**Conversations in Social Justice:**

**Activism and Race within**

**University Teaching and Research**

**Podcast transcript**

Series 1. Episode 4.

*In this podcast Matthew Reason, Director of the Institute for Social Justice, talks to Jonathan P Jones of New York University about universities as spaces for activism, whether through pedagogy, mentoring, research or institutional structures. They discuss the challenge and importance of exploring race within what are still predominantly white spaces and the importance of actively working to ensure that the future of universities is more diverse and representative.*

**Matthew Reason**

Welcome to another episode of the Institute for Social Justice's podcast series Conversations in Social Justice. I'm Matthew Reason, I'm Professor of Theatre at York St. John University and also Director of the Institute for Social Justice. And I've got with me today, Jonathan P. Jones, who's from New York University, where he works across a range of areas and range of backgrounds. He's a director and practitioner, but also works with pre-service teachers, seeking to develop culturally responsive pedagogical frameworks, and most recently, responding to the engagement of Black Lives Matter movement following the murder of George Floyd. His background is in education and community theatre, and he's the editor of *ARTSPRAXIS*, a journal emphasising the critical analysis of the arts in society. And it's really great to have you here, Jonathan, really looking forward to a conversation which we're going to explore various issues related to activism and higher education, and also critical pedagogy and activism and race. It was in relation to *ARTSPRAXIS* that I first came across your work. I submitted an article on my own work, working with students and activism, to ARTSPRAXIS a couple of years ago now, am I interested in that was a module I've run with students at York St. John, where we invite them to produce an arts activist project. And it remains one of my favourite modules to teach with students, I don't know what the students think of it, but for myself it's really invigorating, and feels like it has that kind of absolute relevancy and urgency in what they do. And that the assessment is a real kind of authentic moment in the world, which sometimes assessments in universities can feel a bit artificial. So it's really good to meet you through that context, and have this opportunity to talk to you a bit more about activism. And my first question is, is that and I think I know the answer to this, but would you call yourself an activist?

**Jonathan Jones**

You know, honestly, I wouldn't. I think it's a layered word. You know, it's complicated. So if I was to describe myself or speak openly about the work that I do, I wouldn't call myself an activist, because I think in an American context, in particular, that it very much is a word, has kind of a negative connotation associated with it, if you imagine sort of the white dominant culture of America is very much wanting to try to emphasise commity and going along to get along and not having conflict. And there's this sort of vision of an activist is one who's going to be a disrupter and who's going to challenge and who's going to perhaps cause some conflict and make folks uncomfortable. And so having been raised in this milieu I feel like I wouldn't talk about myself that way, because I don't want to be framed as the disrupter. And yet, the work that I'm doing is very much grounded in making those things, so almost that there can be an active form of activism and a more... I don't know if passive is the right word, perhaps subversive is the way that I think about it. That I'm going to just get the work done, people will talk about it, describe it, frame it as they will, and I'm not going to necessarily be caught up in the label, that's how I think about it.

**Matthew Reason**

That's really interesting. And certainly when I introduced the notion to my students, some of them have that immediate kind of kneejerk kind of drawback, I guess, or repulsion from it, there's a way in which activism has become an epithet for loud or aggressive, or as you say, disrupting, which are all in certain context necessary, but sometimes can put people off engaging with the issues maybe. So maybe, perhaps that's one of the things you're thinking about there that to engage people constructively you don't want to push them away before they've had a chance to kind of explore what you're interested in.

**Jonathan Jones**

You bet. And also, I would say that, you know, if I think about some of my work as a director, and I do work with an organisation, the New York City Gay Men's Chorus, in 2017, I was directing a show called I See Fire. And that show was happening, like sort of after the election of Donald Trump and the beginnings of his administration and things that were happening that were sort of negatively impacting the LGBTQ community. And when I was putting that show, together with the artistic director, you know, I said to him, you know, we can't just have a show where we're gonna complain and talk about how life sucks, like, it's not gonna work. And so we wanted to focus on having a direct concrete kind of explicit call to action as part of the show, and thinking about a call to action that really would allow our audience members to have, you know, very discreet, concrete actions that they could then, you know, put into action after the show is over. And when we were going to, you know, sort of introduce those ideas, I was keen to have members of the chorus kind of speak about their own personal experiences, that they had; ways in which they had engaged in some of those different actions that we were going to recommend as a way of kind of inviting the audience to know that they too, could participate in this way.

