



To cite this podcast:

Mirza, H., Araneta, K. (2023, November 28). Ethnic inequalities in the UK, doing intersectional social research and decolonising British universities (No. 49). [Audio Podcast Episode]. In *Pedagogies for Social Justice*. University of Westminster. <https://blog.westminster.ac.uk/psj/tools/podcast/> DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34737/w8374>

Podcast transcript:

Kyra: *Hi everyone, and welcome back to the podcast. For this episode of the podcast, we are in conversation with Professor Heidi Safia Mirza, an accomplished academic, activist and feminist writer with a wealth of knowledge and experience in addressing complex issues related to race, ethnicity, and inequality in the context of higher education. In this interview, Heidi discusses her upbringing and journey through academia, as well as the key influences that have shaped her career. Focusing on the research process behind the “Race and Ethnicity” report which she co-authored for the Institute for Fiscal Studies, Heidi reflects on the historical context and the intersectional approach used to examine ethnic inequalities in the UK. When contemplating the challenges of upholding the authenticity of social justice work within the academic space, Heidi provides valuable guidance for leaning into and surmounting these hurdles.*

Hi Heidi, thank you so much for joining me on the podcast today. I’ve been really looking forward to being in conversation with you again. How are you doing?

Heidi: I’m doing well – a little bit of a sore throat, but I’m sure that I’m going to...you’re going to look after me in the podcast [laughing].

Kyra: *I will [laughing]. So, I like to start things off with our guests just telling us a little bit about themselves, in their own words, so I guess, first things first, where did you grow up and kind of where are you currently?*

Heidi: Well, I’m one of those transnational people that has grown up in many places. So, I was actually born in 1958 in London, and when I was about four years old, we left London. My mother was Austrian and my father was from Trinidad, and they had all those issues of not being able to get a place to stay and my father couldn’t get a job. He even changed his name so that, you know, it was more Anglicised, and it was still every difficult. But, at the age of four, went to live in Trinidad and went to school there, and that was...an enlightening experience as well because...the racism was different in the Caribbean. There was white elites and hierarchies were definitely there, a bit like South Africa, divisions. There was a black African population and equal numbers of Indian in the Caribbean, indentured workers, so...and Chinese workers too. So, it was a very interesting experience and... I was very



fortunate because my father got a good job – it was in the oil fields. And my grandmother, whom I never met, and one of my inspiring people, she started up a school for girls, [?] girls, and so I went to that school. And what people don't realise and what, in those days, and even now, in the Caribbean, you value education, above all else. It is our form of social mobility. It's how we gain status. But we just value it in itself. So, I had a very strict but...full education, and when I came back to Britain, because my father was, you know, involved in a lot of political activities, so he was kind of sent to exile in Britain in the 1970s – it was 1973, I was completely shocked at the level...the standard of education in Britain and how...I would use the word "violent" it was. It was rude and overtly racist and oppressive, and nobody was learning very much. And the school I went to where my grandmother had started was so strict and I did so well, and so I had a sense, when I came to England, what is this all about, and the lack of discipline in the classrooms and, you know, the chaos in the classrooms meant that nobody was learning anything and... Yeah, so that's my early time, and it did shape my thinking around education.

Kyra: *And I guess I'm really struck by how you talk about this kind of...over racism that you experienced in school and in the wider community, but I guess how was race kind of seen and felt in your household, especially like your mixedness, growing up?*

Heidi: From an early age, I could...you know, it was so weird growing up in a mixed race household because I always wanted my mum to take me to school, and even when I was in my teenage years, I wanted my mum to come and pick me up, not my dad, because I realised that there's such, you know, internalised racism in our communities, and I think sometimes you have to call that out, you know, so I had kudos by having a white mother in the Caribbean, and [I feel like] almost now the tables have turned, in so many ways, but in those days, yeah. And, you know, when in my primary school too, it was, you know, you were treated better. You were...the teachers saw you and acknowledged you. You got more attention because my mother was white. But, you know, when I came back to England, it didn't matter. She was like...she was like...not [there with] secondary school, and all that mattered was that I was brown-skinned and from the Caribbean, with a strong Caribbean accent, and I was put into...I was told that I would amount to nothing, I was told that I should become a secretary, and I was determined to go to university. I remember even applying myself for the exams to go to Cambridge because I just only knew that Cambridge University was the only university that I knew [laughing]. Of course I didn't get in, but I wasn't having any of it, and so... And the headmistress said that I had to learn to speak English, even though I spoke English. So, I learnt very early on how to be like a chameleon, how you have to walk through the corridors of whiteness in order to proceed, and you have to lose a piece of yourself in that process to...speak the Queen's English, to dress as they do, to... And Frantz Fanon talks about this process of white narcissism, how white narcissism and the negation of the black self, that you have to adopt white manners and values, and that's how the process of colonisation works, to erase your identity in order to get



