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[00:00:22.800] - Talat Yaqoob

Hi and welcome to the fourth episode of the Pass the Mic podcast takeover of On the Engender. My name is Talat Yaqoob, I'm the founder of Pass the Mic and I'm your host again, for today. For those of you who don't know, well, where have you been? You should have been listening to the last three episodes, but for those you don't know, Pass the Mic is the national, Scotland-wide, directory of women of colour experts for media to engage with, for events organisers, panels from all different sectors, to be able to engage with and to be able to invite and hire women of colour for their expertise, for their opinions, for their input. Because we know that they are grossly under-represented and often overlooked in decision-making, opinion-making, in commentary, in Scotland.

[00:01:07.520] - Talat Yaqoob

We have almost 200 women on Pass the Mic list, which is much bigger than I ever envisaged it would be, and it should be even bigger than that if we're going to have all the expertise of women of colour in Scotland on that directory. So please, if you are a women of colour, sign up. Your expertise can be in your personal life, your professional life, your learning and education background, whatever it might be, please do sign up to that. And for the rest of you who are working in media who are perhaps organising events, please make use of the Pass the Mic list. I'm joined today by brilliant women who are part of the Pass the Mic funded project with Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Toni and Zoe. And I asked them to introduce themselves and just to see hello, to tell a little bit about themselves, and why they wanted to join the Pass the Mic list. Toni, I'll start with you.

[00:01:56.780] - Toni Haastrup

Thank you so much, Talat. It's so lovely to be here right now. My name is Toni, as Talat said. I'm a lecturer, senior lecturer, at the University of Stirling, so I'm an academic. I work on international politics broadly speaking with a focus on feminist and gender issues. The reason I wanted to join Pass the Mic is because I just moved back into Scotland after about a seven year absence and I was trying to find a space where I could really plug into the community but also meet a few likeminded people and Pass the Mic really provided that platform. In the sense that it was - it's a safe space for different women of colour to engage, but also provided an opportunity for me to engage with journalists, with third sector organisations, but also to really utilise some of the skills that I've been sort of honing and to professionalise them a little bit.

[00:02:57.990] - Talat Yaqoob

Thanks so much, Toni, and a ringing endorsement of Pass the Mic. I didn't even ask you to do that, but thanks. I appreciate it. Zoe, hi!

[00:03:06.220] - Zoe Daniel

Hi, I'm Zoe Daniel. So, I'm a freelance consultant and journalist. So I've worked with the EU on projects and Digi Fairy and lots of other companies and I'm on the advisory board for the Children's Media Conference. And the reason I wanted to join Pass the Mic is because I've been working in the media since I was about 13/14, starting off in radio. And it initially started with opportunities that were local. And as I sort of wrote my portfolio and started applying to places a lot of the opportunities for public speaking and panels, that I was being asked to do weren't actually in Scotland. They were in England and as far as Croatia. So I just felt that the community of women of colour in Scotland, it just felt like it wasn't as strong as it was in places like London and other places. So I really wanted to be a part of an organisation that promoted women of colour's voices in Scotland and having, like, a community of women that are working in Scotland as well.

[00:04:14.900] - Talat Yaqoob

Thanks so much, Zoe. So, we've got brilliant expertise from Toni and Zoe, here. And we've talked a lot, on Pass the Mic and you know Toni, Zoe, and I, along with that safe space of women of colour that they both mentioned. We've talked a lot about how feminism can be that space and how it needs to be working for and working with women of colour. Often we found that a term branded 'white feminism' has been used to talk about the fact that a lot of feminist activity, both historically and

currently, focuses on and attracts more white women to it. And isn't talking about the multiple discriminations, the intersecting inequalities, that women of colour experience with the overlap of racism and sexism. And how that finds itself, illustrates itself, in policymaking, in service design, in the boardroom or within media and journalism. And these are things that are critical to feminism and critical to creating an inclusive feminism that works for those who need it the most, those furthest away from access to opportunity, power, wealth. That is the kind of feminism that we're interested in.