And the first chorus member who I thought about, who I knew I would need to hear his voice, this gentleman - his name is Eugene Levendusky - and he very much identifies himself and labels himself as an activist. And when he wrote, you know, what his introduction was going to be to the action that he was going to talk about that was the first thing that he said, "I am an activist", and he was very forthright. And I mean, it really put people off, in just the chorus community, like as we were rehearsing it, and they were like, "What is going on?" And then the artistic director asked me, you know, are we going too far? Do you think it's turning them off? And I said, it might be and it's not too far, they need to have that voice because they need to know that there are some people who are at the forefront, whose voices we absolutely need. And then there are other folks who are doing it in more subtle ways. And that that is just another way. And so you know, in whatever way that folks are ready to engage, we need to meet them where they are, and allow that kind of diversity of approaches to unfold.

**Matthew Reason**

Absolutely. I think one of the routes I take within my teaching has been introducing students notions of opening up activism from different forms, where it's not that radical protest, or you're chaining yourself to railings, or climbing up statues or whatever. But there's quiet forms of activism or everyday activism that people might engage with whether because of other responsibilities they have, or simply their, you know, more introverted personality, or all sorts of reasons why people might engage with issues in different ways. And perhaps that term activism sometimes puts people off engagement. And there's a phrase I've used with them about saving activism from the activists, it's the notion of a professional or elite kind of core of activists can sometimes be putting off other people. And they're sort of interesting to get to engage and think around how can we be activists, or how can we open up activism in all sorts of ways, because I think if we leave politics to the politicians, then we're in serious trouble. And if we leave activism to only those who can push it as far as they like, then also that seems problematic as well.

In your article, I recognise what you're talking about that you write about that in that article called ‘Call to Action’, where you talk about elevating activism and performance and the notion you're saying about giving audiences a specific thing to act upon for change is really interesting. You say, "I urge the practitioners to recast their efforts in the service of compelling their audiences to act", which I think is really, really interesting. How about if we shifted that to from audiences to students? How do these issues around activism work for you as a pedagogue, as a teacher, as an educator in relation to your teaching practice?

**Jonathan Jones**

You know, Matthew, it was really interesting at the beginning of this conversation, when you talked about the paper that you wrote for ARTSPRAXIS and the work that you've done with your students, because you're able to have this very specific activist project that you're working on with your students. And that for me, you know, most of the students that I'm working with in Educational Theatre at NYU, are indeed pre-service teachers. And I don't necessarily teach the art making courses, other faculty members do that work. And so most of what I'm focusing on is more about pedagogy and what they're doing in the classroom.

And so one of the kind of underpinning ideas that I try to frame, what I would hope that students would achieve as they go out into the classroom, is this idea, as you mentioned earlier of culturally responsive pedagogy. And the idea there sort of three facets to it. The first is kind of related to academics and making sure that folks are learning the content, whatever that's going to be, but then also that they become culturally competent and sort of aware of sort of the dominant culture and their local and perhaps more personal culture, and then also that in some way they're going to develop what's called a socio-political consciousness, which is very much coming out of Paulo Freire. This like sort of liberation pedagogy, self actualization, that once I've sort of achieved my best self, I can then go out and make change in the world. And so how students are going to approach that, I know that I need students to achieve that, based on what my own experience was as a high school theatre teacher 15 years ago, and also what I see happening in a lot of classrooms across the city, and that we work with in New York, which is that folks are very much focusing on theatre production and very traditional methods in sort of almost acting class or something like that, rather than focusing on work that would be more about perhaps activism, but also about devised theatre, whatever that that might be.