recognised. And it's...it is...Patricia Collins, she calls it like the politics of containment, how we are contained, how we have to be unraced and assimilated in order to progress when we're allowed into white spaces. So, I experienced it first-hand. I didn't understand it. I was an angry young woman for a long time [laughing]. But maybe it's...my work is a lifelong therapy, in some ways, to understand the processes of...of power and disempowerment that run through our veins.

Kyra: *And I guess you've kind of talked a little bit about your journey into higher education. Thinking about your kind of time as a student, were there any experiences that you feel like have shaped the way that you teach and the way that you position yourself in the university, and write as well?*

Heidi: I always say that the things we choose to do is never by accident. We're in a lifelong journey of searching for the answers to very deep, deep emotional questions, em, from the trauma of, you know, being seen as invisible, being seen as dirty, you know, hived off, being told you're nobody and that you amount to nothing, is a violence, and the lifelong process [has been] to unravel it and try to understand where racism comes from and... I managed to get into university, and I would say that, if I was a young person now, I'd probably never have gone to university because of the fee structures and the, you know, inaccessibility of higher education because of the costs, the living costs and the fees. So, at my time, there was... there had been, in the late-50s, early-60s, the Robbins Report that said that they should expand higher education and they'd built all those new universities, you know, like Sussex and Surrey and Leeds and... I went to East Anglia. So, they had all these fabulous new universities, and education was free and we got grants, and it was also...new wave feminism, civil rights...you know, we were on the cusp of all of those things. So, you know, women were allowed to go to university, you know, openly and freely, and...and grades weren't so high and so competitive because there were lots of places [laughing]. And so, yeah, I managed to get to do Development Studies at East Anglia, which was about third-world development – that's what it was called then. Now, you know, people say, politely, lower income, middle income countries, but, honestly, you know, it is what it is and, you know, countries that were postcolonial were getting their independence and... And it was an amazing time because, at university, there were all freedom fighters on the anti-apartheid movement for...from Rhodesia, which then became Zimbabwe, all the so-called terrorists and guerrillas, and it was funded by – you won't believe this, but, you know, the trade union movement in Britain was funding a whole generation of scholars and thinkers coming from the...you know, the Global South. So, I was with these incredible people in my course and...and, at that same time, there was the Iranian revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini, in those days – you know, it was like an uprising against the West. So, there was this huge moment in time where we were speaking back to the Empire, through Islam, through the anti-apartheid movement, and, you know, the violence of colonialism, and it was just an eye-opening experience, and I converted to Islam because it gave me a sense of who I was as a woman. I wasn't seen as a



sexual object; I was seen as an intellectual person that could be valued for who I was, not how I look – that was the theory, by the way [laughing], because patriarchy is foundational in so many of our cultures, religious practices, and so on, but nevertheless, it was...it was a politicised moment for me. And it was the birth of my feminism, understanding... understanding that feminism doesn't have to be in the white, Western, middle-class way that it had been developing, that, instead, it could be owned by us women of colour in our ways. And it was...yeah, it was an amazing time. I was introduced to new books and ideas in Development Studies, on Marxist economics, and we did irrigation and we planted potatoes, and we learnt about climate change – this is the '70s, this is 1977. And we were doing this stuff way back then. I remember the first book I had to read at university was called... Schumacher's 'Small is Beautiful', which was all about, you know, downscaling and climate change [laughing], so it was just...it was just all there so... It is...I owe that time, and I owe the British education system, a big thank-you for my education in university, yeah.