[00:05:25.340] - Talat Yaqoob

And in this discussion, we want to talk about how we make that feminism available, accessible, to the most number of women, the widest range of women across Scotland. How do we embed that into the systems that we have around us? So I wanted to talk about this to you and just start off by asking, Toni, why does that matter to you? You talked a lot about the safe space of women of colour in Pass the Mic. How do we create more safe spaces and why does that matter across kind of the feminist movement in Scotland?

[00:05:57.450] - Toni Hastrup

Thanks again, Talat, for that. I think fundamentally, so, going back to the point that you made earlier about the sort of predominance of white feminism, I think fundamentally, it's useful to look at why this is not enough. The failing of this type of feminism is, sort of, the refusal to think about different structures of oppression, some of which you've highlighted. And so when we don't do this, problems are seen in quite an individualistic light, and women are often seen as a monolith. So not really reflecting on the experiences that we have in the every day. And so, for example, while we might acknowledge sexism in the workplace, rather than tackling its root cause - patriarchy. It's easy to focus on things like you know, if you had more - a stronger body language or a certain type of posture, ostensibly as a way to communicate that you're in charge, then, you know, life might be better for you. But in this sort of kind of thinking, we don't really reflect on, you know, how do we challenge the environment that is so detrimental to, for example, women at work? And I think, you know, when we look at other, sort of, axes of oppression, that's what tends to happen.

[00:07:13.120] - Toni Hastrup

So rather than sort of think about, you know, how do we actually talk racism, which is quite systemic? We focus on a particular type of identity and, you know, whether someone is a woman of colour and where they sit. And we see this in different spheres, whether it has to do with sexuality, whether it has to do with disability. And certainly I think, you know, where I would want this sort of conversation to go is really thinking about how we move away from simply looking at a specific identities in a very individualistic light and thinking about more reflectively about the structures. Otherwise, we don't see this sort of change, even the sort of change that spaces like Pass the Mic are really trying to engender. It just feels like you're hitting your head against a constant wall.

[00:08:05.620] - Talat Yaqoob

And that's certainly something. This siloing of equalities issues and different equalities - protect categories. So you know on one side, we're talking about women over here. We're talking about race over here. We're about sexuality over here, disability over here. And it's almost forcing us to pick where we go, as women of colour. As if sexism is being tackled over here, racism is tackled over here, and we've got to pick one or the other. When actual fact, the two intersect. And that is, I mean, everything you talked about is the very purpose of intersectionality and intersectional thinking and analysis. And that the term intersectionality has been used for a long time. And over the last kind of few years, it started to be more in the kind of policymaking lexicon of Scotland. But I have found it very difficult to get people to understand intersectionality in the way it's meant to be understood. I don't know about you, Toni, but have you felt that it has been kind of almost taken over? A diluted version of intersectionality is what we're finding, rather than what intersectionality actually calls for?

[00:09:14.920] - Toni Hastrup

Absolutely. So I mean, I guess the first thing to say is that, you know, I don't think Scotland is unique, right? But I do think that we should focus on whatever environment it is that we find ourselves. So, you know, taking a step back a bit. Intersectionality was sort of an analytical concept that was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, who is both an activist but also a legal theorist. And what Kimberlé Crenshaw

sought to draw attention to is the ways in which the sort of state responses to both racism and sexism, in sort of unequal capitalist system, did not actually respond to the disadvantages or the experiences of a particular demographic of people within the United States. And that demographic was basically Black, woman, and poor. You know, how do we respond to all of those three things at once?

[00:10:14.040] - Toni Hastrup

Now, most engagements with intersectionalities do tend to focus on these identities themselves. So whether you're Black, whether you're women, whether you're poor separately, as you've suggested, rather than the systems that engender them. And I think that with that sort of focus, the result is at best, a partial remedy. You can fix things for a particular group in a specific time and space. But as long as you're focusing on just the identities, I think then what you have is effectively Groundhog day for some other poor, Black woman, where we're not challenging the system for her in her particular situation, or we're not challenging the system for someone who is a woman and is Black, who is a woman - a queer person and who is Black, a disabled Black woman, for example.

