults. And then five days later, they were just like, oh, we're sorry, guys. Here, you can have your predicted grades. And then all the universities were just like we're full. And it will take a couple days for the predicted grades to be you know, reassigned and clear, and it's gonna close in seven hours, so you're not going to uni. And then that's been the end of it. And I'm just yelling.

Pruthvi Mehta 27:34

Exactly. And like, you know, there's I think I've ranted about this, like separately um but I remember seeing a thing on Twitter where someone was just like, you know, like, not all slips in like not all, you know, decrease in grades are equal, right? So you have if you have someone who was like, predicted like an A*. Yeah. And was meant to go to Oxbridge and they ended up getting like a b and a subject. Right. So say they're predicted like A*A*A, and they got like, BBC or whatever. Right? And, you know, those are still, you know, grades or they can actually go to university with and a good university. Yeah.

Karel Green 28:10

Right.

Pruthvi Mehta 28:11

And yeah, and he saw, like, loads of like, outpouring of compassion for those people. Right. And you saw absolutely nothing people who were predicted BBC, and got way less and cannot go to any university. Like, like that. But I saw nothing for those students. And people aren't, you know, people say, oh, it's, you know, you should feel terrible for both. It's like, no, I feel terrible for first group. They will literally be fine. They will literally be fine. Like, oh my god, I just I don't understand this, like we called the dissonance to say, you know, woe is me woe is me from the first group and be absolutely like, silent like nothing but tumbleweeds for the latter, when the latter are literally objectively and logically in a worst state. Like they're way worse off. Horendous.

Karel Green 28:58

Horrible. Pruthvi, me and you had like a big conversation about this and not to you know, shout out myself but also to shout out myself, I made a whole thread on Twitter so they'll be in the show notes, but like... Just to, like, my it was just it was so horrifying, because I when I went to uni, I was in a position I had done my A levels. I had undiagnosed dyslexia, so I just found them really hard. So I did all of my exams with dyslexia and I literally remember running out of time and a lot of my exams because I needed extra time and I didn't know and I got BBC, and I got into Queen Mary. And that was a lot of people's like insurance choice, because they had minimum entry requirements of BBC and a lot of other like Russell Group unis especially in London wanted like three A's, or an A* and two A's and stuff. So a lot of people ended up going to Queen Mary because they didn't get you know, the top top grades. One of the things they really didn't like amongst a lot of stuff that's coming out about Queen Mary, I'm sure we can talk about even today is that like, a lot of people there were just like, oh my god, I wanted to go to UCL or Imperial and blah, blah, blah. And I was just like everybody shut up. It's just like, I went to a college that was a majority had black people, a few Asian people and very few white people. But there were a few. It was in Lewisham, which is in southeast London, which is home to Europe's biggest police station, because it is one of the lowest income boroughs in London height, high crime rates, because everybody's poor, etc, etc. And like, it was just horrible to think about, because if that was me, I barely scraped BBC. And like, I wouldn't have like if they dropped my grades to like two E's and an F, I would have, I don't know, if I would have gotten into uni, like, you know, my life would be completely different. And what you said preppies like nobody, all the people who have to go to Imperial, because they did get into Cambridge, you know, you know, so how will they survive? But then it's like, there was a girl who couldn't get into do psychology and Queen Mary, because by the time they had redone all the A level grades, because it took like a full 10 days, yeah, they took 5 days to say that they were wrong. Another five days to actually, you know, get through the system. All the spots were taken by the people who couldn't get into

Oxbridge. And you know, all the clearing spots are gone. And it's just like, what's happened to those students? I don't know. I truly, I don't know.

Pruthvi Mehta 30:42

Like, they haven't they haven't been reported, or they have not been reported on. That's why, like, no one knows, because no one cares. Absolutely awful.

Sehher Tariq 31:38

That's true that on the news, it's just concentrating on the top end, quote, unquote, the top students. And it kind of makes me think like, the the actually just saying that these people are more worthy of an education um as people who come from poorer schools. Because what was that thing that the MP said. And it was basically saying, like, if everybody gets good grades, then it's going to be people who... people are going to be getting jobs, that they are not qualified for something, or... I'll try and find the quote in a minute... But it was just it was a horrible quote, basically, very elitist. And it just shows the kind of contempt that they have for people who can't afford the same education that they could.

Karel Green 32:37

Yeah.

Sehher Tariq 32:38

And so it's just the whole thing was elitist. It's just ignoring people who, who don't have access to the same resources. And the reason that they don't have access to the same resources, isn't their own fault, it's the fault of the government in the end, because they don't fund these schools correctly, in the first place. They give funding and resources to to other schools that, well in general most schools aren't even funded properly. But these schools in poor areas are not receiving the correct funding. So it's a system of their own design.

Pruthvi Mehta 33:16

Exactly. And it's like, like that, like literal circles of exclusion, right, like you have, you know, like private versus state schools, or another one, I'm for the, like, abolition of private schools or, you know, all schools to be funded equally. I don't think that's a really like, wild concept to have. And I think, I think the concept of the Russell Group, and particularly Oxbridge should be like demolished as well. Like, I just I don't think there's any value in having because what, you know, the Russell Group would basically take... Are the universities that take up them like vast, vast majority of funding, right? And it's like if then and then you have those at the top of the Russell group, which take up the most of that funding. Right? on and it's it's just really hierarchical, exclusionary, elitist and actively works against what good education should be. And it's insane that this exists in the first place. Right? And it's, it's, it's not hypocritical if, for example, you have like Owen Jones, who's like, you know, the Guardian columnist, really good socialist egg. Right, who went to Oxbridge and literally, it's just like, demolish Oxbridge. And I love that, I love that energy. It should

be it should be the people who've literally gone through the to these institutions who like who know that they're how worthless they are, right? It's really I don't I just I can't believe in the year of our Lord like Cthulhu 2020, that this whole, like, the the the the like, you know, disparity between the funding given to state schools over funding him to private schools, the funding given to non Russell Group universities and the funding given to Russell Group universities has just got even worse.

Karel Green 34:56

Yeah.

Pruthvi Mehta 34:57

Like it's it's absolute. It's just, it's just mad to me. I think I just I just want to just, you know, equality it's literally as simple as just getting rid of state versus private stuff.

Karel Green 35:09

Like it's, it's so bad and it's just like yeah, again just for anybody listening. I only know UK and American terms so you're gonna have to search this up yourself but like Oxbridge is Oxford and Cambridge, which is like our equiv- it's like the England's equivalent of like Harvard and Yale yeah and like Russell Group is like England or the UK is equivalent of Ivy League and Pruthvi, you mentioned like Owen Jones again really good egg. We've referenced him for a lot of stuff in our show notes.

Pruthvi Mehta 35:40

Yeah.

Karel Green 35:41

Stuff he's written. And just, he's good. But like, I want to say how like, we have both literally gone to Russell Group universities, like we should big up ourselves Queen Mary was a Russell, is even, a Russell Group University. Pruthvi, you're in Liverpool, I'm in Nottingham, those are both Russell Groups. And we are also saying demolish Russell Group. It's garbage.

Pruthvi Mehta 36:03

I think it you know, like, it's, you know, you that you feel it's insane. You feel like a certain stamp of pride when you're like, Oh, I go into a Russell Group, and you know, and so and so didn't and whatever. And it's just like, Well think about how bad that is. Think about how weird that is.

Karel Green 36:19

And I'm not gonna lie, I got accepted into about three different universities for my PhD. And you know, when I was asking people about where I should go, you know, getting advice and which one should I pick? Like, you know, a lot of my friends did say pick Nottingham, it's a Russell Group, you're more likely to get funding, and it sucks. But you know, as a black woman, I was like, you know, I need to get as much help and prestige as I can to get through life. And they get more funding, they have

more resources, they'll give me a better PhD. Same thing for when I got into Queen Mary, because my only choice was, because I wanted to do specifically astrophysics and my grades are there was no way I was getting A*AA right? My options were Queen Mary or Nottingham Trent and I just might I cannot afford to move out to Nottingham back when I was an undergrad, we just did not have the means. So, Queen Mary is my only choice. And when I got it, everyone was happy. I remember those days, everyone was like, your grades. So good. You got in, Karel. My parents were like my girl got into a Russell Group University. And you know, it's like weird because I still feel pride that I did that. But also I hate them so much.

Pruthvi Mehta 37:24

So yeah, it's like, it's like double think I completely understand that feeling, right? Because like in most of your like, society tells you, and you internalize that it's the best thing. I mean, and I'm better than others whatever people going here, and it's really hard to let go of it. It's like It's like unlearning a lot of the stuff and like on learning. It's almost like unlearning privilege in a way to like, let go of that pride and go Okay, you know what the actual the system is set up against people who didn't go here. And that's not right. Yeah.

Karel Green 37:54

Just to go back to the GCSE hell, I found an article on Sky News that says how the quote unquote algorithm works. I've been trying to understand it, I don't know. So I'm gonna go ahead and read it out to you guys, if we copy and paste it into the chat, so you can see it. And then we could we can go through this together. Okay, so it says. So the first point is that the most important is the grade distribution of your test center for previous years. So, the second most important is your rank within the test center, which is based on a) how your test center runs you and b) call center assessment grade, which seems to be what your teacher thinks you will do in your mock exams. And then three is lastly, your previous exam results. So if you're in your A levels, they took your GCSE scores.

Pruthvi Mehta 38:55

Horrendous. Oh my God.

Karel Green 38:56

They look at this for both you and for people who took the exam in previous years. So you know what, let's have a mini mini like what we did the Athena SWAN where we just yelled at all the points we go through.

Pruthvi Mehta 39:08

Yeah, yeah.

Karel Green 39:09

Oh my God.

Pruthvi Mehta 39:13

So the first point the the great distribution of the test center. Oh, like that. But is that is that is it dependent on area right, and like the in- the income of people in that area, because that's obviously going to have a correlation. So you could literally like have worked your like literal bottom off to get to get a really good grade right and because of where you are, it would it would just be dropped off dramatically from the get go. That is that is horrendous. So bad.

Sehher Tariq 39:51

Again, is it's about access to resources and the like the ones that will have this, this I guess, you know, not as high grade distribution, what I don't even know how to say, say that. But yeah, these these, these schools that are going to have like the quote unquote, lower grades, it's because they don't have access to the resources. They're like the teachers are overworked. There's too many people in the classroom like, obviously, that interaction time is going to affect how, like how much these kids are learning that this is how our education system works. We need to learn from a teacher. And if they're not giving you the time, you're not going to be able to... It's just about resources. And it's just a kind of makes me so mad.

Karel Green 40:39

That's it. No, it's fine. You're You're absolutely right. You know, teachers are overworked, they are off all the jobs, they are desperate for teachers, because nobody wants to be a teacher. I've done a lot of like teaching and tutoring. And I know that I don't want to be a teacher. My sister is literally teacher and it's just collapsing. Like it's just horrible. The amount of work, classrooms are over crowded, I think like it's about 35 ish students. And honestly, they've tried to bump that up to like, 40. And it's just like, that's like the breaking point. It's been at 35 ages. You know, it's horrible. And it's like, yeah, it's like, how is it the distribution of your test center from the previous years? Well, you know, what if last year, what happened last year, that was like, really bad for everyone. What if the stock market crashed and we went into a massive recession, and you live in a poor area, so everybody in your school was struggling because everybody's struggling generally. And it's like, you know what I um... In subject... I just, I remember who works and things like weekly homework, and there's always a spread, there are weeks where I would be the only person getting As and everybody else would get C's and DS, like, human beings are good at different things at different times of the year. Some people are sick one week and aren't sick the next week and do better, like what do the spreads of the test centers grades from previous years have any you know bearing here.