Kyra: *Wow, I feel like just the way you've described your experience as an undergrad is like... the complete opposite to mine [laughing], like yours almost sounds like a utopia, if anything.*

Heidi: [No], you imagine, I'm so inspired at the moment by Black Lives Matter [on the campuses], Rhodes Must Fall, em, you know, the students were like, "Why is my curriculum white? Why is my professor not black?" All those things had been happening in 2015 to...to now, and these uprising on the campus, you know, against the, you know, in support of workers, you know, [?] and whatever, you all those... Students are very active. I think Covid... Covid put a...a kind of shadow on it because you couldn't be out on the streets, you couldn't see each other, but then it opened up the whole world of Zooming, as we are now [laughing], and the ability to communicate across time and space. So, there's new forms of... new forms of, you know, resistance that I see among students, and I'm also...like I've just done a workshop this morning with students at Westminster, where you're from, obviously, and...and it...I was just bowled over. Because I was talking about decoloniality and, you know, and decolonising pedagogies and our thinking, and black feminism, and [they were] way ahead of my game! I was like, you know, I'm thinking, Heidi, you've got to like update your work because they already know [these things]! They're already doing research in their communities, using, you know, decolonial thinking, and...and...and it's radical, and also, what's so impressive is the amount of black British bodies in higher education that are actually shifting the ground and...There's no excuse when lecturers don't know books and things because the students are bringing them in! Because I was giving them some literature from the mid-200s and they're like...were quoting work that I didn't know of, so I'm going like I need to join your courses [laughing]! So, I described it...I reckon, you know, Kyra, in 20 years' time, somebody will be interviewing you and you will be – and they will be saying, "Oh, that was such an incredible time you were at university [laughing]!" It always sounds better in hindsight.



Kyra: *Well, I hope not. I hope, like by the time I'm ready to be interviewed, that it's a lot better, but we'll see [laughing]. You talked a little bit about you went through this kind of process during your kind of journey in higher education of like unravelling and kind of unlearning, and learning at the same time. Is there anything that you think you are still learning now?*

Heidi: Oh well, like I said, I was just learning from the students, new books and... Yeah, I am learning to not be so up my arse [laughing] – I'm sorry to say that phrase on a podcast. But, you know, I used to be so...em...serious about everything, and especially in academia, you've got to dot your Ts and Ps and Is and make sure that, you know, your work is peer-reviewed, and when you give a lecture, it's really formal and... And I don't think I could give a podcast when I'm talking about who I am and my background, you know, even 10 years ago, and I think I've learnt to relax, and as my daughter said, "You're much better speaking freely than speaking...you know, to a script" which makes me feel safe, you know – when you speak to a script, you feel safe, you've got your notes in front of you so... And I find that, when I free-flow, I suddenly start knitting things together, like how the past...how my past has informed my work, which is the question you just asked me, I begin to see it. I just wish we were doing Desert Island Discs and you were asking me for my favourite songs at different times [laughing]!

Kyra: *Yeah. I mean, when I first met you, I was really kind of nervous because I was just like, oh my gosh, like, you know, this is Heidi Mirza! And then like speaking to you, I'm just like... it's just so refreshing I think also to kind of meet academics who you admire and people that you kind of...have been reading, and it's like...when you're yourself, you almost humanise yourself, and I really appreciate that. And even with like my lecturers, like when they're just themselves and, you know, they just speak freely, like it really kind of feeds off and you can just feel it, as a student, and it's definitely something I appreciate.*

Heidi: You listen more, I think, to someone who isn't...arsy, and free-flowing. I have...I mean, you know, my most favoured and probably most influential person I've ever met is Angela Davis. She's such an icon. And I was 10 years old, and it was in Trinidad, on a little tiny black and white TV, when I first saw her, and she was...you know, she'd just come out of prison and she had her funky afro and her black sunglasses, and she gave the black power salute, and I saw her on the news and I went... I was just spellbound, and I knew I wanted to be Angela Davis [laughing]. I wanted to be a freedom fighter. I wanted to fight for what's right and... And then, my colleague, [Sara Amin], a wonderful, wonderful writer and thinker, probably the best philosopher that Britain has known, she organised a conference and invited Angela Davis, and I got to sit next to her at the dinner afterwards, and then we went to the toilet at the same time and we were in the little girls' room talking to each other [laughing]! And I



can't believe I actually was with Angela Davis in the toilet – that's my claim to fame [laughing]!

Kyra: *I guess, on the topic of the Race & Ethnicity report that you wrote for the Institute for Fiscal Studies, I also really appreciated how you highlight these kind of really rapid changes that are occurring within some ethnic groups, and I think that just even just points out why terms like BAME, Black Asian Minority Ethnic, are so problematic.*

