

That's All Folx Pilot Episode Transcript

Noelle Broughton:

Welcome to That's All Folx, a podcast where graduate assistants bring their work home. On our show we will discuss systemic oppression and public education juxtaposed with our latest TV binge. The basic structure of the podcast will have one of us present the other co-host with a scene from a show we watched recently. Our goal is to provide examples of systemic issues found in media and relate them to public education. My name is Noelle, and I am a Master's student in the O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs at IUPUI. Today, we'll walk through how our podcast came to be and our background as people, and how the lived experiences we have influence the interpretation of the media we consume and its relation to public education and equity.

Erin Sanborn:

I'm Erin. I am a Ph.D candidate in the Urban Education Studies Program at IUPUI and we're three graduate research assistants at the Midwest and Plains Equity Center. And the Midwest and Plains Equity Center is an organization federally funded that came out of civil rights legislation, which specifically supports schools and departments of education and districts in their local context...thinking through how they can center and increase equity within their local organizations...and so being a graduate student that works in that space and who is being a part of helping other educators really analyze who they are in their space and what the history of their space is in terms of racial systemic inequity...so we have kind of no option but to think about who we are, what are the different identities we hold, what are the different lived experiences that we have coming into a space.

Katy Rusnak:

I mean, that's the reason why we're doing this podcast. My name's Katy and I'm a doctoral student at IUPUI in the Urban Education Studies Program. In the moment of when I was a teacher, I did not recognize the importance of the histories behind my identity...you know, the fact that I would choose not to share things with my students, I didn't think was important...you know... because I didn't think that it was had to do with me as a teacher.

Erin Sanborn:

Yeah. Can you give examples of things that you wouldn't share?

Katy Rusnak:

Yeah, sure I can Erin. No, I think that as a member of the gay community, I didn't come out until later in life because I think it was something that when I grew up you just didn't talk about it. And I think that's another reason why we talked about doing this podcast is I had mentioned to Noelle it's so cool now that there are these large-scale shows that show lesbian couples, gay couples, interracial marriages, the stories of different people who make up the history of the United States and how they came to be. That wasn't there when I was growing up. You didn't talk about your problems, you didn't talk about being different. So I just think it's obviously, I think, a good thing that TV can reach so many people, but then I wanted to apply that even more because it's reaching people, but are we really considering, and is it really changing how people believe?

Erin Sanborn:

I think that's such an important piece that you brought in Katie because we have media via TV, music, et cetera, that is now lifting and raising these issues and centering the lived experiences and voices and perspectives of individuals that have been historically marginalized. So how can we help educators then use that content to push their own thinking and use that content to think about themselves in their spaces?

Katy Rusnak:

I think that maybe one reason is that by me choosing to hide who I am, I'm telling students that it's okay to hide who you are and don't really reveal your... Be embarrassed about who you could be or have... I think that it's not creating an accepting culture.

Noelle Broughton:

So it doesn't empower students to be their full, authentic self.

Katy Rusnak:

Yes, thanks Noelle.

Erin Sanborn:

Or you want to be... Like, you're trying through your research and work to be a model for what it means to be your authentic self.

Katy Rusnak:

Right.

Noelle Broughton:

So why is it important for students to feel like they can be their full, authentic selves?

Erin Sanborn:

I just think of like teaching and learning as a co-construction of knowledge. There's history behind our teaching population is majority white women, white, cisgendered, middle-class women and that is intentional because they were positioned in that profession to uphold white male civility. And so if I'm going to be in that space, I need to be disruptive of that. And so within that, I think it's important to decentralize myself as the power and the power authority on knowledge and what knowledge has worth. As a teacher, I always wanted my eighth graders to understand that I was going to teach them how I learned how to read and analyze and interpret a text and how to write papers, but it was going to be important for them to create a process that was meaningful to them, so don't do it my way. You have to learn how to read, write, think, and speak in a way that's meaningful and purposeful to you. In order to get there, trust and rapport have to be built and so I think it's important as a teacher, for me it was important to let my students know as early as possible, it usually took about nine weeks that their lived experiences mattered, who they were mattered, what they brought into that space mattered, and the culture that we were going to create in that classroom space was theirs, not mine. I was just a facilitator of that.