Pruthvi Mehta 42:04

There is like zero like causation.

Karel Green 42:08

No correlation meme. Like...

Sehher Tariq 42:12

Okay, here's, here's a suggestion, a controversial suggestion. So obviously, people who have who were in like a poor area and go to school in poor areas, they're, I guess they're less likely to be getting the top grades. But people who go to private schools they're more likely to get those top grades. When it comes to because when they do exam grading they have to do it on like a curve right? And this whole grade distributions about that, why don't they do it where poor schools are graded up and then private schools are graded down because surely that's more of a fairer assessment because of the the privilege that you're getting from the private schools and then because of the lack of resources you getting for the poorer schools if you truly wanted a grades that reflect people's situations that surely isn't that what you would do like I'm not some educational data, genius, whatever. But that makes more sense to me than grading someone from a poor school down.

Pruthvi Mehta 43:25

Yeah...

Sehher Tariq 43:25

As opposed to...

Pruthvi Mehta 43:26

That's that's how if anyone had any logic...

Karel Green 43:32

I think you're forgetting the key point of how dare people be poor and they should choke and die so like, I'm sorry that you have like you don't have the big five head brain that I have.

Pruthvi Mehta 43:47

Cosmic brain Karel over here. Yes.

Karel Green 43:50

Calling out the facts. And...

Pruthvi Mehta 43:53

I think like the like the last point, which is like which is, you know, you'd be looking they're looking at your your GCSE and key stage 2 like, like, assessment scores.

Sehher Tariq 44:03

Isn't there like a whole five years between your key stage 2 and your GCSEs?

Pruthvi Mehta 44:08

I'm crying. I'm crying. I'm literally in tears. This is awful. Like, I just might my dad's a teacher, right. And he like he has so many students that he's helped from getting Es and like Us at GCSE to getting A's and B's at A level right? Like the idea that

someone here because here's the thing like GCSEs, are sort of, they're that period of your life where you're going through like the worst of whatever teenage years have to offer you right? Like they are the they are like, you know, 13, 14... We all know what year 8s are like, we all know what year 9s are like. 13, 14, 15, 16 are the hell years.

Karel Green 44:21

Yeah.

Pruthvi Mehta 44:22

When you eventually maturing into an adult and you don't even know like, what you want to be doing at age you don't know anything. And it's the amount of like the amount of like GCSEs and stuff people have to do as well, I think is mad, right? Like it shouldn't you shouldn't have to take so much stuff that you'll just never need to know again and people don't deal people don't go like deal well with doing stuff they don't care about, which is you know, a lot of GCSEs quite frankly. Yeah, like, I did not care about World War Two. I still don't care about World War 2.

Karel Green 45:22

I didn't even do a history GCSE because history just made me sad. I did geography instead. Like, it was like, you know, I don't care. I don't care about R.E., I don't care about citizenship, like, and I have all those GCSEs.

Pruthvi Mehta 45:37

And the idea that you're like, you know, A level grade and physics could be reliant on your GCSE grade in history. That is just stupid. So dumb when you say it like that.

Pruthvi Mehta 45:49

I... it sucks. I already think that GCSE is too young to do this to start going off to little children, and be like, you need good GCSEs, so you can go to a good college slash sixth form, you can go to good university and get a good job, right?

Pruthvi Mehta 46:02

Yeah.

Karel Green 46:02

And it's like, but you know, that is the world we live in. And it's like, how am I supposed to go up to somebody in year nine, a God damn like 10 year old, how old are they in year nine? And be like, if you don't start working hard now, you're never gonna be able to have a good life because you can't get into a good college, you get into a good uni. And how especially now especially with universities and stuff, that stuff is harder for mature students, for people who perhaps just gone straight into work, or didn't do that well in school because school isn't for everyone, has no bearing on how smart you are, people learn in different ways, and then have come back in later life. But it um it took me a while, you know, God forbid, I didn't know I

wanted to do physics at age 18. So here I am at age 29. But yeah, you know, how do you go up to a child and be like, you need to start working hard now. Like God, give them give them a childhood like... Oh...

Pruthvi Mehta 46:51

Yeah, and GCSEs don't don't test like your actual ability in any of the subjects, right? What what it does is test on memorization and your ability to take exams?

Karel Green 47:01

Yep.

Pruthvi Mehta 47:01

That's all it does. It doesn't test your prowess in anything. Right? Like, you know, that's the reason you get people with like insane imposter syndrome later on in the life chain, or, you know, whatever learning is because it's like, you don't know at that point, you don't know if you've gotten there, because you actually good at it or because you're good at taking the test. And I think this entire test based, like just in a general way, this entire test centered on attitude, we have to like, learn-, you know, school education, and you know, after school education, academia and stuff is just like wild and wholely, terrible for people's like mental health. It's just It's so bad. It's so bad.

Karel Green 47:40

But yeah, I am. I also think like the idea of homework, like going to school all day, and then having to do work at home. You know, I know, as a student, we don't like it. But like, literally, the entire idea of homework is just horrific to me. I'm just like, just sending people home with more work to do. And it's like, led into how now people were like, I wish I had a nine to five and didn't have to go home and finish up all my work or I'd get fired from my job. It's worldwide as well. I know, Pruthvi, you've talked a lot about the work ethic in Japan how everybody just wants to die. Like...

Pruthvi Mehta 48:14

They're trained for that from like school age as well, like they'll have like after school work classes right where it's just it's like school, but like outside of school, you go to another classroom and work from like, 8 till 11pm or something. And it's Yeah, and it's like, these countries aren't faring any better than countries like, you know, in fact, doing worse sometimes in countries like Sweden, where you have like no homework, you have school, like four days of the week, right? You... like working hours in general are shorter for adults who are working in like an office or something. It's just like, we all know that the whole productivity equals number of hours worked is a scam myth. Yeah, it's just that to drive consumerism and just increase profits off capitalism. Like that's, that's it. So, I hate it.

Karel Green 49:05

Just to quickly talk about number two, because we skipped that even though it is equally as bad as the rest. It's like your rank within the test center. I remember us like yelling that universities used to rank their students. And now it's like they ask your teachers to be like, Who's the best? Who's the worst? Like, how can you ask the teacher to do that? These are people, students or people, like, you know, people have different again, different backgrounds and different experiences. I happen to have two living parents who are able bodied and were able to work my entire life. Not everybody is that lucky people die, people get sick. People have more siblings or less money coming into the household and living the worst areas, whatever else, like how can you ask them to like look at these students who they they literally know. And yeah, it's human nature. You're gonna like some of your students more than the others and rank how you think which one's the best And it's like, if somebody goes into an exam and get 70% of the questions, right, and somebody else goes into exam, you get 70% of the questions, right? They both deserve the same grade one doesn't come out on top of the other. Why do you like how do you rank that? And then what? And your assessment center grade? And it's, again, how can you rank assessment centers and my college was really good. They got me really good grades, everybody in there got really good grades, just because we were all black does not have anything to do with that. And literally in Lewisham, again, next to your biggest police station, and how can you rank people like this? So upset.

Sehher Tariq 50:44

I think it's, I think it's important to consider the biases as well, like, you kind of hit a hit on that a little bit there that teachers will have biases. So, for example, if you go if you're like, a black person who goes to a majority white school, I feel like you would be subject to a lot more bias, when you're in that environment. Well actually know, if you're just a black student, in general, like you already have, like these issues, when it comes to more black kids getting suspended from school than white kids, and mostly for ridiculous, stupid reasons, like their hair. And you're going to have teachers who have these biases and think that you're not as, quote unquote, smart as other students, because of your race, because this is something that has been ingrained into society for so long. So that was always going to be a factor that played into this whole, like, what does your teacher think you're going to get? Because there's so many kids out there, who they, they do... say they don't do well in their mocks, or their teachers think, oh, they're going to get all C's, and they end up getting great grades higher than that due to various reasons, it might just it might be because the the teacher was like, I don't think he or she, or they are going to be doing very well, because I don't feel like that, they try hard enough. I don't think they've got the smarts for it. But then they end up going into the, into the exams, and then and then they just, they get like, 90% or something it happens. And yeah, I've lost my train of thought, but you get what I mean.

Karel Green 52:34

Yeah, you're completely right. And it's just like, you know, I can... you were talking about that and I can think that the teachers that I didn't like, I'm sure you guys all

have teachers that you didn't like that I wouldn't trust them to give me my grade. And you're right, you know, there's biases in both ends, students, some students can do better than others, not due to their inherent smarts tm, but just circumstances and some not all teachers are good, sometimes are better than others and some will be like, I don't like this student, but to be fair, they would get an A. So here you go. And someone will be like I don't like this student, they're getting an F.

Pruthvi Mehta 53:08

Yeah, exactly. So many so many teachers are just sort very, like...

Karel Green 53:14

Petty.

Pruthvi Mehta 53:15

Very sort of... yeah petty, and they they take and they take into account like a student's perceived nature rather than their, like, actual nature because I went to like, I went to an all girls school, I know how, like some girls actually were versus how they like appeared in front of the teacher. Again, it's not a gender thing, right? But it's sort of like, you know, the whole like sociological aspect of like women like being better or like being forced by society sort of, like, you know, bluff their way into like a scenario, or, you know, makeup or pretend like they are put on the facade of character or something to like progress, right? That's something um, that can happen. And it's just sort of like, I know that there were like, students that were favored by teachers because they were just, you know, more outspoken and just like more talkative or whatever.

Karel Green 54:09

Yeah.

Pruthvi Mehta 54:09

If you didn't just like continuously run your mouth in class, you'd just be labeled as shy and not maybe not going to do that well in this sort of like essay section because for some reason, how much you do in class equates to how well you do in an essay. I don't know what that means. Yeah, like what I mean is just like some teachers are stupid and petty and like terrible, if you have if you have like, certain mental health issues. If you have like ADHD or other other conditions right, which affect your behavior which I behavioral difficulties, you are going to get destroyed in some classrooms when the teacher is like this level of petty economic, you know, perfect behavior all times regardless of your actual workability. And that's happened to like family members of mine as well. Like teachers aren't not biased, right? They're all... every teacher, I would say, including, you know, my own dad will probably have some sort of bias in them. Right? And it's about, you know, understanding that you can't put your entire faith in what a teacher thinks of you to grade that student. Like, exactly. That's not fair at all.

Karel Green 54:12

Especially with like, ADHD and stuff chronically under diagnosed in all girls and men of color. And...

Pruthvi Mehta 55:26

Yeah, exactly.

Karel Green 55:27

Including non-binary peeps and everybody else, but anybody who isn't like a cis het white male, just does not get diagnosed with anything. And yeah, it's horrific. And I wanted this brings up the idea. So something we thought I forgot about, which was really important in here that I remember this, like micro affirmations? Yeah, like white students, especially white male students, but white students in general, I'm sick of like giving white women a voice in there to be quiet.

Pruthvi Mehta 55:55

Don't give them half, don't give them half.