And so I'm trying to figure out like, how do we not just keep replicating that, because if we're just going to be doing scenes from plays by white playwrights that are traditionally performed by white actors, when we're working in a very diverse community, that that's going to leave people out. And even if we take the leap of using plays that are written by playwrights of colour, which is tremendous, with characters that are more diverse, like that's a step in the right direction, but still, if we just sort of leave it at that level of us just kind of doing theatre unto itself for theatres sake, that really that that's just getting into that kind of academic theatre place, and not necessarily going into the level of developing cultural competence, getting folks to take or be mindful of socio-political action that they could be involved in. And so, those things are possible if we're still in the realm of traditional sort of written theatre by playwright that we're now going to perform, if we're going to have conversations around that. And it's just that I don't necessarily know that those always happen. And so just in, you know, sort of focusing so much of the conversations that I have with students about pedagogy, around this idea of culturally responsive pedagogy with these three facets, I know that when they go in the classroom in whatever way that they decide to work with their students and-and interact with them, whatever content that they want to draw upon, that they're going to be sort of making those or really sort of asking those questions and finding ways to get their students to-to get more out of the experience. Things that are going to be more impactful in their own lives, but also in work that they can do in their local community. I think

**Matthew Reason**

It's about making the teaching and theatre and that practice of making theatre, have a relevancy and immediacy that is beyond the, I guess, the purest form of theatre for theatre sake in a way.

**Jonathan Jones**

Yeah.

**Matthew Reason**

When you're working, you're talking about working with a very diverse student body there, and I'm listening, and I'm thinking in my head, that's the different position we are here in York St John, in York in the UK, from yourself in New York. So I'm teaching in university that has got a very white student body, where over 90% of our student intake are have a white background, and the questions that raises for how do we teach, in your terms, a culturally responsive pedagogy to a largely homogenous student body, and actually a largely homogenous staff body, and the role that places myself in as an educator in different contexts? I mean, I'm interested in maybe talking about that a little bit. And you're talking about performing white plays by white men and we're in the process of asking how do we decolonize our curriculum? How do we have a more diverse curricula? But still having a very homogenous class group. I'm aware, often I'll be talking about issues relating to race, and I'll be very aware that I've got maybe 40 to 45 students in the class, and they'll be one person of colour in the room, and I'm the white lecturer. And it's just always feeling, there's no resolution to them, and I don't expect you to give me one, but I'm interested in your reflections on those very different experiences that we'll have of teaching in those contexts.

**Jonathan Jones**

It's such a great question. And I realised, as you were speaking, that the ways in which I talk about my work and the language that I'm using, and sometimes being imprecise, and that when I say students, and I talk about having diverse students, I'm thinking about the student population, like kindergarten through 12th grade, you know, school aged, young people. As opposed to my students at NYU, because in our programme, in Educational Theatre, I mean, just as you've described, largely white, largely homogenous, largely female identifying, so at which, to me is kind of the picture of most education programmes in the United States. Along come the white women, is what we see. And so one of the kind of concerns that became apparent last year just in terms of it being at the forefront of folks minds, and also in conversation, was that in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd and with the movement for Black Lives, that the lack of diversity in our programme is a problem, you know, just on its face, but also that when we only have, you know, a very small handful of students who are people of colour, and that they don't have kind of their own community in many ways, and the desire that they have to experience that, and that they had hoped that they would find that in New York, and at NYU, in particular, and then it not really being there. And then of course, particularly for folks who are going out into the classroom, well, then they're going to be teachers, with students who I think right now in the United States, just across the country, more than 50% of the students in K through 12 school are students of colour, so and still most of the teachers are white, and then often identifying as white women. So there are concerns certainly, that there is that kind of disconnect between who the teachers are and who the students are.

And so, you know, one of the things that I think we want to do, is find ways of getting more people of colour in the profession. NYU is a very unique in some respects institution, in that it's so expensive to go to school here. And so there is just the economic issue of who can afford to go to school. Also, I think there's something about the idea that people have of NYU as an elite institution, which it is, but that doesn't mean that it's exclusive, necessarily. I mean, I am the principal, I do kind of like the recruitment officer, I guess, for our programme. So anybody who's interested in coming to study in our programme as a master's student or a doctoral student, I'm the person they meet with and so I think, you know, me being in the position that I have, so like I become the face of the programme in a way certainly gives folks a sense that "Oh, there must be people of colour there. He is a professor. He is an advisor, he's..." you know, and so just that kind of my existence in a way kind of sets me apart from what's happening in other programmes in our fields in the US where there wouldn't be a person of colour necessarily on faculty at all, or they might be, but they wouldn't be the person who's kind of the face of the programme in that way. So having that representation of myself, I think is then inviting folks to the programme in a way. If I look at our doctoral programme, we have a high percentage of people of colour in the doctoral programme, but in the master's programme less so and so I know that there's more work that we need to do there.