Heidi: Yeah. I want to...I want to make like a...I wouldn't call it a tattoo but maybe a label on my head, "Don't call me BAME, don't call me a babe BAME [laughing]!" It's so insulting, you know, like, "Are you a BAME? Do you want to belong to a BAME network?" You know, I'm just like, please, no, no, because one of the things we found in this report is...we call it, you know, the danger of a single story, taking after, you know, Ngozi's book, and what we found is that...the danger of a single story means that we are all labelled BAME, but if you look deeply, there is complete change and continuity going on. There's no one story. No one group has done badly. No one group has done universally well. But there are different shifts, and it's all to do with where you come from and the amount of wealth and human capital, i.e. education, and your background, i.e. how middle class you are, that that affects your trajectory through the BAME jungles, should I say [laughing] – it sounds awful, [what it] conjures up for me, you know. So, em...yeah, so we would that Indian and Chinese have done quite well, but, interestingly, they have come from largely middle-class backgrounds, well-educated. A lot of the Indians came in as refugees from Uganda and Kenya in the '70s and, you know, they're like 2.5 generations on. And then a lot of other very skilled people have come from India through the years. So, we find that people have come, at different times, with different skills. The very early Indians weren't so skilled. You know, a lot of people came, like the Bangladeshis and Pakistanis, and Indians in the '70s, came to work in the cotton...what were the cotton-mill industries [in the] industrial north, and are still located there, and hence we see a lot of poverty in those communities. They might be homeowners but they're living in deep poverty, and that poverty is growing, it's not decreasing. And what we did find is that the groups that have done reasonably well in education, and all ethnic minorities, again, like this educational desire is there, in all migrant communities, even in the second, third, and, as in the Caribbean, fourth generations. What we find is that they do not get the rewards in the labour market. So, if you have a degree and you're black African, black Caribbean background, you definitely are not getting rewarded in the world of work commensurate to your white colleagues, and it's also harder to get a first-class degree when you're from those groups. So, there they are, in education, wanting to do well, doing reasonably well given all the...all the caveats of racism and discrimination, and yet they are not being rewarded in the world of work. That's inequalities... And we can actually measure the inequalities. So, I...I worked with these statisticians and they...they can take...they can put in education as a factor, take it out, put in social class as a factor, take it out, and then look at the calculation – what makes the biggest



difference to somebody's life, having a middle-class parent or having an education? And, for ethnic minorities, it's a bit of both, but then we can actually measure that that educational advantage that they might have over the white population, because they tend to be more involved in education, they don't get the pay – the wages are lower. Pound for pound, qualification for qualification, their wages are lower. So, I say to lots of young people now - because it costs between £60,000 to £100,000 to put a kid through university – are you getting the rewards when you're from a black and minority ethnic group? We're investing in a very traditional system, in a white system that's...that's...you know, abusing us in so many ways, you know, so we have to be strategic and, you know, operate round corners. I hope I'm not depressing you, Kyra [laughing]!

Kyra: *I guess I just...would just kind of respond to like your talk about kind of the research process, because one of the things I really appreciated in your analysis was how you combined kind of existing theoretical qualitative and quantitative literature with the new quantitative datasets because I'm also...I hate numbers too. So, I think, because you're so consistent with it, in the way that you analyse the data, it really helps to kind of understand the inequalities and their roots and, you know, it's almost like you've contextualised them, whilst also acknowledging the different kind of conceptualisations that are already out there, and I think, just by doing that, you make this kind of point of...you know, this data cannot be thoroughly understood on its own; we have to consider the kind of histories and patterns of oppressions, along with the kind of insights provided by different social and critical theories. But I can imagine how challenging that was, and I guess, luckily, you had the help of some people from the Institute, but what were some of the major challenges in using a kind of intersectional approach to analyse these really high-quality datasets?*

Heidi: It was a massive challenge [laughing]! And if I knew how massive it was, I would have run away and hidden under the quilt and peaked out from the covers to make sure that no one was looking! You know, you know what I have to say, I worked with, you'll see on the report, with Ross Warwick. He's a young white guy, a brilliant economist. He wasn't afraid of race – and that's what I'm finding with your generation. You know, because you've grown up in London, or in big city centres - because that's where ethnic minorities live, you will see in the report, we can actually see where people live, and that makes a difference – and it's just this...comfortableness with talking about race. So, I didn't have to...I didn't have to educate him. He just got it, you know. He knew what I was saying – we got to do this by gender, we got to do it by race, we've got to do it by socioeconomic group, we cannot just look at men in, you know, in certain ethnic groups, we've got to look at the men and the women, and then we have to look at class as well. So, what was meant to be probably a few weeks, you know, writing a 10,000-word paper, turned out to be a three-year project – don't ever ask me to do anything [laughing]! When I came out from under the quilt, it was a three-year project, a 70,000-word book, with probably about 500 references! Honestly, I don't...I don't know how we did it, but we did it together, and, do you know, one of the interesting things was,



working with these people in the Institute of Fiscal Studies, they are so good at their job but they're economists and so they can, like you said, they can...they know the figures and they can chart things and they can see downward trends, upward trends, but they can't explain the things that I can. Like, when people came to Britain, [whether they] come from, you know, Africa – like, in the '90s, there was a big tranche of people from Africa brought in particularly to do semi-skilled and unskilled jobs, and yet there were Africans who came before, that came from more middle class backgrounds, before the '90s, and so there were different times when different kinds of people were needed, again, to come to Britain, as we do need now. So, we can then understand why there's different trends and different things going on and...and I can explain those things.