Karel Green 55:57

Exactly, they get away with a lot more, regardless of their ability. I'm sure you guys remember, you know, in lectures, where a lecturer would say something, and the white student would try it, you know, when they have like, a little mini argument with them. I remember, in our space time and gravity lecture, not to bring up the literal devil that was that lecturer. But like, I remember, somebody tried to say how, like, time isn't real. And it's like, I understand how you feel like, Oh, you know, you know how, like, clocks are a made up concept. And the fact that we have the 12 hour or 24 hours, we could get to change that. That's completely arbitrary. But time is real, because you can it can be like, measured and like, over time, like properties of things change. And its intrinsic to the universe, right? And he was trying to like, then I but time's just an arbitrary concept. And he was like, No, it is real. You know, the fact that we measure it...

Sehher Tariq 56:50

Was that the same person who, who was like, I don't believe in Einstein's theory or something like that.

Karel Green 56:57

I don't know. Maybe

Sehher Tariq 56:59

I just remember something like that. Like, we were learning about Einstein or something. And they were saying that they don't believe in it. And we're like, mate...

Pruthvi Mehta 57:08

Whole mood.

Karel Green 57:12

You know, they got the right. the right choice, the wrong way.

Pruthvi Mehta 57:18

Way the wrong time. That was, like 20 minutes my life I'll never get back. I can't forget like the the guy in um... It was like a sort of science communication module or something like that, Scientific Skills or something, who just started like arguing with the like, when we were all first years, I remember this. And he started arguing with the, with the lecturer about how he like he didn't think this is important and how he didn't want to be here and how he thought this entire module is a waste of time. And we were like two weeks into the year. And I don't know a single woman of color who would like to say that to like a lecturer... I just don't like...

Karel Green 57:57

Honestly, would a woman of color get away with it. I don't think they would either. Like they're quiet because they would get wrecked in the way but like a white boy doesn't. It's like...

Pruthvi Mehta 58:07

We're already ostracized. We don't need to make our conditions worse by like running our mouth off to a lecturer.

Karel Green 58:14

Like, yeah, everybody knows again, microaggressions everybody knows what they are. But micro affirmations, the fact that they can get away with little things all the time. Well, not even little things, big things. That's the thing, the idea I have said it before. The name behind micro affirmations and aggressions have been like ruined because it's not the actual aggression that's micro, it's the way that they get treated is micro. So like when people do bad things that are really actively bad, but then they are played down like oh, it doesn't matter because it's only a small whatever, but the person's like, No, I just got called a slur or whatever. You know, it's not the way it's not the aggression that is small. It's the way it gets treated. It should not be treated as micro and that's the affirmation. Like how dare they get away with this? It's so awful. I Oh, I hate them so much.

Pruthvi Mehta 59:02

And I think something else needs to be said is that you know, like white students when they do have privilege and power should realize that you know, they're not good like aside, you know, they're going to just progress and do whatever, right but they're not going to get anything special by like not speaking up for people who need need it right. And I guess like use your privilege in a way that benefits students of color, right, don't... you're not going to like... First of all, nothing's going to happen to you if you if you personally speak out because you know, you're like you're you're in a position of privilege, where nothing's going to be risked, like you're not going to

gain anything by following the rules to a tee 100% of the time thing and also you're not going to gain anything if you don't speak off people who need it, right? You're just actively like, by not doing anything, you just sort of letting you're enabling people who have privilege to abuse their power like you can't, you need to like speak up about it. Um, and I think like another thing that okay, well, I want to just wanna sort of change tact for a second. And just like another thing I've realized about, like what I've learned through this, through this whole process, and like what we've all done together, I think what I'd like to say is like something about the term BME and like POC just like, you know, it's like a little point, I just want to bring up, I think we've brought it up before, but it's sort of like I don't see in the whole, the whole idea behind the term like BME and you know, POC it sort of it again, lumps, people like, saying, you know, it lumps people who aren't white together, without taking into account their different sort of backgrounds, and how they've grown up and you know, stuff like wealth and class privilege, like all of this is sort of just completely ignored by the term, it's sort of, it's more than the fact that white people get to sort of, like, use it in a way to separate them versus us. Right.

Karel Green 1:00:57

Yeah.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:00:57

And it's sort of it's used in like, in terms of, like, diversity and statistics and stuff. It's like, you know, if we have half the people in this thing being white and half of people being people of color, right? It's like then that's it's like racism is solved everyone. Good job, right? Like, you know, it should, ideally actual equality would be like, you know, looking at each individual, different person in that group, who are different races, and go, Hey, okay, how can we improve the conditions and accessibility to resources for each of them? Right? Not just like, okay, let's just lump everyone who isn't white together and treat them like they're a monolith. Like, that's something that needs to be completely, like, just disregarded. But I think that I think it's something that it's really hard to avoid, because every single every EDI group or whatever, will have a acronym for POC, or BME or whatever, right? Like, there will always be, there will always be a need, in some sense to like, acknowledge the difference between people who have white privilege and people who don't. Um, and it's really and we are we all three of us sort of use the time POC all the time, right, we've done it several times in this episode alone. But I think it's something that's worth mentioning here, not something we're going to like immediately stop using or something. But it's sort of something that needs to be brought up. Because it's, it's more of a way of how individuals using it, it's a way institutions use it to be divisive, rather than help individual people using conversation. Right. Um, so I think that's what the main, like the main takeaway from that, not to do with individuals, but to do within how institutions use that time, instead.

Sehher Tariq 1:02:37

But I wonder if any of you have any, like, quick, like additions to that,

Sehher Tariq 1:02:40

I remember when. So when we try to come up with a name for for POCsquared, I remember googling it, and I saw some people saying that is problematic, as to say people of color, and then other people were saying that it's not problematic. And I think when I first started, I didn't see it as a problem. Because for me, that term was, and I don't know whether this might seem problematic status. I don't know what you guys think. But to me, that term it unifies people, you have these issues in a country like this against people who have that privilege. So I guess that kind of plays into the part where you're saying that when you said that, it's about how individuals use it. So when I use it individually, I use it as a, I acknowledge that put someone who is black will have different experience to me who is South Asian will have a different experience to somebody who's East Asian, somebody who's indigenous or native. They're gonna have different experiences. But to me, it's a unifying term, because I understand these issues, and I, I want to fight against it on behalf of each of these people. And... But yeah, I understand that when a white person uses it, it's a lumping term.

Karel Green 1:04:14

Yeah.

Sehher Tariq 1:04:16

So yeah, I just, I, I've learned about it a lot more. Especially since we started this that when words are used by different people, when it's used by somebody in a position of privilege is gonna have a negative connotation as opposed to when we're using it. But that that was something that I kind of, I've learned more as we've done all of this work.

Karel Green 1:04:47

Yeah.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:04:47

yeah. I think the whole on like the the resurgence of like Black Lives Matter and everything that came from it. It's sort of like throws into sharp relief for me because you see a lot of especially white white media outlets using the time People of Color when they should be using black, because the police violence affects black people more than any other ethnic group, right. And it's, it's just it was just it was like, it's all... I realized the whole the the harm done by using the time POC when it's not, it's not needed and it's not the right time to use, when I saw primarily white media outlets using it using that word using the term instead of black. Right. And I think that's something that was that was really just sort of like, ya know, this, the conversation, you know, as to when to use BME POC really was sort of came into its own was when, when that happened, right, and you're completely right, Sehher, it's literally a matter of like, like knowing, especially for, especially for white people who will a lot of the time use and sort of divisive, us versus them sort of mentality sort of time, right?

It's sort of, for them to realize that they need to be very careful when they use the term people of color, and they need to use it appropriately. Right.

Karel Green 1:06:05

Yeah.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:06:05

And same for also I'd like to say the same for people of color, who aren't black when they're trying to co-opt a black struggle, right? It's like, you know, if you're not the ones being affected by it, you don't need to use the term POC. Like, you know, that's not something you need to do. You have to, like, give the right demographic to the, the right term for the right demographic for the right, you know, struggle, like you can't, you shouldn't, you shouldn't, like just appropriate like a label, and think that, you know, it's going... use a label and then use it to, like, appropriate struggle, which is not yours, I think. And it's something that there needs to be a big discussion about it within communities of color, which aren't black, because we're the ones which are, you know, very likely to do this a lot of the time, like we've talked about, and I think we could have a whole episode on, on, like, the problems with, with individual communities regarding anti blackness and, you know, an example in like, certain, like non-Muslim communities about like, Islamophobia and stuff, right. Like, that's a whole that's, it's quite, it's gonna be like, quite heavy episode, I think. Um, but I think it's like, conversation definitely, definitely needs to like happen because it is really pervasive. And it's just, it's, it's a big problem that people don't like talking about, even in even in woke, you know, activism circles, people don't like talking about it. Um, so I think we should really have an episode where we discuss this, and it's yeah, it's something that needs to be done. IMO.

Karel Green 1:07:39

Add it to season two. Yes, I would. Yeah, I'd like to say I basically completely agree with everything everyone said, if you check the show notes and you guys right now, the talking points, I put in like a graph of like skin colors, I just quickly googled, and like, the first thing I'd like to say is that... Yeah, the initial point of like, EDI teams being like, okay, we need 50% BAME 50% White, to make sure diversity is, like saved, it's not how it works. Because, you know, as much as like, you know, our struggles do overlap, I'm just as different from you guys are South Asians, as I am from a white person, I'm just like, like, the removal for me, between like a Latina x person is the same as the removal of me from like a white person, and so on and so forth. And same for you guys. You know, we're all different races. And if you end up with like, 50%, white and 50%, BME, what you're doing is saying we've got 50% white, 2% South Asian, 2% East Asian, 2% African, 2% Caribbean, and so on and so forth. And that's not an equal number. Okay. 50 does not equal two. And that's that on that. So yeah, there is a lot to be said. I mean, like, there is loads of like anti blackness, including in the black community. Again, Pruthvi, if you can find the tweet, because I blocked the account, that stupid black love, garbage, where every single woman, you know, if you're a black woman, you have to be light skinned, or black women

are only allowed to date men, black men who have darker skin than them. A black man can date whoever they want primarily lighter skinned women of any race, as long as they're lighter skinned than them. That's just what's happened in this world. And I hate it.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:07:42

Yeah.

Karel Green 1:09:21

They can choke. That's all I'm saying.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:09:25

Yeah, exactly. And we can like go into this more and like, even now like Season Two beauty standards episode, right, yeah. Like we can talk about that as well. And how, you know, there's a lot of like, you probably it stems from anti blackness and like anti and you know, colorism in South Asian communities where you have like, the, the trend towards you know, like wanting to be fairer and like skin lightening creams and all that stuff, you know, also hailing from like, colonial standards of beauty because you know, how when the British came and people and you'd have like, you know, priests or whatever people who worked in doors right how to like fairer skin and these were people who interacted with the British Raj, and they benefited from the privilege from that privilege, right, and treated better by the British then, you know, people who would work outdoors and their farm laborers, you know, if we're going to bring up casteism into it, like the lower like castes, who would be most likely to have outdoor jobs and like, like labor jobs and stuff like that outdoors. And who would like obviously become like, darker. And yeah, like, that's, that's where that comes from, as well.

Karel Green 1:10:33

I mean, even with, like, the black lives matter as well, like the police officer, I, I'm not gonna say his name isn't like triggering for a lot of people. But the guy who got choked to death, like one of, not the police officer, the white one, but there was like a latinx was me. That was the name of a police officer. Yeah. Yeah. And then in the UK, I haven't seen anything about this. And I am not going to search for like, the other day, there was a police officer who was like doing something similar. And the other police officer, not the one literally on the neck, but the other one was an Asian man. And like, even people like Gandhi, who's like, lauded for being the ultimate like white tm, like activist because, you know, he wouldn't actually like to do stuff. He was just like, we should all get along with each other guys and not you know, actively being like, Hey, you know, we're going to defend ourselves against what you've done and actively stop you. And then it turns out that he like, hated how he was... He was lumped together with black people under the you know, person of color. How he was like a growth us super gross in other ways, not just the more racism might I add, but people have the links, no doubt.