[00:11:03.820] - Toni Hastrup

So that is, I think, one dimension of the shortfall of how we're thinking about intersectionality. But I also think, you know, of course, concepts travel and the analytical frames travel, but I find specifically that the hollowing out of intersectionality that does not really consider the significance in particular of racism and the process of racialisation as a sort of ordering principle of how we've lived and how we currently live as a bit baffling in terms of articulations of intersectionality. You know, when we understand the parallels in the sort of disadvantages of different types of people, and the ways in which, you know this is the process I call racialisation, then we can really begin to grapple with sort of the disadvantages of the system.

[00:11:58.760] - Toni Hastrup

And, you know, when I sort of think about these issues in my very sort of particular context of higher education, I kind of reflect on the last 18 months, right? You know, I'm in a very particular section, higher education, which has often sort of situated itself, as been quite progressive, wanting to deal and confront with issues of racism and sexism. But inevitably, what we've begun to notice, and particularly in the last 18 months of the pandemic, is that they're not actually doing much to really look at those structures, right? We know that the burden of care at home has fallen to women, and we've really started to think about what implications that has for us as a society, in Scotland. But when I sort of think again about my sector, there is, for example, no reflection on how, you know, the burden of care did fall on women, including in my sector, but also care in the workplace. You know, a lot of times there was people of colour, women of colour who had to support students, for example, in dealing with the sort of trauma of incessant racism, that really came to the fore in particular in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd. So of course, there's a lot of frustration around the many Black Lives Matter statements and the many squares on social media that have not really attended themselves to the ways in which these different structures of oppression actually interact with each other, to be quite oppressive to those people who are reflective of multiple and different identities.

[00:13:48.960] - Talat Yaqoob

I think there's two things from that - one, the dilution of intersectionality to become a kind of, it's a little bit of everything without it actually being about systemic inequality, tackling institutionalised, systemic racism and sexism. How those two things intersect. I think we are using the term quite freely but not necessarily using it correctly and using it with the depth, the complexity and the skill that comes behind it. If we use an intersectional lens well, we are talking about oppression, we're talking about multiple discrimination, we're talking about system change and transformation. That's often a diluted version of intersectionality that we're given, which I just don't think is fit for purpose. And I certainly see that over Covid-19, when we've been seeing analysis and data of how it's affected different groups. You realise how superficial the intersectional analysis there is, because suddenly we're not talking about the reality of the lived experience of Covid-19 for women of colour. Suddenly we've gone back into the silos of where data is available and where it is easiest to bring that data and that analysis in. So we see how superficial the intersectional analysis or the understanding of intersectionality is, when we have faced with a crisis like Covid-19.

[00:15:22.230] - Talat Yaqoob

I wanted to bring you in here. I know that you have written about intersectionality before, but also looking at it through young women's involvement. Young women of colour's involvement in feminism in Scotland, do you think there is an expectation, a higher level of expectation from young women for there to be an intersectional, inclusive feminism in Scotland?

[00:15:46.180] - Zoe Daniel

I think young women in Scotland are definitely missing out on an intersectional space in feminism. I think the rise of feminism becoming quite prominent in young people can be attributed to social media and people on social media that promote feminism. So in that case, we have like people like Florence Given. And it's difficult because I think especially with looking at Gen Z, and looking even above Millennial, a lot of politics and social ideas are driven by trends. So it's difficult to figure out if intersectionality is being discovered or understood by larger groups of young people.

[00:16:31.110] - Talat Yaqoob

And you talk there about trends and I do - and thank you also for including millennials in that, that made me feel a little less old. Certainly I see - if I look at my nieces, for example, there is a real impact when feminism is being discussed in social media, when there is you know, the image that comes into my head is Beyoncé with the big lights 'FEMINIST' behind her? It makes them interested in it. But at the same time, there's a lot of critique about it being a diluted, commercialised feminism. How do you square that circle? Do you think that it's worth it, if it gets people into the conversation, or do you think is in itself problematic to have a kind of commercialised type of feminism like that?