**Matthew Reason**

How do we, I guess, as teachers, and maybe as researchers engaged with pushing our discipline to be more responsive, more diverse, more political in different ways. So such as listening to you there, I'm reminded of a project I'm currently working on editing a collection and the roles of thinking about how to make sure that the authors within that entity collection are diverse and have people of colour, people from different continents, different countries, different linguistic kind of backgrounds, and then sometimes the questions that go through my head of when we don't achieve that, and what are the reasons why we're failing to achieve that. And sometimes thinking what would the best way to achieve that be for me to simply get out the way as another sort of white straight man sort of taken up that editorial position, should I just sort of say, "actually, I'm not the person who should be doing this" sometimes. And that it is interesting hearing the different experiences in the US to the UK, there's different demographic reasons and different histories, but some of the same recurring issues around access and expense, and what people perceive University for and who they perceive it has been for. So it's really interesting to hear that as an educator and pedagoger. How about as a researcher, as a person of colour, in terms of the research culture of our discipline, which also remains predominantly white, and how can we begin to shift that?

**Jonathan Jones**

For myself as-as a person of colour, I mean, it's just, I think, I approach this in two ways. On one hand, it's that I have to remind myself constantly that the experiences that I'm having have value for other folks. It's very funny, when I was getting my PhD, I was in my defence, and my dissertation chair, Philip Taylor, we were talking about my work at the close of the meeting. And he said to me, "So what articles do you think that you might publish from this? Or do you think there might be a book that could come out of this?" and I remember thinking at the time, and this is seven years ago now, that that wasn't my impulse, I didn't feel like that was something that I needed to do, I just wanted to do my work. And if people found value in that, because they encountered it, by working with me at some point, great, I was just not interested in doing more than that. And I know how that that was just backwards thinking altogether. Like, if I want people to have access to what I'm doing, and it to have value, I have to put that out there. So just reminding myself to write more is vital.

But then the other piece is that as a mentor, and as an advisor, I mean, when I have that one student of colour in my class, I don't want to put them on the spot in that space, necessarily, because I think that that's one of the challenges that people of colour often have when they're in an all white or mostly white environment that they feel like they're sort of the token voice that they have to speak up. And in a classroom that's not appropriate when people are in person. But in terms of kind of inspiring, and inviting people to contribute to scholarship, I feel like that that is vital. And so that was one of the conversations, again, that came out post the murder of George Floyd, was me reaching out to people like explicitly to say, I know that the work that you're doing has value and other people need to see that it's going on. Because if we don't start getting those voices into the journals, and out there in the literature, it seems like it's not happening. And it's another layer that I think was as the editor of ARTSPRAXIS that in the wake of kind of this reckoning that we were having, certainly in the US and the New York theatre community, about how white the field is and what that means, a lot of folks were reflecting on the work saying that there weren't enough voices of colour, like that they just didn't exist. And I thought, well, that's not true. It's true that there aren't enough voices. But it's not that the voices don't exist. It's just that they're disparate, and they're not being centred in such a way. And so I immediately put out a call for papers for *ARTSPRAXIS* to do a special issue that was just going to be about racial and social justice practices in Educational Theatre, because I know that folks are doing that work already. And just to have it collected in one place would be very helpful. Of course, there are other journals and other publications that will do similar work. But I knew that that was something that I could do immediately. And still, as I say, this idea of mentorship and also, as an academic advisor, that for some of my students, like just making them kind of come to grips with you, too, could be a doctoral student. And even if you don't, just being able to write narratives of practice, being able to draw upon what you've learned about kind of research paradigms and putting that into actual practice, as opposed to it just being some assignment that you did for a class but actually as a way of reflecting on your work, sharing your work, communicating that to a wider audience is really vital. And so I sort of see that as one of my roles to find these folks who are out there doing the work and making sure that I'm on the one hand, encouraging them to publish. On the other hand, though also, if they feel like they're not sure how to do that. Or if they feel like the kind of gatekeepers who are running these organisations might not be open to their voices, like finding ways to kind of break that wall down and really let them in.