Sehher Tariq 1:11:43

Yeah.

Karel Green 1:11:44

But yeah, and like how he was like, well, he was crap to his wife, wasn't he and

Pruthvi Mehta 1:11:48

Yeah.

Sehher Tariq 1:11:48

He was crap to a lot of people.

Karel Green 1:11:49

...If you're sick, you can die. Yeah. And he was just extremely anti-blacks for that, like darker skinned Asian people deserved what they got and stuff like that. And it's just like, struggles can overlap. But you can't, you know, part of the racism that you like you said that white people had that have stemmed into today, because again, racism doesn't disappear with time, it just morphs into whatever the newest trend is.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:12:13

Yeah.

Karel Green 1:12:14

It is the us versus them mentality of like, BAME versus white people? And it's just like, you know, how about you start seeing us as people, as who we are, and part of the work have been like, okay, I can't just lump all of the Browns together, tm, and just call it a day like we actually have to work on each individual group and recognizing that they have different struggles and taking the time, effort and care to address those because that's how it works. And I think we talked about this loads, how, especially in the main thing we talked about with getting a PhD, or they get their international students who pay loads of money from their partner University somewhere in East Asia and because of diversity statistics say they have 14% BAME, even though they're all Asian men, and literally nobody else, they do nothing else. And it's just like, that's not what diversity is.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:13:05

It's not.

Karel Green 1:13:06

You have to care about diversity and if you're taking the government money, and if you're laying down your life to make sure you have the Athena SWAN silver award, so the other white women could be like, we're doing so great for ourselves, then you have to actively do all of the diversity and not just the bits that benefit you. And part of that is addressing colorism so there's that.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:13:28

Yeah, like we can have like a whole like, like yeah, I mean, that's what that's one thing I you know, think like the discussion with like, racism and stuff, like a lot of it is like colorism, right. And I really, I really feel like like racism stems from colorism. You know, it was literally the mentality that all these people have skin that's darker than ours, and therefore we're better and we can treat them in X, Y, and Z terrible ways. Like that's, that's like the that's where racism and like really stems from. Um, and I think it's just yeah, we can like just discuss colorism and then you know, for ages because it's it's such a huge topic that really does affect so many aspects of our lives. Yeah, it's taken growing up to like realize that it's like all the stuff that happened to us when we were younger, right? A lot of it all stemmed from colorism and not just like racism in the broad sense, right? Yeah. Um, and I was I was obviously looking through the like the rest of the stuff and like, I've realized that one thing like one bullet point that hasn't been crossed through is just taking take relaxing habits into the classroom. And I don't know how to put that in.

Karel Green 1:14:36

Okay, well, I guess we'll go onto solutions maybe I don't know what this episode has been. We haven't talked about anything specific but like...

Pruthvi Mehta 1:14:43

I think that was the whole point. It was just meant to be a sort of like rundown of everything that we've learned and just stopping wanted to talk about that we haven't really addressed in detail in previous episodes, and maybe hit that future stuff. So yeah, solutions just let's fix all the stuff we've yelled about.

POC Squared 1:15:00

Solutions.

Karel Green 1:15:01

So, something that really stresses us out in uni, but I think we all agreed with was that like, long days, I can't believe a garbage lecturer wonce said to us that students were doing 30 hour weeks as if we do a nine to five. And you know what, looking back, that was awful. But we will also do more than that, because we were getting in like 8 then staying until 10, to like revise for exams or whatever, with no pay, because we were paying to be there. And it was just like, there was never enough time, there are some days where our timetable was awful. And there wasn't even my time to like eat and relax. So...

Pruthvi Mehta 1:15:32

Oh I remember those...

Karel Green 1:15:33

Stress eating trying to eat crisps in Electra, so I didn't literally pass out,

Pruthvi Mehta 1:15:37

While doing a problem sheet at the same time.

Karel Green 1:15:41

I remember off, you know, remember, like in our, like Astro lectures, and how we got run to the shops that I get food in the break, and then come in and like try and eat as quietly as possible, because you never, you can never tell if the lecturer would be okay with it or not. And there were some lecturers that would just moan and be like, Oh, you shouldn't be eating or whatever. But you know, you literally didn't have like a you had woke up at 6am and you weren't really hungry, but you choke down like an apple or something for breakfast. And then you haven't eaten all day. And it's just like they're gonna moan at you no matter what. So you might as well eat something and not like feel like you're gonna faint. So like, listening to this, like let people eat what Shut up, nobody cares. A crisp packet isn't gonna kill you, like, let your students eat.

Sehher Tariq 1:16:30

Especially, especially if it's a three hour long lecture or lab.

Karel Green 1:16:34

Yeah, we had to... We had feedback, we have to have formal feedback and moan to lecturers that they were going straight through like into a one hour lecture a 10 minute break and then a two hour lecture and we were literally just like can we please have two 10 minute breaks not just one.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:16:50

I still think that's too little like...

Karel Green 1:16:52

It is, it is!

Pruthvi Mehta 1:16:54

Oh God like I remember like doing masters year when I had like some I had like particle physics lectures at UCL they were three hours long. We also had to convince the lecturer to do like two 10 minute breaks but really there were two 5 minute breaks. It was horrendous. And like beforehand I had to like eat my lunch on a cramped train to like Gower Street wherever UCL is like trying to shove a baguette in my mouth in a cramped train under someone's armpit while crying. And then like because of how long the lectures were, I'd literally my lunch right and then I'd be awake for the first lecture right, the first hour and then I'd, like, because the blood sugar would spike in the second, I fall asleep in the second lecture and then wake up in the third lecture having no idea what happened or where I was. It was like an out of body experience. Everyone Wednesday I just die.

Karel Green 1:17:50

Stop eating an entire baguette.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:17:52

No.

Karel Green 1:17:55

Eat a vegetable like put a vegetable in the baguette, Pruthvi.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:18:04

Eating a baguette on the train was like the nicest part of my day.

Karel Green 1:18:09

I got to eat. Thank the Lord like oh...

Pruthvi Mehta 1:18:12

God, how did we survive?

Karel Green 1:18:14

Why do you oh.... I literally came out so sick of my degree, literally physically ill, because I just had no time to breathe. It was just so bad.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:18:22

I had like, nothing's like TMI, but like I think I've told I've told you guys but like I literally every exam season in undergrad and in school my period was just like stop for like three weeks straight. I don't have an underlying condition or PCOS or anything, it would just stop due to sheer stress. And I'll be like Oh yeah, that's normal. That's a normal stress time. It's exam time. For me, this is normal. And I literally accepted it as normal. It's like so messed up.

Karel Green 1:18:46

Well, if we want to get to worse TMI, I literally have PCOS and I didn't have a period for ages. And I was just so, there was no time, there's actually no time for me to go to the doctor, almost like because I forget about it for literally months. Because again, we you know, I don't know how we can make this about our like STEM academia podcast, but the, you know, period poverty, and how nobody talks about it meant that I would literally just forget that we are supposed to be having them. And then I thought oh, I should make a doctor's appointment. And then they'd be like, here's four homeworks and you've got an exam, a midterm, and I was just like, well, I'll wait till next month.

Sehher Tariq 1:19:22

I remember talking about this with you. And I was like, what you haven't been to the doctors. I was like so shocked. But it just needs to it made sense. Like, of course you haven't.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:19:33

Yeah, I'm here. What do you mean? Like I've been here all day, what do you need? So maybe I don't know. So biology is science. So let's have an episode on period poverty. Let's do that. Well, I think I think that's a really good idea because like I also want to talk about how like, the human shaming happens especially in countries in the global south and how like, as a as like a South Asian like woman. I know that Hinduism in particular, like has really bad views women who have periods to the point where you just can't go and you just can't worship in the temple, because deemed unclean, right? Well, according to some scripture, you fall to the lowest caste and therefore you can't go into like a temple. And it's like insane because like, my temples just don't have like period bins and stuff. And like, you know, they just there's no sanitary product, or like bins, put them in. So like, every time there's like an important Festival on my period, I'm like, guess I'm at home, I guess.

Karel Green 1:20:27

Terrible, and it's like, awful. And it's like the idea, especially during your physical health during your degree, especially for like disabled people stuff. It's like it goes beyond. Again, go. I just, I'm just coming for white women today. But it goes into your knee, oh, need to take a break and meditate and blah, blah, blah. I'm just like, those things are good. But like people who have actual problems, Becky, like your literal physical health, like, again, I can't believe we were choking down chunks of meat in the 10 minutes we had between lectures then just clenching because we didn't want to have to make the entire row stand up so we could go to the loo. It was just so bad.

Sehher Tariq 1:21:05

You just had a random thought, an idea for another point that we could put in a future podcast is the the appropriation of yoga.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:21:15

Oh, yeah.

Sehher Tariq 1:21:16

Yeah. When you said meditation, I just thought of, oh, white women and yoga. And I was like, damn, they've done so much stuff to yoga. And we used to, we just need to unpack that. There's like, yeah.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:21:28

Should we go on to solutions now?

Karel Green 1:21:30

Because this was supposed to be solutions? I think I might put...

Pruthvi Mehta 1:21:33

Oh, yeah. Okay. Yeah.

Karel Green 1:21:34

..being in before this. So we shall see. But one of the big things that I wanted to bring up and this I don't know how, you know, practical this is because, again, you know, how am I supposed to get all universities to do this. But I still think that significant change is worth more than getting a top mark, somebody who's come from a really stressful, horrible background has come from getting like C's in A levels to getting like a 2:2 or a 2:1 is worth infinitely more than somebody got A's instead of A*s in A levels and got a really high first. Yeah, you cannot change my mind. And I think, you know, that goes into the BME attainment gap with how like, in not in like, exam, because those marked somewhat, you know, somewhat blind, but in like coursework and stuff where you see it a lot. But you should see how hard people are working and base their grades on that. Not on, you know, what they get at the end, like, are they engaging? Are they doing the best? You know, oh, god, I'm still thinking about my master's project. I'm still bitter about that, you know...

Pruthvi Mehta 1:22:40

You should be, you should be, it's daft, it's daft. And also, just like another thing I want to bring up because he said that, the whole like, we talked about the whole exclusivity and stuff of like Russel Group, and whatever. I also think the way especially university degrees are awarded are like really dumb, like we talked about before, but like, there's no difference in someone getting like a 70% and getting a first and a 69.99 and getting a 2:1.

Karel Green 1:23:04

You cannot change my mind.

Karel Green 1:23:07

It's just like, exactly, when I when I got like, I got like 69 and like one of the years of undergrad, and I was like, You know what, I did not want a full high first for this year. I am happy with the 69% because it is nice. And yeah, like I it's just it's so it's so dumb. It's so trivial. Also, different universities have different ways where they like they round for some subjects or like some universities will round up a 69, like a six and like a 69.2 to be first but some universities will keep a 69.2 to be a 2:1. And it's like it's insane. There is nothing there like oh, exactly. And it's so tricky, especially when I was going to PhD interviews, like universities do not know what other universities do. I've done. Before my a PhD I did zero coding, right? None, right? Nottingham gives you loads of coding, right? And you know, the degree was just worth the same and it's just like, I did parallax for like seven years in a row, sweetie, you're like hell, like. So it's simple. And it's like, you know, not all degrees are the same. So like, yeah, like this grading system literally doesn't mean anything because they don't know what you know, like, they don't know what you don't know. It's nothing.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:24:30

So yeah, I think like a way to like, yeah, fix slides, just get rid of Yeah, get rid of the Degree Classification system. Just have your grade your final grade be the grade that you get, like, you know, if you get 69.9, put 69.9 there and don't don't call it second or first or whatever. There's no point. Just call it what it is. Because that way it's literally fair.