[00:17:18.680] - Zoe Daniel

I think there's pros and cons. I think the pro is that it definitely, you know, hopefully engages people to want to look into feminism further and understand intersectionality further. I do think, however, that it can erase certain people's experience because I think we've seen that in a lot of growing trends where people are really champion to the gender pay gap, or really championed other causes, which are incredibly important and vital. But then it means that when women of colour share an experience or share an issue, it's not championed in the same way because it's not necessarily an experience shared by all women or all people. And that's where the problem lies. It's when - your feminism, is it promoting issues that only you face? Or is it promoting issues that you don't understand as well and issues you don't face? Are you willing to look into those issues that you necessarily might not face yourself? That understanding is really the only way that intersectionality can be achieved is, when people understand people's experience is different from theirs.

[00:18:30.860] - Talat Yaqoob

I think the Me Too movement kind of highlights exactly what you're saying, Zoe. So you know, Me Too being founded by Tarana Burke, but it becoming popularised, it becoming media worthy when it was celebrity white women that started talking about it. And actually what you found was Tarana Burke was lost, was made invisible, even though she was doing the campaigning, she was the one that was pushing that agenda. And when we talk - there's been a lot of commentary about the Me Too movement, and it not bringing women of colour and the experiences of women of colour in the workplace, the experiences of sexual harassment and sexual assault in the workplace or otherwise. It lost women of colour at the beginning, and it focused on celebrity white women. So, do you know I think that was an example of how active the erasure of women of colour often can be. Is that something that you found when you were talking about, writing about the Me Too movement?

[00:19:41.720] - Zoe Daniel

Yeah, definitely. So I did write about the Me Too movement and especially the women's march in America. And I think the understanding of these events, the problem is it's all started with, usually, women of colour and is then co-opted and these spaces don't feel safe for all women. It feels safe for white women. That's exactly the experience of a lot of women of colour. And then it's this whole idea of glass ceilings as well, I think and there is an Angela Davis quote that I always remember. And she said, it was at the Women of the World Festival, and she said: It's not about glass ceilings, it's about standing with women for whom the floor is collapsing. And I thought that was a really interesting way

to put it, because I think that is so true. I think there's certain feminist movements that become more prominent than others, and it's interesting that they do become more prominent because of whose spearheading that campaign. And in terms of young people I think, you know, young people are just getting started and just understanding these things, but also have their own experiences.

[00:20:54.390] - Zoe Daniel

So I remember when I spoke about my experiences. It's often been labelled, but that's like a race experience. That's not a feminist experience. And it's quite difficult to have to explain and have that language at a young age to explain to people that this is part of equality. This is part of all of it. So I think giving young people the language to explore feminism and intersectional feminism, because it's not something I learned at school. It's something I learned from Twitter, it's something I learned from my own experience and having to research myself and then going on to Uni and studying sociology and understanding it further. But my primary understanding and having that language to describe my own experiences has come from social media and has come from what I've learned from reading my own self. And I think in order for that to change and for more young people to have the language to understand their own experiences, but have the language to also understand other's experiences too, start with it in education and start with it young. Because I don't remember it being brought up at school at all and it's something that's incredibly important to me now.

[00:21:59.440] - Talat Yaqoob

Yeah, I don't certainly - putting aside the fact that I went to school significantly years before you. It also wasn't talked about then, in fact, feminism - the only thing we learned about was the suffragettes and a very kind of passing glimpse of that even. So, certainly not a kind of feminist analysis within schools. And I think that does need to be, certainly needs to be reconsidered. And before recording this, I was just reading up a bit on the Me Too movement and Tarana Burke, she actually founded her Me Too organisation, the Me Too group, 12 years before Harvey Weinstein, and the Me Too movement gained traction on social media. So, to have at the beginning of all of this, she was recognised afterwards, but at the beginning of all this had 12 years of that effort and that work made invisible, because some celebrity, largely celebrity white women, have decided that they had newly coined the term must have been a real kick in the teeth. So, it just goes to show how critical the race and gender perspective coming together and they're being an understanding of privilege within feminism. How critical that is to the future of feminism, to actually making a difference for the women who need feminism and anti-racist practice the most. Toni, I want to bring you in here your thoughts on this?