**Matthew Reason**

I think that description of the experience that there are the voices out there, and your criticism and critique of that, saying they are there, it's just they're not being heard, is really important and really powerful to hear. It's something which I think I've heard myself and maybe even heard of people in the room I'm working with saying is that that difficulty of finding voices, and it strikes me as the difficulty then is to simply try harder and to be more proactive in working that way. And also thinking and looping back maybe to that classroom experience I have myself, and that description you have there of making sure that the one student of colour in the room doesn't have to speak up for everything that their identity might represent, is really important.

I remember a while back, I was invited to give a paper at a conference in South Africa. And as you know, quite excited, and I've been to South Africa before, it was only after accepted that they told me it was on diversity. And I immediately had that thought, is it appropriate that I'm the person they invite to South Africa, given all of that history, to talk about, this was about children's theatre and diversity. And in thinking around that, I found a paper by the Jamaican novelist Marlon Jones called "Why I'm done talking about diversity" in which he kind of explicitly kind of has this kind of thought experiment about shouldn't all diversity panels be all white, because it's white folks who have to do the work, you have to make inclusion happen, which I thought was an interesting image. So in that sense, as a researcher, and that reaching out to people, again, is that an activist act? Or is that just good practice for every academic?

**Jonathan Jones**

it should be good practice, but doesn't necessarily seem to be happening all over the place. I remember when I was in the doctoral programme, as a student, one of my colleagues, she felt like she wasn't getting opportunities, not necessarily in our programme, but in the field in a certain respect, because she was a woman. And I remember saying to her, like that for myself, because I feel like, I feel like I work very hard, but in some respects, I feel like I've been kind of lucky to be given a lot of the opportunities that I've had. And I said, you know, if I feel like if those around me are not getting opportunities what can I do? How can I change that? And she said, you know, to her, that if you can bring folks along or find ways to advocate for other folks, then you're doing a tremendous service when you have those opportunities. And we had that conversation probably eight years ago, and I never forgot it. So I'm always thinking about finding ways to promote other folks. And I don't know that I necessarily succeed all the time, but I'm thinking about it. And so, you know, I sort of do the dance like, Am I the voice that's appropriate for folks to hear from? And if I think that I might not be what capacity do I have to allow other folks to step up as well. We did some work in China, I was invited to give a lecture and to do some workshops with folks in Shanghai, it was a huge conference there with 5000 classroom teachers and administrators who are participating. And I remember going into it thinking like, Oh, I'm going to be really prepared, because I'm going to do drama work that's drawing upon like Chinese mythology. And for some reason, I felt like that was culturally appropriate. And in some ways it could have been, except that my reading of the mythology was through, not just a Western lens, but an American lens, for sure. And so just the way that I talked about the character, it was all off. And I didn't realise it was off until I was in the space and seeing how the folks were responding. And I realised that you know, I just was a little bit off the mark.

So then in the last year, I was invited to go back again to do some work. And I said, I need to know a lot more about the audience and the participants before I step into that environment, because I don't want to find myself sort of caught out there where I had good intentions, but they just sort of misfired. So I think there's something to be said about that too, as well, that, you know, in whatever capacity, one can do some kind of I would call it kind of diagnostic assessment, but it's hard to figure out in the moment. But if you can do it in advance to figure out who it is that you're going to be working with, and what their needs are, whatever that community is, I think is worthwhile, whether I'm thinking about my own students, I'm thinking about, you know, going into another culture, whatever that's going to look like. I think within that there's a powerful message which is not to presume that your audience are going to be like you. And they're going to have the same kind of cultural references and cultural meanings as yourself. And I suppose that's particularly a message that a white academic who is used to addressing audiences who are more like them should definitely heed and adhere to.