Karel Green 1:24:52

Exactly. Again, it's like the idea especially because it's still true PhD to a certain extent much less, but like having to like be at lectures and things really is not good. We have it here, especially for people who have chronic illnesses, disabilities, mental health issues, we had a lot of friends who've literally got kicked off our degree, because they were sick for a long period of time. And therefore, what a load of lectures even though they were literally recorded, and then we're just like, what they were just like, you didn't come to the degree, so you're getting kicked out, even though they literally paid nine grand, like make that make sense. And it's just like if we're adults, right? Because you start your degree at age 18 ish, that's the time and it's like, if you're a full adult, right? You should just be like, record the lectures or whatever put them online, people can come if they want, or they can watch them online, don't do an attendance register. We're not children, you know, you don't need to make sure it's all in here. So we're not like dying on the streets, because that's what schools are for. And then like just mark their grades and you know, what, if they're not doing well find out why. You know, a lot of people get sick, stuff happens to human beings who would have guessed. Loads of reasons those reasons behind that not everybody who gets a 40% doesn't care. Like what's what is going on. Like get rid of registers and attendance measures and compulsory things, just get rid of them. Just be like, here is the information, here are the resources, do with them what you will, then you'll see all the gross, white boys and don't show up and then don't do anything aren't as good as you think they are.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:26:30

Yeah, like we're literally students paying for like a service, right? Like, we shouldn't be treated like children or work mules or whatever. Yeah, like, you know, like, and another thing is just like, you mentioned the whole, like, being anti ablest, it's literally it's true, like the the, you know, even even our universities who are Russell Group universities, where they have nothing in place for people who, um, you know, maybe cannot make it to a lecture. I remember when I had like dislocated my kneecap, and I literally had to be at home because I couldn't I could not walk I could not go to university. Right, so I was completely reliant on like, terrible photocopied lecture notes. And like, the vid the video, most of my most of my modules, I remember didn't have a video like, you know, recording setup, right? Or the one that I did had video and I'm only joking. So it was literally recorded half a board, or half a board of equations. Like I bought it was it was all for these we go to we go we went to a really good university, right? Queen Mary is a really good university and is still yet was completely complete failure on that front. Um, so yeah, like, you know, in order to make, like, just academia better universities, and that

seems to be trying to make sure that students are catered cuz that would literally improve the grades produced right and improve experience, improve the, you know, rating of the university, it'll just make things better.

Karel Green 1:27:58

Yes. Speaking of that, and being anti-ableist, I remember especially there was like a guy who was only in our first year, and then I never saw him again, who like, so again, the recordings were like, really choppy or bad. I remember, and you have to like blast them up to hear them. So you know, if you're hard of hearing your erect guy was talking about, you know, he had significant sight issues, and had very large thick glasses, and just could not see things that were too far away, and he sat right at the front on his own. And it's just like, that's not a way to learn. That's not something that's happy. That's not like how you get to do things. I remember I will give them credit, they did have lifts, the lifts are always terrible. It was who knew if they were working, especially the ones that were available for all people, those will take forever to come. So again, so if you have any kind of like a walking issue, that was bad. I remember, there was a building, especially that, so we have a friend who has been hidden disabilities. And one of them is that their spine, they were just born with like a wrecked spine, basically. So they have really bad back pain. So even though they can walk, not that they have to justify this may I add, but even though they can walk, you know, there are there are significant problems there. I remember once we had a lecture in the law building, I was holding her bag because she was having a bad day. And she was waiting for the lifts and we could go stairs, and some crispy, ugly white woman lecturer was just like, um, students aren't allowed in the lift and she had to be like, you know, I'm, I'm disabled and I'm just like, I'm literally holding her back. She has, she's having a bad flare up with her spine. And they're just like, okay, so she can go in. And so I you know, I had to let her go in, put her bag on the floor and and like get upstairs, and it was a mess, because again, she couldn't lift the bag, so she had to keep the door open for anybody else who have spine issues just had to wait. Pick up the bag, out of the lift, though, then we could go to the lecture and it's just like, you know, in... You've seen images of people in wheelchairs were like at the top of the stairs because they come into the lecture hall. And it's just it's just awful. It's just so bad. You have to I, we talked about how there's no BME anywhere. And that's true. But like, there's also no disabled people, even. And I would not that we have to rank things, you know, I'm not a teacher. But, you know, I'd say there are even fewer disabled people, especially like, severely disabled. People in wheelchairs, for example, and stuff like that, who like really, really, really can't even one step in academia. And it's because it's like they're excluded, because everything's the worst. So you need to actually think about that more, because there's no way if I couldn't see very well, there's no way I'd be sitting at the front four meters away from the rest of the lecture.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:30:48

Exactly. So isolating, it's literally literally physically isolating. And obviously, mental isolating, as well. And I think, I think we may have, like, touched on it before, but I

think it's like, it's a separate issue. I think that, you know, we've we like, both... You mentioned, Karel, how, like, the Queen Mary and just undergrad just did not prepare you for like, how different a PhD is to a PhD work is to like undergrad work. And, you know, like, we like, again, same thing with me, right? Like, like, neither of us learn to code in any formal sense. There was no actual continuous um module, like not just a one off random c++ module, right? On how to code and it's just coding is such an integral part of any, any scientific PhD now, right, like, learning to use Linux, which is like a, you know, an operating system designed for running and producing code. It just wasn't even taught to us, right. I like not even...

Karel Green 1:31:50

Didn't even learn anything in Python, which is all I use, like...

Pruthvi Mehta 1:31:54

Yeah, yep. Like I, uh, yeah, like, it's just, it's really, it's really bad. And it's, even if we weren't learning the right language, right? It's literally like the mindset of a coder is something that is so difficult to pick up.

Karel Green 1:32:06

Yeah. Exactly.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:32:07

No one tells you how to do that. And undergrad does not prepare you for that. It's so theory based and like, again, I'm still upset that the end of our first year here, we have to go to a high energy physics Summer School. Right? And that is theory. We've done a whole year of like, you know, experimental PhD work, right. And we're sent off to summer school, which just touches on theory that we'll never learn again...

Karel Green 1:32:29

Exactly.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:32:30

One, like it's just like a hellish nightmare experience, we're meant to do theory, you haven't touched in, you know, ever, if you haven't done any advanced quantum stuff in your, in your fourth year, like, you know, over over a year for me who had done some of that stuff, but it's been ages, right. Like, in front of a board in front of people, which is another can of worms, right like that, you know, that's really bad for people's mental health, I have anxiety and you know, doing stuff on a blackboard in front of people is just the worst. It's not something that is conducive to PhD research. It just doesn't matter. And yet we had to go to and I just wanted to complain about it. But yeah, basically, PhDs just don't, are just, you know, there's so different to we do undergrad and no have passed before. And I think we should have like another episode on that.

Karel Green 1:33:16

Yes.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:33:17

I just I hate it. I hate how different everything is, I hate how learning physics is not the same as doing physics. And how no tells you until you've been scammed into something. Like talk it out for two more years. So difficult.

Karel Green 1:33:32

Like I'm I'm at a point now where it's like, I have so much data because I'm using that massive images of the night sky, they've been looked at for several hours to get the to get as much information as possible, that I'm running code on... Login through the Linux terminal, and like run your code in there. And it's got a bunch of like cores, because like, I'm getting memory errors on my personal computer, because there's too much data. And like, you know, that is just a whole other world away from doing a degree, like I'm dealing with, like massive arrays of just information I have to keep track of. I'm working with thousands of galaxies, I have to make sure they're the same one. So I get the correct numbers on the right. And it's Yeah, like, don't get taught it....

Pruthvi Mehta 1:34:16

It's all about data management a lot of times. You're completely right, it's like, I'm not very good at managing like anything. You know, I like I like learning stuff. I like reading stuff, you know, but it's like being admin for data is not something I've signed up to. And yet here we are, like...

Karel Green 1:34:32

I'm admin for data. Exactly.

Sehher Tariq 1:34:34

Yeah, I think. So when it comes to degrees as well.... When they do that one module of c++ or they do Python now, I think it Queen Mary, and they don't teach you good practice, either. So when I went to, so I did a job, a software job after like a year after I graduated, and when I was doing that, like I was bad at coding, I don't know when the know, why I took that job. But I did that. And then they were teaching you that there's like certain ways of writing your code, that's good practice and stuff like that. And I had no clue that that was a thing. Like, the main thing I knew from when I did c++ was that some people like you putting in notes, putting comments in your code, and some people are like, if you're, if you put in comments in your code, then then your code is rubbish, because people can't, can't tell what you're doing straight from the code. And like, I didn't like that. I like comments.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:35:33

That's, that's awful. Comments are literally vital, like both like, you know, I have to work with software, like which is which was written in the 70s and 80s. Right? Because it's written in Fortran 77. Without and there are no comments in it. And we, you know,

I, it's, it's really it's like the opposite of what whoever the hell was talking to us, like said, right, like...

Sehher Tariq 1:35:53

Yeah.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:35:55

Good, good code is commented, yeah, it's clearly sectioned and commented, right? Like, what? Who on earth isn't just like, oh, you're meant to know what it is immediately. But no one can do that. No one can do that. And coding isn't like, coding isn't like reading a book. Right? You need to you need to have statements telling people what, what does what I'm going to I'm going to scream.

Karel Green 1:36:16

Yeah, I kind of, like there's a reason they're called coding languages. Like I there is a lot of stuff that I could do in Python that I cannot do in like, C#, for example, right? You are literally literally learning a new language like human beings. We have words for things. Because we need to know what they are. Yeah, they called them a coding language, because they are a language. Like, if you...

Pruthvi Mehta 1:36:43

imagine having like a Spanish like textbook, you're learning Spanish, and they just it has everything in Spanish. And there's no English translations, what you're learning

Karel Green 1:36:52

That's not how anything works, I'm yelling, I'm yelling. Yeah, sorry. Oh, my God.

Sehher Tariq 1:37:00

No. So it is alright because the whole point was that they liked putting comments in. But some people are a bit like basically up themselves, that they don't like having comments in there. But in terms of General, good practice, when it comes to doing coding, if you so if you're not taught that at uni, and then you go into a job straight after uni, and then you're doing coding. And they have like, they follow this whole good practice thing, but then you're just like writing code, and you're like, Okay, this works, it's fine. You're not going to be seen in a good light. So like, why are you not teaching students good practice when it comes to coding. So it's like, that's a skill that you need. as well. Like, if there's a standard way, if there's a way that you can improve your code that you that you've written instead of just like teaching people and then telling them to code until it works, if there's a way of making it better through good practice, and all of these, you know, ways of writing code and why you're not teaching that at that level. It's just disadvantage in people. Again.