[00:23:27.280] - Toni Hastrup

Yes, I mean I think, you know, if we go back to the example of Tarana Burke, one of the things, as you said, I also find it fascinating that this white women celebrities came on and really took it, really took it up. Alison Phipps has done a really good book on that called Me, Not You. But what I find interesting is that, you know, those 12 years before, not only are we shocked by the fact that some newer women with visibility, come in and sort of take the work of this woman. I think it's important to ask why that work was invisible in the first instance, right? So, you know, these women, in a way, are a product of the system, you know, forgive me for going back to that systemic language. It's not the case, certainly, that, you know, women were not harassed and abused before Harvey Weinstein came about. And in fact, when Harvey Weinstein happened, or at least when it became news, it made me think about an incident that had happened years before. With a man who was known by his acronym DSK. He used to be a former director in one of the international financial institutions where he had allegedly sexually assaulted a Black woman who was a housekeeper in a very nice hotel in, I believe it was in New York.

[00:25:03.620] - Toni Hastrup

And the fact that, you know, when this woman who was Black but also an immigrant, and when she reported it, the focus was very much on her prior history, her immigration status, the fact that she might have been promiscuous and so on and so forth. And in the end, whereas this very powerful white man resigned from that position, he's gone on to live a very healthy, normal life back in France. And yet when Me To happened, and, you know, a lot of the white and invisible women came forward, what happened is, you know, you got a coalition of funding behind them. You had a whole Times Up movement that was started after it. And I sort of, you know, I go back to those 12 years in between

when Tarana Burke started it and Harvey Weinstein happened, you know, what were we doing in that time period? Why were we not focusing on the experiences of those women, when the data tells us that by and large and women of colour, precisely because they don't have that position of power in society tend to be the ones who are abused, including sexually abused, by both people they know well, but also in intimate relationships.

[00:26:28.800] - Toni Haastrup

So, you know, what were we doing in this period? Well, for me, the answer again goes back to how the system is currently ordered, how the system is currently organised, that, you know, the experiences of women and women of colour is not a priority in terms of how we deal with those things that we actually find abhorrent about society, that, you know, when it happens to our sort of societal norm and an image of, you know, who is, for example, a good woman, then we act there. And unfortunately, a lot of women of colour because of how we've been socialised just do not fit that mould. I think, for example, of, you know, we've heard lots of reporting and lots of stories around, you know, when more recently around the very unfortunate murder of Sarah in London and the fact that, you know, there were lots of other women of colour who had been killed in the same way but did not necessarily get the same sort of attention in the media. So, again, this is not to suggest that we shouldn't pay attention to this particular heinous crime. But we should think about the ways in which we pay attention to these different types of crime and to differentiated engagements in this particular space. So, yes, when I think of Me Too, I do think it egregious that you know, Tarana Burke wasn't acknowledged, at least online. But I think it's also important to sort of look behind the masks of Twitter, what happened in those 12 years that we were not paying attention to the multiple deaths of Black women. And this is a point that Kimberlé Crenshaw, who coined Intersectionality herself, has taken up in her #SayHerName campaign, where our focus on police violence, which clearly we show is coming from racism, tends to erase the Black women and women of colour that are killed by police. By focusing mainly on men and men of colour.

[00:28:53.110] - Talat Yaqoob

And we see that of course, in her TED talk, where she asks people to, I think, put their hand up or stand if they remember the names of Black people who have been killed at the hands of the police, who have experienced to brutality. And they're more likely to remember the names of Black men and they don't remember or they have not seen in the news, the Black women who have had those very same experience. Absolutely all of this, all of it comes back to system change, institutionalised, systemic sexism and racism and how those two things inter-relate. And, like more things in my life, comes back to intersectionality and doing it well, I think what we talked about is so critical. And the Me Too movement and other large scale movements like that highlight who is given a platform, who's life makes it to the front page news and who's doesn't. And it's a very vivid example of the reality for women of colour, particularly Black women within that. What do you think Scottish feminism and feminist movements, and anti-racism movements, in them trying to be more feminist? What do you think we can learn from those experiences, what would you want to see change or included to improve those experiences? So they spoke for, and worked with, and worked for, women of colour. Zoe, what do you think?