Also, what I was really impressed with, working with these very senior white – and they were all from Oxford and Warwick and top universities – white, largely male, leadership at the Institute of Fiscal Studies, they weren't afraid to say to me, "Heidi, we know nothing about race – can you tell us what words to use? Can we use BAME?" and I did a whole section on why you shouldn't use BAME, and then, you know, how to approach the subject, and it was just...non-judgemental, I would say, and open to learning and saying, "We're vulnerable, we need to know, and we want to get it right, and, Heidi, can you do it for us [laughing]?" But then, they read it, and they liked it because it explains everything very clearly, from how eugenics and IQ have informed racial ideas, what the legislation says...I mean, everything! It goes into a whole range of things.

Kyra: *So, I guess, just as a last question for this segment, before we move on: what were some of your biggest take-aways from writing this report, and, you know, can we expect another one?*

Heidi: I was just talking to the powers that be at IFS. It was funded by Nuffield. And I said, "Can I make it into a book?" Because, even as I speak, and it's only been like...it came out in November, just literally six months ago, it's already out of date because new...the new Census came in, and I said, "Please, can I...can I update it, and can I have another brilliant researcher to help me [laughing]?" because, you know, I hate these numbers... And so, I'm just waiting to hear that we can turn it into a book.

Kyra: *Amazing.*

Heidi: And I've been giving talks in schools...because they still use 'Young, Female and Black' as a...as a textbook for Sociology of Education and understanding inequalities in education. The date is...I'm going to whisper this, it's 30 years old! And I need...I need a young woman,



such as yourself, to do studies on young girls in schools now because the world is different, but the kids are so amazing and they go like, “Professor Mirza, what inspired you to do this?” and they’re like...they’re such sweethearts! But they asked...I had a young Asian guy who said, “Professor Mirza, heterosexist patriarchy [laughing]!” and I just thought, oh god, they’ve been reading Bell Hooks, and I was just so excited by that. So, if it turns into a book, I believe it will become hopefully a classic in its own right, you know, because I feel that it has all the...all the elements of that because it’s so...it’s operationalising intersectionality with data, and that makes it a powerful piece for policy.

Kyra: *So, to change the topic ever so slightly, I wanted to kind of focus on doing decolonial work in higher education. You are someone who has been writing and talking, as you said, about this struggle, and you were also the co-editor of the 2018 book ‘Dismantling Race in Higher Education – Racism, Whiteness, and Decolonising the Academy’, so I’m really grateful for this opportunity to kind of talk about where your thinking is today. A question that’s been coming up for me personally as well is kind of thinking about what does it mean to decolonise outside of settler colonial contexts and in the imperial metropole, and I guess also questioning my kind of position in that as well. But my first question is: how important is acknowledging our positionalities and our position in the metropole when it comes to doing decolonial work in British universities?*

Heidi: It is the beginning, the middle, and the end. Who you are and how you’re positioned, it’s...the decolonial journey that you will take in your work that will define what decolonising means for you. Everybody wants a kind of...easy pat definition of what decoloniality is and what decolonising is – “decoloniality” meaning more about the state of mind, and “decolonising” is the process of change – and I just think to myself...I don’t have that answer because it is a journey, and that journey begins with us unravelling, first, who we are, to find out what inspires us or what makes us want to think differently and excavate that ground through our research, but putting yourself in the picture, you pay a price. It’s personal, and personal is exhausting, and, every day, you’re thinking about it and you’re working towards it, but I think it’s...like I was saying earlier, it’s a bit like therapy, you know, talking about it helps. So, you know, thinking about positionality and the metropole is important, right? I was talking earlier to the workshop here at Westminster and a young woman asked about the difference between – because I was talking about white Western societies, i.e. the metropole. She was from a Chinese background, and she was talking about, you know, how the parents often say, “Oh, you’re becoming very Western”, and she said, “Are we using “Western” in a kind of loose way, you know, and what does talking about white Western societies and their white privilege, what are we actually talking about?” And I said, “Well, what is happening in our communities is we’re becoming more British.” So, we are black British – and we struggle to call ourselves black British, you know, because...why give Britain that [laughing]...that honour, after they’ve treated us so badly. But that’s what we are. We live here now, for so many generations. We’re born here. We’re mixed...call it what you will,