Karel Green 1:38:10

A problem I had at my like end of year, like progression interview thing was that I spent so much of my first year my PhD just learning how to code, that I didn't

actually like I just about got like one graph that had like a result in it. Because like, in especially in like, you know, there's so many basic things that you could just teach to an undergrad that will just be so helpful. Like in astronomy, for example, you obviously, when you have pictures of the night sky, you could take a picture of your phone and have like a PNG or JPEG. And that's pretty but if you want the actual science to be encoded into the image, so you can get like the magnitude, the the luminosity, or whatever else he wants, so you can do science with it, this stored in these physical fits images, so you can have this specific Image Viewer, and it opens fits images, so you could see the images and then each pixel has like the information in that pixel. And it's like, that's all astronomy is. HST or any telescope, if all it does is print out fits images, I didn't know anything about how to help open one, I don't know how to like cut out, like if I wanted to chop out a specific galaxy, or star, I didn't know how to do that, you know, I don't know where to find the numbers because like, you could go open them in another thing that allows you to like see the tables, because it will be like okay, here's all the magnitudes, here's the ID that each one here's all the you know, all the other stuff, you know, and it's just like, why why wouldn't you teach them how to do that, because that's how like the science is done. And I know there's loads of other basic things and all the other different subfields that would need that and it's just like you don't get taught any of it in undergrad. You know, like when we talk about like trusting your feelings we mean it, that six page homework where you you derive some garbage thing, but like fudging and integration by parts is not what you're going to be doing your PhD, I don't go into my supervisors meeting and sit down and solve the Schrodinger equation inside an infinite well inside a finite world outside in an infinite well, right? You know, what, what do I do you know, I don't do that you put it into a computer and you iterate it over your thousands of data that's like... So upset.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:40:23

It's like sort of like it's really geared towards like, maybe a theory PhD, but even then, like, I, I doubt it's even that useful cuz even theory and even theoretical PhD stuff will have some sort of, like computer components, right? Like, it's not like no, not even any, like theory PhD is solely done on a whiteboard.

Karel Green 1:40:43

Yeah.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:40:44

Like it's, a lot of it involves, like, having a theoretical simulation that you come up with, and then sort of, like looking at how it works and some software or something like that. Like you... We live in a we live in like an age of like, technology literally everywhere. You can't like just pretend that like, you know, physics has no place in like tech and stuff like that, when obviously it doesn't like, and I was... Yeah, it's just it's really, it's really like, it's just it's so bad. The entire approach to it's so bad. It's so theory heavy. It's so old. And like redundant. Again, I don't know why we had to have like several modules on quantum physics that taught us the exact same thing.

Karel Green 1:41:25

Yeah, like every single astronomy module, I did have parallax in it, because I know how to, like invert one number like... Hate it here. Oh, my God, I am. So just to get through the last of these solutions. I just wanted to say like, especially in the UK, again, when we took to Chanda, she said that they don't have it in the US. And I don't know how well this goes because it's like, I want them to get rid of self funded PhDs. Institutions should not have positions that they are willing to pay for, like if you're going to pay some people to do a PhD, but then won't pay others because they wouldn't give you money. Like what what does that mean? No, like, if you're, this is a job, like you are willing to pay people to do it. So it is a job. But then also, like the ultra rich, right? should not be getting funded PhD over the the ultra poor. So...

Pruthvi Mehta 1:42:21

Exactly. I don't care if you literally better on application. Like if you are like wealthy enough, not just to like scrape by doing a self funded PhD. But like, you know, can actually like really more than afford doing a self funded PhD, you can do a self funded PhD, you should not be allowed to apply for any funded PhD place.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:42:40

Yeah.

Karel Green 1:42:42

And it's like, I don't know how those two things connect of getting rid of self funded PhDs, but also not letting the rich get away with getting more money. But you know, that's for somebody else to work out.

Sehher Tariq 1:42:53

I think it's just more that if you're not going to get rid of self funded PhDs, that's a solution you should have where, where people who can afford it, pay for it.

Karel Green 1:43:01

Yeah.

Sehher Tariq 1:43:03

But if they're going to get rid of it all, then it has to be it will be like an even playing field. Hopefully, it should be.

Karel Green 1:43:10

I also think self funded PhD should be put to the same standard as non self funded PhD. So maybe like, I don't know. So it's important that the department has the say over who gets to work there or not. But also, maybe they shouldn't, because again, like I I will never forget Cardiff who didn't even give me an interview. But I accidentally put down because they had a really bad application process that I was self funded somehow. And they called me up before anyone else even got in

contact with me. And it's just like, oh, if I'm doing self funded, all of a sudden, they'll speak to me on the phone before anyone else. But if I wanted to be paid, they wouldn't even like let me in.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:43:48

Yeah.

Karel Green 1:43:49

It's like, no, if you have a self funded student, they should be put the exact same standards as non self funded. And I don't know if there's a way to do a bit of like, blind, have all of this self funded, and the people wanting funding in the same pot, and then being like, Okay, so here's like, our top five people. And it could be like, Okay, we've got, we've got five funded positions, but three of the people in your top five, are self funded. So now go down the list and get three more kind of thing. Yeah, I just, they should not be able to get away with being like, we will take anyone who's self funded as long as they have the minimum entry requirements. But if you haven't, like climbed to heaven, and licked God's feet himself, we're not getting into this PhD getting paid. Like, like, That's not fair. That is not fair. There should be like a rank for people from first to last. Here's who we want. And then you know, the top five people who can't afford it, get the funding and the party, you know, and whoever else is in there who could self fund just gets to come. And if there's number 10, and they're self funded, but they're number 10. They're not getting in, like that's what that means. You cannot change my mind. Right.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:44:55

And there needs to be a lot more support for international like students right like I mean, because you have international students who have a, have a some have a grant or stipend or something from their, like home country to come here and like work right and do a PhD. But they will come with a proviso that they have to go back to their country and work there for minimum time after the PhD. Yeah, um, and like, that's a bit that's been messed up. Also, I hate the way that all of academia is just sort of in English all the time. Yeah, so I remember talking with I've broken off contact with EDI department now. But one of the one of the first people I talked to with it for the school of physics a Liverpool, he talks about how like he, he literally gave an example of a student who was an international student, wasn't very good at English, because, you know, honestly, if I had to go to like China, and learn Chinese and like, do a whole PhD, then a different country in this language in the other language, and I would just be suffering, right. So fair enough, right? Yeah. Yeah. To do his, like, his thesis had to be written in it, or he had to do is like viva and it like, so much so much terrible, terrible stressful stuff, which has no reliance on like, how good their PhD actually was. It's just the department word willing to like, look into like a translator or someone to grade a PhD that was non English, like, what on Earth. I want to correct, I don't think it was... It wasn't a school of physics, but I think it was somewhere the School of like, Mathematical Sciences or something. But like, it's Yeah, like, it's really, it's just really, really awful. I don't I don't like how all major

publications are in English. I don't like the fact that, you know, I work with a literal with a Japanese collaboration. I don't like how I'm, like, all the like, all the presentations are in English, okay, they're all like that, pretty much all the collaborators are fluent in English, right? But it's, it must be difficult to think and communicate in a not in an entirely different language, with a completely different language structure. I don't like the fact that you know, even the presentations that students or professors from Western institutions give or don't have, like Japanese like subs or something like that. And again, it shouldn't be on like students to have to do Japanese subs for their own, you know, presentations and stuff, because that's enough stressful already. But departments aren't hiring translators to go with people on like, you know, conference trips or whatever to like, help translate or something like that. There's like nothing to bridge the language barrier between different like collaborations with in different parts of the world. And there's, like, there's no attempt, aside from like, five, basic, you know, like, one off like language courses for each student of different like backgrounds. And obviously, they cost ridiculous amounts. Like I was looking into learning Japanese at Liverpool, they literally decided against it, because it's just far too expensive. And the concession for student wasn't that much at all. And it's, it must be even, like, you must be way worse for like, like international students who come here who don't speak English, right? To like, have to pay for it, especially as an undergrad, undergraduate budget, whatever have to pay for it.

Karel Green 1:48:21

And then you're right, it brings in the more bias in that the ones who can afford to pay for it are the only ones who come like...

Pruthvi Mehta 1:48:28

Exactly, exactly. International international students who have like massive grants, for example.

Karel Green 1:48:33

Yeah.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:48:34

Um, or who are wealthy anyways, to begin with, who can afford to come over? Like it benefits them. You know, it's a struggle still for them. But it's obviously not as much of a struggle compared to someone who like can't afford the language courses and stuff.

Karel Green 1:48:47

Bringing back the no correlation meme, there is absolutely no correlation between your proficiency in English and like, how smart you are, I know this because I know exactly nothing and English is the only language I speak. And not to bring white men into this safe space. But you know, like Einstein was German, you know, most of these big tm scientists we know about spoke other languages floated them like Italian or French or whatever else I just there is there's absolutely no need for stuff to only be in

English, it's just like a fallback of the you know, colonialism, forcing everyone. And you know, it helps if everybody can speak one language, but there is a reason that the language is most commonly English. And there is like...

Pruthvi Mehta 1:49:36

Yeah.

Karel Green 1:49:40

And it's just like, I cannot you know, I was even thinking I thought about this in my degree when we had like, friends from other countries and also like, I don't know how people do like a really technical or anything, learn anything in their second language. It's insane. It's just, it's so hard and it's I just I have so much esteem for anybody who does that like it's Yeah, it's Just amazing. And especially as people grew up in England, we never, we never get to taught other languages. I think that's one of the big failings of the British education system.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:50:08

Exactly. Or in any kind of like, serious way, right? And like you learn, you know, you don't even have to do a language, language GCSE at GCSE, and even then that's like shapes and colors and stuff.

Karel Green 1:50:20

Yeah. Exactly.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:50:21

That's only to like, go abroad and have fun or holiday. Like, it's nothing. It's always Western languages, you notice that? It's always European languages?

Karel Green 1:50:30

Yeah. French and Spanish.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:50:33

Like only recently did my like and you know those countries are affluent to begin with. Right? Yeah. And even now, they started putting Mandarin in some schools, right. And even then, China is still economically a lot better off than other countries, which aren't in the like, Western Hemisphere. You know, like, you know, they're not going to start teaching Hindi or whatever, in like British schools anytime soon and I wonder why, like,

Karel Green 1:50:59

No, it just is so bad. It's so bad. And it's like, it needs to be in like, honestly, it needs to be in primary school, we know how hard it is to do a language when you're older. And especially like, especially in secondary school, when they're just like, you need to get 16 GCSEs. And this reminds me, I forgot to say, especially A levels. When I did my A Levels. In my first year, I had January and June exams. In my second year, I

only had June exams. Now A levels, they've moved all of your a level exams at the end of your second year. So you have one chance, and you know, you have to like pay a bunch of money, which, which is why I think they did it. Because before you could, it wasn't as much money. And you could do like more resits and have more chances. And it's just horrible that they were just like, how dare we give people chances? God forbid, one year you happen to be sick during your exam. So you resit it, you know, a couple months later, but no, now it's all at the end. And it's a lot to memorize, try to remember like, how many ailable exams? Did you have to do like total? Like 20? I don't know, like five like different? You know, at each different thing?

Pruthvi Mehta 1:52:04

You're right, you're right. Thinking about it, like separate exams is insane.

Karel Green 1:52:07

It's literally like and you know, GCSE those? I have I have like, five, like almost 20 GCSEs. And most of those have more than one exam, right? Yeah, you know, trying to do all of that at the end of like, the course or wherever it's horrible. And again, trying to do all of that at the end of you trying to remember years of work. And then you have to do it in a second language at all, you'll get it wrong, is just insane. You know, if the answer to something is the orange, and I put down the word orange in Spanish, French, English, Mandarin or whatever, as long as it refers to the right color, it should not matter. Like I God, I hate it here. I hate it here so much. Why would they do this?