[00:30:25.400] - Zoe Daniel

I think it goes back to consulting women of colour when you're working within a feminist space. The only way you're going to get real representation is if it's coming from the people that it affects. So working with women of colour and involving them and not just women of colour, involving disabled women, involving LGBTQ women, or people, in these discussions and in these spaces as well. I think in Scotland we have a tendency, I feel, to kind of say that everything is fine in relation to other places. But I recently saw a discussion about Scotland's involvement in the Caribbean, and it's something we never learned at school. And it's something incredibly prominent. And it was by Caribbean British journalist. And she said, why do you think my last name is Frazer-Carroll, but my skin colour is like this? And certain issues like that that I think, you know, we have to acknowledge the past to know why these things, why systemic racism has evolved. We need to understand our past in order to move forward and to create a more inclusive future.

[00:31:39.740] - Talat Yaqoob

I think you're absolutely right. And there does tend to be this thinking that Scotland's more progressive, more inclusive. But we can't just simply say that, we've got to do something about that. We've got to actually show in our actions and in the systems that we have created within Scotland, I think we spend far too much time think we're not as bad as some other place, but I'm not looking for the lowest common denominator. I'm looking for the best of the best. I'm looking for the creation of genuine equality, genuine tackling of inequalities and creating a level playing field, which doesn't happen just from words. Toni, what do you think needs to happen?

[00:32:27.320] - Toni Hastrup

Well, I mean, I think it's exactly as you and Zoe have mentioned, that we definitely need to stop this narrative of exceptionalism that you know - I mean I love, love, love, love Scotland. But I think it does have a lot of the same problems as anywhere else where, you know, race has been an ordering principle. And, you know, in that sense, it's not that unique. But I also think, you know, things are perhaps changing in terms of, like the sort of conversations that we're having. But in order for those conversations to be sustained, I think we need to sort of broaden our horizons a little bit. So a lot of the focus has very much been within the realm of politics. But we need to think about it in all of our other institutions, as well, so you know, I've spoken earlier about higher education, for example. And, of course, we know that this requires investment. It requires investment in practical terms, time, resources, actual funding to think about. You know, what are the implications of these different types of inequality on the sort of country, the sort of nation that we want to build? And, of course, that really does mean I would echo what Zoe said here, that we do need to engage with those people who are currently, historically excluded, who tend to sit on the margins of society because, you know, this space is important for them, too. And for me personally, this is where I actually think that, you know, Pass the Mic has been quite instrumental in that it has created a very specific space, but it's created this space because it's been willing to embrace, being bold. To sort of say, we cannot just sort of fix this issue's piecemeal, but actually, let's create this space.

[00:34:28.760] - Toni Hastrup

Let's go out there, actually ask these institutions that can put in that investment, who are saying that, yes, we want to more equitable society. How do we actually make that change happen? And, of course, to do that, we have to acknowledge that something is wrong in the first place in order to even begin to fix it. We also obviously need fellow travellers who are willing to show solidarity but who are also willing to sort of say, I'm not just going to sort of sit with my guilt and wallow in my guilt and sort of say, let's roll up our sleeves and see what it is that, you know, we can do about things. So for me, you know, Pass the Mic, as I said earlier, has been a space that has allowed me to sort of build that community, have engagements with people who understand that struggle, but also a place where by building community, we can actually work together for change. I also think it's important that those people who already have power acknowledge that they have power, that, you know, when we're talking about the different impacts of racism on women of colour, that you don't get people who say, oh, yes, yes, I hear you. But, of course, remember, I'm also a woman who face disadvantage. And we have to have spaces where people just take a step back and understand that there are, of course, things that we have that are overlapping. And this is where we can work together, but also acknowledge our different experiences and think about the ways in which we can really support each other to achieve those. But specifically, those people who are in power need to be willing to create the space. And really, you know, need to be willing to, figuratively speaking, you know, put their money where their mouth is.