Noelle Broughton:

Thinking back on my experiences with school, if I had been empowered to be my full, authentic self, I think that the internalized racism I hold would have been dismantled much earlier. When I talk about internalized racism, the way I think about it and experience it, is my own denial of being Asian. And that definitely has everything to do with growing up in a predominantly white culture where I didn't know anybody that looked like me. I didn't go to school with anyone that looked like me. None of my teachers looked like me. And so my way to survive that experience was to be as white as possible, whatever that means. The TV shows that we talk about highlight differences and... Well, at least they serve as a way to open conversation to be more critical of the white dominant culture and so I do think that connecting these ideas from media and culture open up a dialogue that's approachable to everyone to more critically think about these issues and how they play out in our schools.

Erin Sanborn:

Yeah. And not just... I mean, I know for me I tend to always gravitate towards talking about race just because for me race isn't the only thing that matters, but it always matters and in talking about inequity, but just also just thinking about like the marginalization that happens at the intersections of race, disability, language, gender, sex, orientation, class, et cetera, et cetera, because it's like multiple layers that happen simultaneously at the same time.

Noelle Broughton:

Yeah. I think, Katie, that's a great segue into talking about how you came up with the name of the podcast.

Katy Rusnak:

Okay, so we want to use TV in this way to be more inclusive and I was thinking about the term Latinx, and so I had to look that up and I realized that the X was like that gender non-conforming and was more inclusive. And I was like, "Oh TV," and when I think of TV in general, I used to think of Saturday morning cartoons and Elmer Fudd at the end of it would be like, "That's all folks," and I was like, "Oh, here's a connection between what we want to do, TV, and then how we want be more inclusive with TV and include all," and use the folks, F-O-L-X.

Erin Sanborn:

I was just going to make a joke that we have to get it straight, that it was Porky Pig that said that's all folks.

Katy Rusnak:

Oh yeah. Why did I think was Elmer Fudd? Didn't he say it sometimes too or no, or was it always Porky Pig?

Erin Sanborn:

Always Porky Pig.

Katy Rusnak:

So I even looked up the history of it, because one of my concerns was that Porky Pig, he stutters, and so I

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wanted to know if that was purposeful. Like, did they do that to be more inclusive of people who stutter or are they poking fun at him?

Erin Sanborn:

Especially with Looney Tunes because Looney Tunes has a history of being racist and problematic, and so I think even that's important that we wanted to use this title, but what does it mean with the three of us and the identities we hold, what does it mean if we use a plan, a phrase that comes from a problematic history, so I think it's good that you looked it up.

Katy Rusnak:

Yeah, and Warner Brothers created it, I guess it kind of took too, it just stuck. So starting in the 80s, that's when it became Porky Pig.

Noelle Broughton:

So That's All Folks you chose because it was an inclusive term and we want to be inclusive of everyone and everyone's experiences, but it also represents the cross section or the intersection of identities and how multiple layers of identity is influential in everyone's perspective.

Katy Rusnak:

Yeah and it was a way to kind of like disrupt the norm too because the norm would be like F-O-L-K-S, so it was a way to like... you know that kind of resistance movement that we're seeing now. That's all folks.

Erin Sanborn:

In That's All Folx, we're looking at our latest TV binges as a test lab for identifying and examining problematic social interactions.

Katy Rusnak:

But we go a step further and talk about how these same issues manifest in the classroom.

Noelle Broughton:

And as graduate assistants at the Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center, we know that how we identify people play a large role in understanding the cultural context behind these TV scenes.

Erin Sanborn:

Join us in this mini-series as we talk about our latest TV binge through each of our lenses of identities.

Katy Rusnak:

We'll explore the transgender community's voices in Pose...

Noelle Broughton:

The not so subtle racism in New Girl...

Erin Sanborn:

The white non-disabled patriarchy of Big Brother...

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A PROJECT OF The logo for the Midwest & Plains Equity Assistance Center, featuring a stylized 'E' and 'C' in a circle with the text 'MIDWEST & PLAINS EQUITY ASSISTANCE CENTER' around it.

Katy Rusnak:

As well as multiple intersections of identity and insecure in Grand Army.

Noelle Broughton:

And how it relates to all folx in a classroom.

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