Pruthvi Mehta 1:52:55

Um, and like, yeah, I think I think just success to cross off like the last thing in the solutions, but they just basically sort of ties together all the systematic forms of systematic racism is that you know, I think one of the key things anyone can do is just an analyse your own politics and do your own research, right? We've always said, right, like, stop relying on women of color, who already stressed in your department to do the majority of EDI work if you are a white, cis het, priveleged person, you are also capable of using the internet researching things on your own like we will have to do.

Karel Green 1:53:29

Yeah, cuz that's what we did.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:53:31

Exactly, exactly. And like, you know, when you come... There are loads of free decolonial resources out there, right, make them accessible for everyone in the department, give them out so that they literally have to read them by...

Karel Green 1:53:46

Making it mandatory. I've said before in previous episodes, and I will say it from the day I die, I did not emerge from my mother's womb, with critical analysis on race, I

just experienced racism. And because nobody else, no white person would teach themselves, I would have to go out and learn why this was happening or just not be able to do what I wanted, which was study physics. So guess what, I had no money. So I use the internet that my parents paid for Googled things and learnt it that way. And that's what literally every single like marginalized person has done. So you can do it to you. Like it's not impossible.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:54:25

On the issue of funding, I think, you know, sort of like trying to you know, like we talk about how the importance of like grass roots like stuff, is the idea of like, you know, like getting away from funding bodies, and particularly in terms of funding, right, like, I'm funded by the ST-, I'm actually half funded by STFC and half from university. But I think you know, there's so much more to be gained from like making, you know, money from the university like for me, like internal like, university, like the fact that funding pools the fact they're just taking like 9000 a year from students. The money is going...

Karel Green 1:54:58
9250

Pruthvi Mehta 1:54:59

Damn you're right. 9250... From students they're taking that from students, all the students in university every every year, right? It's not I think after the total amount, it's every single year, money goes somewhere, you know, you can literally use, you can use that money to fund PhD students instead of going, Hey, you're being funded by this other organization or, you know, go get go get some funding yourself before you apply, or something ridiculous like that. Like, you know, universities have money. We all know Dean's and chancellors are paid in insane amounts, you know, in a millions, the millions, right...

Pruthvi Mehta 1:55:36

Have you seen their offices. Have you seen how it was on Twitter this morning, apparently, so Queen Mary, under the guise of the A level results has made 500 more spaces available on like a bunch of different courses. And then everybody including the lecturers are just like, we literally don't have the time, or the resources to like mark 500 more students, like work. And then everybody's like yelling, because they're just like the, like the dean or whatever, just wants more money. And he's like, terrible, and it's just going up in flames. So I hate that university. And they're the worst. And yeah, they're just sucking more money for themselves basically, like...

Sehher Tariq 1:56:12

I knew that they were going to do this as well, because a lot of the universities when lockdown happened, their obviously their stream of income had lessened. They weren't able to do as many open days and stuff like that. So I knew that when this A level thing happened, that they probably we're gonna take a lot more students on

because they want to make up for the whole lockdown situation, because there was like, I can't remember which University it is in London, but one of one of them was like, basically almost gonna have to close, because they just lost all their revenue. And, and like they couldn't pay the rent and the bills and stuff like that. And the way that they make money is through students and like, it's basically I don't know if, correct me if I'm wrong, but I'm pretty sure like universities are like for profit institutions anyway.

Karel Green 1:57:05
I'm sure they are.

Sehher Tariq 1:57:08
Like, it's just, it was inevitable that they're going to be doing this, they're going to overwhelm all this staff with all these students, because they want to make up for the fact that they, they lost that money for that period of time during lockdown. It's just going to make things worse. It's it's not making your standards any better. It's not making you look any better.

Karel Green 1:57:26
Yeah, like my uni is opening up for undergrads. And so, so many others during these Coronavirus times people are still dying every day because of the virus. And you know what, like, I'm not going back. I'm not allowed to go back. And it's like, it's so awful. They're just like, yeah, the undergrads can die. But like everybody else stay at home, but it's because they need the money. They want the money is...

Sehher Tariq 1:57:49
Yeah.

Karel Green 1:57:49
And it's like can't pay the rent? It's just like, what are you doing all the money not buying the land that the university is on like, What? Why? Like, why are they for profit? But why doesn't the government just own the crown, they'd be like, here at the university, go to it, like, Oh, that's a whole other can of worms I'm yelling.

Pruthvi Mehta 1:58:09
I would like to say that I just think the the way that's the PhD students are being treated in terms of funding, especially now. It's just horrendous. Like, we're gonna have to, like pay for like, I mean, I hope this isn't the case, I'm touching wood, but like, I'm scared, we're gonna have to have a PhD exten- extension with no money. So we're gonna be working for free. And also, that's really scaring me right now, I just want to scream about that. Because I just... Well people need to be aware that like PhD students just aren't being like, this is like this is going to severely impact funding. And yeah, like, it's going to not only have an impact, like the work that we can get done, it's going to impact the work we're going to have to catch up on. But we're not going to have any money to do that with and it's just horrendous. Just want to...

Karel Green 1:58:55

Especially experimentalists and stuff, like I've been alright, because I just code on a computer really badly in my room. But there are people who actually use proper equipment and stuff who just cannot do work and have to have extensions. And so far, from what I know, the people who would have graduated this year, have funding extensions. They're gonna be like, oh, but that was a year ago. And so you can work for three more months for free. And then yeah, and I'm just yelling especially how vivas how they used to like waste money, sending out lectures for like, less than a day to another country to do a viva, the carbon emissions, stuff like that, when now they're doing them over, like over the internet. And I'm just like, you know, what, if you have enough money to send a dying lecturer on a round trip within one day to another country, you have enough money to give people funding extensions. I cannot believe that they were doing PhD vivas that way, and they're only now thanks to a global pandemic, a literal plague, doing them online. I literally I really did think that they were doing them online before this, I'm shocked.

Pruthvi Mehta 2:00:02

I'd like to, like urge any listeners to like come for the stories of like horrific, like funding disruptions due to, like, use of the pandemic, just because like I'm trying to collate, like stories of like PhD students who've just like had, like, the worst time because of everything, and I just aren't being promised any sort of like funding for like the rest of their PhD. You know, it's not just like, yeah, I can get by on like, you know, a PhD stipend, but it's just me. But I know people, like in my office who have dependents, like they're living with people who are also reliant on their like, on their fundings. Like, you know, I might actually I might be okay, my funding gets stopped for a few months, I can maybe just about on what I have, right, and like what I saved up, but like, you cannot do that. If there's more than one person reliant on what is it like 16 k? Like, that is not okay.

Pruthvi Mehta 2:00:51

15k outside of London.

Karel Green 2:00:53

Yeah, I am. I'm literally like pre planning to look for jobs before. So like, my job will start like maybe a month or two after I finish my PhD. But obviously, I know with corrections and stuff, never that easy. I just don't have that option. If they don't give me a funding session that I have to plan to finish my PhD in three and a half years worth money I have, like, there's no way I'm going to work for three months for free to start extra time.

Pruthvi Mehta 2:01:20

Like it's exactly because it's like, you know, I'm funded for 3.5 years and the maximum max time is four is four years. Right? So you're already working six months without pay. That's what that means.

Karel Green 2:01:29

Yeah, exactly.

Pruthvi Mehta 2:01:30

But if this if we have to have a three or six month extension, because again, I have literal lab duties and data from a lab I cannot get right now. Yeah, after work for an extra six months. So that's basically a year without pay. That's not feasible. My god awful, awful.

Karel Green 2:01:51

And I, and I'm lucky that again, you know, I'm not waiting for like a lab like you are perfectly I've got data from the Hubble Space Telescope, that they went and brought down and like cleaned and everything, but now there's too much and they're going through it and dependent on anything that's currently happening. And that's not true for everyone. Okay, that was bad. I don't know what this has been, but...

Pruthvi Mehta 2:02:13

It's been great. Yeah, I like nothing sort of overview of everything that we we've been like, sort of wanting to say, and also like, you know, stuff for the future, as well as getting this was a really nice way of ending off the series. Yeah.

Sehher Tariq 2:02:28

Also please have a look at what I call the yoga document.

Karel Green 2:02:32

Oh, I can't wait. Okay, we are definitely talking about season 6. Okay, you know, media recs, and then I'm going to start yelling about goat yoga.

Karel Green 2:02:48

I'll go first, because I like to speak. But I'm going to recommend a book series by a black woman called N.K. Jemisin called The Broken Earth series. The first books called the fifth season, I'm not gonna lie, I still need to read it. But it's definitely on my list. But basically, this book series, it came out so much, especially during like the Black Lives Matter movement, when a bunch of authors were like talking about pay equality, especially between different races. And they were like talking about Okay, and I got paid 125k advance to write this series. These like ugly, gross, white men whose books were mediocre at best and then loads of black women or just women in general, I will give white women this one tiny thing. Well, mostly, the black women will get paid the least of course. So N.K. Jemisin talks about I think she only got like 25k advance, which is not even a year's worth of work. She's the only person who has ever done this, not the series, each individual book has won the Hugo Award, which is really good. Now, you know, it's really hard to have a full series where each book is good, because obviously, you have to have like a plot that is wrapped up in each book,

but then they have to connect so not everything is going to be wrapped up. But she did that. This book has had so many ratings, so many awards, so much like this, she still has been paid significantly less than white men significantly less than white women whose books have not even done a fraction of how well hers has done. And you know, it makes me sad. I've only heard about her because of this. How many other black authors who are just as good, maybe better or maybe worse, but are nowhere near bad, whose books just have not been talked about? Read The Broken Earth trilogy, read The Fifth Season, which is the first one, it has LGBT plus representation as well. In this world, everyone is bisexuality is just like the norm. It's like it's to the point where it's not even mentioned in the book or anything. It's just like people like this is how people live and then you realize, Oh, wait, everyone's bisexual because guess what, that's what it should be. Yeah, as long as you're consenting adults, that's all that matters. And and it's high fantasy excellent read and I'd really recommend it and I'm going to, can't wait to get into it. I'm just getting I just, I cannot believe this book that won three Hugo Awards, she only got like 25 K, and some ugly white women has not done anything good with their writing get 125,000 pounds.

Pruthvi Mehta 2:05:13

We all know exactly, we all know 50 Shades of Grey like just for like selling mass copies. And it's like some of the worst writing ever I've seen ever.

Karel Green 2:05:23

Literally or Twilight before that was also bad.

Pruthvi Mehta 2:05:28

That was true. That's true.

Karel Green 2:05:29

I literally remember I never read Twilight because I have taste. But I remember somebody reading it. And they were just like, oh, white boy one the white woman two and white woman three walks into the room and the seventh person to walk into the room. Like it wasn't even proof read. Like they didn't even count to make sure that they were numbering people correctly or such. I hate it here. And it goes to show, especially in publishing, a load of publishers will be like, okay, we've published one black man's book this year. We're not publishing any more blacks.

Pruthvi Mehta 2:05:58

We've solved racism guys, like..

Karel Green 2:06:00

Exactly like the black man. So it's like all of the black men in this book, have a white wife and we crap on black women and then that's it. Like, it's awful. It's awful. So you know, read The Fifth Season, buy it from somewhere so she gets some money, and then try and find more black authors because you don't have to when three who go would be considered same as like a creepy white man.