[00:36:12.600] - Talat Yaqoob

Yeah, and I really you feel that, and obviously with the work that I do in other places, we talk a lot about politics. And we've had the first woman of colour, Kaukab Stewart was elected, and the first woman of colour in the Scottish Parliament. And that's great. And it's something that I applaud with the caveat that we want women of colour in the spaces of power, but we need them to be feminist and anti-racist and want to create system change and want to pass the mic themselves. And it's only through that that we create the kind of transformation, the kind of deep structural change that we need. It's not just a couple of people at the top, it's wholesale change that's needed. One of the things that you just said there Toni, made me think about obviously, the news from last week about how, according to some MPs who produced a report to say that white working class young people were

being held back and they were the most disadvantaged and a fact check of that shows they are as disadvantaged as others from similar backgrounds. But they put the emphasis on white privilege and the use of white privilege a term, and the analysis around white privilege as the reason, extraordinarily, as the reason for white working class young people not succeeding, particularly in schools, in education. And you know, aside from being gobsnacked, I do think that there's a real misunderstanding, and quite deliberate I think, misunderstanding about the term white privilege and how white privilege is used. What - how do you want to see it used? How do you want to see education around privilege tackled and dealt with so that it actually creates good? Rather than this misuse, this purposeful misinterpretation that causes even more division.

[00:38:13.740] - Zoe Daniel

Yeah, I think when we talk about white privilege and this conversation that's come up in this recent week, what's really interesting is that I think it's all focused on shifting blame. As we've said before, it's about shifting blame on to what has caused this. And it doesn't focus on the root issue, which is austerity and structural issues that have affected people and not just people of colour. And this kind of hierarchal situation where my problems are bigger than your problems and again, comes back to a lack of understanding of what these terms mean. And a term doesn't create inequality. The use of a term doesn't create inequality. It's ten years of austerity that creates inequality.

[00:38:54.800] - Toni Hastrup

Right. I mean, white privilege, if you're going to use that concept is very easy to understand. It simply means that, you know, of all the things that might be wrong in your life, your racial identification is not the thing that disadvantages you. That does not mean that, you know, a white boy who is poor does not experience certain disadvantages. But if we were to put said white boy say next to a Black boy or another boy of colour, the truth is that they move through life differently. So in the first instance, even the articulation of white privilege, if you're going to take it at face value is, as you say, sort of a deliberate misunderstanding of the term. And for me, you know, it's par for the course for a government that is being consistently quite reactionary. So, you know, I don't put much into that. But the other thing I want to say is you know, white privilege as a concept is something that we've only recently started using and I mean very recently in perhaps the last five years, this government that has commissioned the report has been in power for over a decade now. So if indeed, even if white privilege had that much power, how do you explain the previous years, the previous years of austerity and the impact that Austerity has had, and we have data on that, we have information on this.

[00:40:29.000] - Toni Hastrup

And finally, the other dimension of what I really think about when I think about these issues of white privilege is, you know, these MPs cannot, to my mind, care about white privilege. When I look at data in this in this country, about you know, who are the people who are very disadvantaged? And who are not, you know, really being engaged and acknowledged by society, and who are being actually deliberately marginalised by the structures of power exist? You know, I think of traveller communities all across the United Kingdom. They are not considered in this sort of defining terminology of, you know, white working class boys who benefit from white privilege or who, you know, the term white privilege is used against. Indeed, they're not even considered in that category. So if you really - if it's that you just care about, you know, white people, why are you not speaking about this particular disadvantage group? Why is it that almost every step that is taken by this particular government is one that, sort of, sticks to marginalised and victimised, and much more so than knowledge that I can ever have. There are lots of third sector organisations, civil society organisations that have been calling for government to stop marginalising people within travel communities and stop racialising them in a very particular way.