you know. So, I don't know if we're becoming more Western, but we are making Britain our own – that's what I feel. And I feel now, in your generation, you need to chart that change, whether it's looking at the arts, the music, the vibrancy of that community. So, you know, we really influence what it means to be British, and I think that that's...that's something that we need to document, need to celebrate, and we need to...we need to have the research to show that contribution because, too often, [we're] seen as problems and...and interlopers, even now, after all these generations. So, I think we really need to...need to show how we contribute to the economy, em, and how we change what Britishness is.

Kyra: *And I guess, lastly, I just wanted to kind of reflect on the challenges that also come with kind of doing any kind of social justice work from within the same institution that you're hoping to change, and, you know, while there's definitely some good work being done, across our university and others, I think there's always that kind of risk of the work becoming performative because it's been co-opted or pushed to go in other directions. And I guess I just wanted to ask you, like do you think it's possible to kind of prevent our projects and our pedagogies from being co-opted by the institution, and like how do we go about that?*

Heidi: Whether or not the institutions co-opt our work, they have co-opted everything – like I was saying, you know, they've co-opted [?], they've co-opted intersectionality [laughing], they've co-opted everything, and “decolonising” has become a buzzword, like “intersectionality”, and “diversity” is a buzzword, and, you know, it's sort of like, yes, we are co-opted, our bodies are co-opted, our ideas are co-opted, but it's warfare out there, you know? It is warfare and we need...we need to be tooled up for it and...and keep on changing from inside-out. Things like...I call it the “quiet riot” ... So, a lot of feminised, particularly feminised work, like my grandmother and the work that she did to, you know, teach women to read and write in Trinidad in the early 20th century, you know, as a [?] woman, she changed the world from inside-out. She didn't know what she was doing at the time, and how she was building capacity for women, you know, for the postcolonial, you know, resistance movement. She didn't even know that, and we don't even know now how we are contributing to a quiet movement of resistance, from the inside-out. The thing with academic work, it's very individuated. You're alone. This is particularly a neoliberal time where the individual is celebrated in terms of being free-floating and having no commitments and just... And we're meant to work within that model, and it's almost impossible because we...we have responsibilities and we are still [deemed] the carers. So, what I'm saying is that we have to work to resist from the inside, and if they co-opt our ideas, well, it's because our ideas are bloody good!

And [I'm worried] about things like “decolonisation” becoming such a buzzword. So, it used to be like maybe the BAME Network becomes the Decolonising Network – well, what is that,



you know?! The university's institutional tick-box. And yes, so it does, but we just keep talking about it ourselves and using it in our research, you know, "make decolonising real".

Kyra: *Thank you. So, unfortunately, we're coming to the end of our talk. I feel like I could honestly talk to you all day, but as a question I like to end on, what is something you'd like to see happen or see develop within higher education in the next 10 years?*

Heidi: Oh, to shut down BAME networks. Honestly! They are just institutional smokescreens that they make us, the changemakers – so, you have to give up half your career to do the institution's dirty work. So, I would like, in the next 10 years [laughing], for the rich fat-cats that run the universities to do the work themselves and stop [farming it out] to us, you know, because we can't change it. They have to change it. They have to look at their structures in institutions. It's like telling, you know, young black kids to change the police! Why..? The police have to change themselves. So, in 10 years' time, I'd like to see some of that performativity exposed and for those in power to do the hard work. That's what I'd like to see, [so that] a generation, you know, can come up and actually do well without having to carry all that white baggage.

Kyra: *Mm, Heidi, I cannot even begin to thank you enough for joining me on the podcast today. You shared some really valuable insights and reflections about your journey through higher education, your writing, and your research. It was also so nice to discuss the Race & Ethnicity report with you, and our listeners can actually check that out through the link in the description. But also, just thank you for the really kind of solid advice about how we can kind of continue to do this work in the university as well. You have all my thanks and appreciation, truly.*

Heidi: Well, I have thanks and appreciation to you for asking such brilliant questions and organising the podcast!

Kyra: *To find out more information, access our tools, or get in touch, visit us at blog.westminster.ac.uk/psj.*