Pruthvi Mehta 2:06:24

And I'm definitely sick now in the show notes and like, that sounds excellent. I love it. Um, yeah, I would like to my recommendation is I was screaming about that before this episode started by one to recommend Raji. Um, it's a video game, so I'm sorry.

Karel Green 2:06:41

You should feel bad.

Pruthvi Mehta 2:06:43

I do. Um, but it's basically like it's, I think the only game I've heard of that's been produced by an all Indian, like a fully Indian like dev team. Um, and it's also got like a fully Indian like voice actor cast. So it's not like I've recommended like Indivisible before, um which is also like, as like a lab zero game and it people out there and it's like set in like a sort of Indian like country. They're kind of vague about it. And they have like non like the wrong sort of demographic voice actor for the characters, right, largely to step up, step up, because he doesn't do that. Fully Indian like dev team, fully Indian was at a cost. So basically, like the it's it's sort of like a 3d model game as well. And it's like, incredibly detailed. It's just, it's just absolutely it's just such a pretty game. I can't stress how pretty it is, enough. And they basically it's certain it's set in India. And it follows the story of like a circus performer called Raji. And her search for her little brother Golu who was stolen by demons. And he basically have to like fight demons. And it's, it's excellent as well as Hindu mythology. And it's probably done it's not whitewashed, or any kind of like in a subverted in any weird way. It's just true to story. Um, and it's, the graphics are excellent. The, it's a really unique sort of it is sort of like a fighting, it's more of a fighting game than like an adventure game, I think. Um, but like, it's different in that, like, you know, you get to move around a 3d space in the 3d world. And the fighting is different, because it's not like sort of turn based. It's just really like the way they program the fighting styles are really like fluid and acrobatic, which is in keeping with the character, obviously. And it's just, it's really beautifully done, like, you know, it's very rare to see, like, the whole realm of video games as sort of either in the west or in Japan, right? Like, it's, you know, she's a fighter. That's it. Right. And it's really, it's really rare to see countries that aren't in the joy in the global south like to, like break into the video games scene, or have any sort of like, main part in terms of producing not just in terms of characters. So it's like, really, it's just like, kind of breath of fresh air. It's something really nice. And it's 11% off on the Switch. Like... Yeah, it's like 20 quid right now. I don't know if it'll get cheaper or whatever. But you know, just keep an eye out for that. I think it's something worth playing if you have the time.

Sehher Tariq 2:09:21

Um so what I wanted to do, instead of doing a media recommendation, is that I wanted to bring in a bit of my job. So what I do is a job is are in an R&D consultant. So what I do is I help help small medium sized companies apply for tax relief on any research and development they've done. So I get to talk to a lot of directors about

some of the research and development that they've done and a lot of the clients that I deal with they, they're in the tech sector, mainly. And so that's quite a big area for research and development. So what I wanted to do is I wanted to look for people who are black, Asian, minority ethnic, who are leading companies, they've founded companies that are in technology, mainly, I'll just list off a few people that I found. And I found it really difficult to narrow this down because I found so many interesting people. But here's just a few of them. And I'll give some links for the show notes as well that have more examples of people. So first one is Anya Roy. And she's a co founder of Sirona Women, and she's an Oxford and Cambridge graduate, and she did bio science and what Sirona Women is, it's a digital startup that's aimed to democratize women's health. So if you go on the website, you can see that they offer consultancy for women, I guess, like medical appointments for women, specifically to do with women's health. So there's an application that they've developed for that. And there's several things that they've been doing with Sirona Women. So that's quite interesting. The second one is Ismail Ahmed, who is the founder of World Remit, and he specializes in digital money transfer. So he did an economics PhD, and then went on to found this tech company, which deals with transferring money in a secure way. So that seems to be doing quite well, in terms of how big is getting. And then the next one, I found very interesting, there's a video that I watched about him as well. So I'll link that in the show notes, too. And that is Silas Adekunle. And I'm sorry, if I'm butchering any of these names, I did try and look them up how to say them. But he's a robotics engineer. He graduated with a robotics degree. He was born in Nigeria, but is based in London. And what he did was he wanted to get into STEM education and what he did, he was helping create battle bots, who would have this program within schools where kids could create their own battle bots. And so they get trained up in coding and robotics. And I found that really interesting. And he did it in a way where it's, it's more of a game. So it's, it's a gaming focused augmented reality focus, instead of it just being like, Oh, you make this robot. So that's pretty appealing for people here in you know, who are younger, and well, me as well. Next one is Anne Marie Imafidon. She is the founder of Stemettes. And she did a maths degree. And what Stemettes does is it promotes jobs for women in STEM. And so I know that they do a lot of work with younger girls and introducing STEM to them. And she's pretty amazing the fact that she passed GCSEs in primary school, I can't be that smart. And then the next one is Bola Adegbulu and Meha Nelson or Meha Nelson, and they founded Predina AI, or I think the company is just called Predina. And what they do is the software that they developed analyzes risk factors based on autonomous vehicles. So they developed a program specifically for calculating and taking data in and calculating the risk to do with autonomous vehicles, which is quite a growing market at the moment. So heard of like Google, and I think, is it Uber, they're trying to do like driverless cars and stuff. They are developing software and analytics to basically help analyze the risks to do that. And then the last one Enass-Abo-Hammad. And she founded H2Go Power. So she has a PhD. She focused in what H2Go Power does is it focuses on clean energy, and specifically hydrogen storage solutions. So the focus is how to get renewable and clean energy from hydrogen instead of you know, fossil fuels and like

other forms of renewable energy, so that I found pretty interesting renewable energies really, really big on a big part of research and development at the moment and what I've seen, and then I'd like to...

Karel Green 2:14:57

H2Go and it's hydrogen, I get it. Get the joke.

Sehher Tariq 2:15:01

Yeah.

Karel Green 2:15:03

I see you.

Sehher Tariq 2:15:06

And then I'd like to give a shout out to Kirsty Devlin. I follow her on Twitter. And I'm pretty sure she follows POCSquared as well on Twitter.

Pruthvi Mehta 2:15:17

Hi Kirsty.

Sehher Tariq 2:15:18

And yeah, she she has a not for profit organization called Recode UK. And the basic premise behind that is that she believes that anybody should be able to code no matter what postcode you're in. And I think that she works a lot in the Northwest. So I think that's a reason why I like she sticks in my mind, because she's, like, kind of local to me. And she's actually self taught from what I read in coding. If I'm wrong about this Kirsty, if you're listening, then tell me. But yeah, I found that pretty amazing that she's, she did, I think a business degree and she's self taught. And she's teaching all these people how to code. And it's true, like you should be able to get access to this kind of resource and postcode you're in. So I wanted to give Kirsty a shout out. And then, as I said, I will put links to more people that are really interesting in the show notes too. Because there's loads. Yeah, that's, that's who I want to highlight at the moment.

Karel Green 2:16:26

Once again, you are the only one who gives good show notes, and everything else was terrible. I really liked renewable energy shouldn't. Exactly, I'm going to go through all of these and be like who wants to hire me when I'm done with my PhD. I love renewable energy. I love not burning dinosaurs and calling it a day. Right? Okay, I'm happy with that. I thought just to speak about season two. So basically, we aren't doing Season Two for a couple more months, at least, we want to try and be like grant funded. I know we had like a Kofi and I think we still have the Kofi and the Patreon and stuff. But just to keep up with that, that would just be would be too much. Like, we it's just too much. This isn't our full time job. So we couldn't do it. And honestly, like, we should not be collectively sharing the same 20 quid with each

other. The rich should be able to give us some money at some point maybe. So we are in the process of applying for grants where we see them. Finding them is a bit difficult and stuff like that. But we want that money and it should be money should be top down activism should be bottom up and that is it. Like give us the money.

Pruthvi Mehta 2:17:40

I love that. I love it.

Sehher Tariq 2:17:42

Tweet out that quote right now.

Karel Green 2:17:44

So there we go. That is it. But we have ideas we have ideas for season two, talking about traveling as a BAME person during PhD and stuff like that. We would have done it if we could travel But Miss Rona's diamante heels still on our collective throats. So, that episode is just you know, who knows when. We have the beauty standards episode where we are going to talk about... What's in the beauty standards? I can't even see, I can't read.

Pruthvi Mehta 2:18:10

Um we're talking about like skin lightening and stuff like that and how that stems from colorism and all that stuff and like facial features and how those all have to be westernised. And all that terrible stuff.

Karel Green 2:18:20

Yes, yeah. Then we have a separate white matriarchy, so you know how you have the male patriarchy and now we have the female matriarchy and how white women legit think being called pretty is oppression. See if Pruthvi put my excellent academia meme in the show notes. But yeah, I just I cannot believe because again, you know, I know none of them are happy. I know they're all overworked. But there are women there white women at all stages of the academy from like top not just like lecturers but like literal top Dean's of the academy all the way through to undergrads to the point where like, undergrads, there are like a good 40% female and a majority of that is white women. Like you are not oppressed as you think you are like, you just have to accept that. Cis het, able bodied white women are not that oppressed. So we have a white matriarch episode. I'm so upset about how nobody has the race equality charter everybody has the ATHENA Swan for example, white matriarchy. We have ATHENA swan 2: Electric Boogaloo, which is about the race equality charter. We're going to go through that we're going to perish in the same way, like we did for our episode, which my ad is our most viewed episode. Everybody hates the Athena SWAN. So garbage. So get ready for that. We have an episode on how to get a paying job in STEM like we did in this month series. That episode came out today the day we're recording August 22nd. But this one specifically on how to progress outside of academia because honestly, honestly, academia is not that good and that's that. We have an episode on, called Mind the

Gap. And it's about like pay gaps and BME attainment gaps and how to actually ask for like pay transparency, and sick of going to places and being like, how do I get paid transparency and they're just like, you ask the white men you work with, and you have to hope that they tell you the truth. Like, you know, that's so scary, so scary. And it shouldn't be up to me. And to be awkward and further ostracize myself by asking what these white men get paid, and just hoping they tell me the truth, only to find out, I get paid like 25,000 pounds less. Like, there's no way, there's got to be a better way to get to this information. And we are going to find it. We have an episode on decolonizing science lectures specifically, because we talk about all this decolonizing stuff and we thought that people be like, okay, here's the information, now do with it and decolonise things. And they are just said that we don't know how. So we are going to like hold your hand, literally through every step of the way, and teach you how specifically to decolonise lectures in undergrad. So you're not being a gross mess. And then we have period poverty and physical health during your degree. Again, I can't believe all three of us are just like, yeah, let's not go to the doctor for years on end and okay with it. And finally, we have, as we have discussed today, white women and goat yoga, I love the idea of like yoga and meditation and stuff that I put, I just cannot I forgot. I forgot that it's not a stupid YouTube fad and is in fact, like an ancient practice from the global south. There has just been destroyed. I'm so sorry. Oh, my God. So we're going to literally perish in that as well. And that's what we have for season two. But again, we aren't doing it until we get funding. We want to buy microphones we want to get paid to do our work. Like Come on.

Pruthvi Mehta 2:21:58

We deserve money. We deserve money.

Karel Green 2:22:02

If we live, we'll see you 2021 maybe. Like who knows.

Karel Green 2:22:11

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Karel Green 2:22:55

I've got you know what we're all gonna die until we're a lot older. Just a phone call that I'm ignoring. Oh God I'm off my flow now.