[00:41:54.440] - Toni Hastrup

So I'm not convinced that the MPs who came up with this particular report, number one, understand what why privilege is, and number two, actually want to deal with any of those issues. We should think about white working class boys. We should think about the reasons why perhaps they don't have as much social mobility as they should, or that the MPs think that they should. But those reasons are not down to the use of particular terms, particularly when the use of those terms is done so as to demonise and marginalise other communities that have been historically excluded from from society.

[00:42:33.660] - Talat Yaqoob

Yeah, absolutely. And like I said, it's using - misusing progress, misusing the steps towards progress to try and pull us back, to prevent that progress from happening and create even further division by the kind of purposeful misuse of terms like white privilege and the purposefulness understanding of them to create division in itself. We have so much that we could talk about and we don't have as much time as I would ever like in these conversations. It could be all day long. But in a kind of short answer, in a short sentence, what do you want to see? What do you want to see done in terms of creating the kind of best version of a feminist movement in Scotland? What do you think could happen over the next year that would really elevate the voices of women of colour in Scotland? Zoe, I'll come to you first.

[00:43:26.500] - Zoe Daniel

I think it's just better understanding in all areas, better understanding in education, better understanding in politics, better understanding in everyday life. I think we've been talking a little bit these big, structural movements, but it comes down to just being a person of colour and feeling comfortable in your community. I know that I grew up in a rural community, and that was very difficult for me because I struggled with representation. I struggled with understanding myself, and that came from a lack of knowledge and a lack of awareness. And I think it's just making sure that all experiences are understood in different contexts.

[00:44:05.980] - Toni Hastrup

I think, you know, I think it's useful for us to move away from simply the politics of representation, I think as you alluded to earlier Talat. I think representation is very important, after all if we don't have representation, how do the people who come after us know that, you know, they can aspire to certain things, but of course, our feminism cannot just be about, you know, those in those top positions. Women of colour are everywhere in society. And yes, when we're talking about representation in everywhere in society, it's not just going to be about placing a few key people. It's about thinking systemically about how this becomes commonplace, this becomes normalised. And I think, you know, when I think about how do we do that in concrete terms? A good start is already Pass the Mic, and, you know, I'm using that as an example because for me, at least as someone who moved to Scotland two years ago, it's been quite a revelation in terms of access and engagement with women from all walks of life, from different types of background. And so for me, what I would like to see perhaps next for Pass the Mic is, you know, how do we move from simply looking at avenues of - media avenues, for example, you know, how do we develop a bit more so that you can get women to do research?

[00:45:34.340] - Toni Hastrup

You can get women to go into different community spaces, whether it's companies, whether it's government, to speak about their experiences and expertise so that, you know, women of colour become normalised in spaces that they are not previously considered. So moving beyond the sort of more public engagement appearing on radio and media, to just being everywhere, really, and how to facilitate that. As I said earlier, the only way that that's going to happen is if there is substantive investment there. So I think those companies, those individuals or institutions who already have power within our Scottish society really have to pony up to supporting the sort of aspirations of spaces like Pass the Mic, but it's not just Pass the Mic.

[00:46:25.820] - Talat Yaqoob

Thank you so much. Like I said, we could talk so much more about this. There's so much to cover, but thank you to Toni, thank you to Zoe, for your expertise, for your participation in Pass the Mic and for your thoughts on today's podcast. Thank you to you for listening. That is the end of our podcast takeover of On the Engender, and I know that would make you very sad, but hopefully you have enjoyed this. Like I said at the beginning, please do sign up to the Pass the Mic expert list, if you're a woman of colour, share their expertise, regardless of where those expertise are from or what topic that is. Please sign up to be part of the Pass the Mic directory. And if you are in media, if you're in the third sector, if you're organising an event, you need to speakers, you need commentary, you need a quote or an interview in media, use the Pass the Mic list. We have expert women of colour who should be part of the narrative setting in Scotland, and the decision making in Scotland. So, be part of it and

play your role in transforming society. Play your role in changing and tackling systemic inequality. Thanks so much for listening and thank you again to Engender for passing the mic and sharing this podcast.

[00:47:36.360]

[Jingle plays out]