**Matthew Reason**

Just shifting slightly in terms of the range of things we're talking about, and maybe what our relationships are to the institutions that host us, so the universities and the colleges and those institutional structures and-and what they do to themselves as activists. I'm interested in, we've got various terms kind of floating around sometimes in the UK about the Civic University or the Socially Responsible University. And I'm wondering if there's a scope of possibility for an Activist University and what that might look like. Whether they exist or whether it's kind of almost an antithesis to what kind of a-an institution might be.

**Jonathan Jones**

That's such a great question. Golly. So I'm sure that when folks are listening to this, this response will come immediately. But I took a long, long pause there, because I was thinking about trying to imagine what that would look like. Both if I think about working in the US and nonprofit organizations and what the limitations that they kind of have on political speech, I think, in particular, and not that one should be dissuaded from doing activist work because of limitations on political speech, because it doesn't have to be political. And so then thinking about, you know, what impact that would have on the university. It's hard to say, to me, I think that I believe in the idea that all theatre is kind of activist by its very nature, both in terms of what a playwright chooses to include in their work or leave out. And in the same way, what a director decides, or an artistic director of an organisation, decides that they're going to produce. And so when I think about education, the same is true that it is activist by its very nature. And as an educator, when you're developing your curriculum, what you choose to include, what you choose to exclude, is an activist action just in and of itself. And so there's that side to it. And it's really a question of, does an academic institution seek to maintain the status quo? Or are they oriented towards trying to change the system, whether that's locally, nationally or globally, for a particular demographic of folks, however, that's going to be.

And I think I'm in particularly for myself, working at an institution like NYU, which is just this behemoth it is so large, so many tens of thousands of students, reaching all across the world, I think there are some aspects of the university that are very much pushing towards racial and social justice. And there are other large swaths of the institution that that might not be. And so if the whole institution was going to be working in that direction, I think that would be fantastic. In the United States we have historically black colleges and universities, so HBCUs, like that, I know that these organisations exist, why they exist, historically, that we used to have segregation, and there needed to be these institutions for our black population. Well, that's not why they exist today, because those students could go elsewhere. However, because of the inherent racism that is sort of underpinning our society in America, those institutions, they're just vital altogether in terms of providing an environment where black folks can have that space of being just speaking to folks who share similar experiences to them, lived experience, but also knowing that when those folks go out into the professional world, that they're going to serve as a network to, you know, just as I was describing about my own work before, that is going to find yourself in a position of power in some kind of way and that then you're going to have the ability to bring other folks along, sort of changing the system from that point of view. So since those organisations exists, I know that a school can be centred around that. I don't know that they were founded for that reason, necessarily, but certainly they can be serving that role today. So yes, yes, we could have institution and we should have more of them.

**Matthew Reason**

An excellent proclamation. I realised that certainly my, a lot of our maybe, but definitely my, conversation here is presumed that activism is for progressive ends. And I realised, actually that you couldn't be activists in all sorts of political directions and all sorts of ways and-and we've had examples fairly recently of kind of more regressive activism in that sense. And I think that's worth noting that there is no way that even arts activism or theatre activism or educational activism is necessarily always progressive. Sometimes universities are operating maybe in the opposite direction, towards maintaining status quo is in different ways, in different manners. I'm interested in this the Free University Movements and the Free Black University in the UK, which is an interesting way of breaking open those ways that institutions are difficult to turn around, you know, they're so large, how do they reverse those structures in a way.

**Jonathan Jones**

As a kind of endpoint, you talked earlier about wanting to reorientate theatre performance to be a direct call for action. So at the end of each performance, the audiences might have some quite specific things for them to go and act upon. And I was wondering whether you might have any particular kind of call for actions to when this conversation. Maybe to academics, researchers or students, postgraduate students, who are listening about what calls for actions would you suggest they have in the area of activism and education and race. To be direct; share your voice. I've just been working on a book chapter where I'm talking about why doing devised theatre is a culturally responsive practice and why we need to see more of it. I think, as I understand it in the UK and in Australia that there's a lot of devised theatre work that goes on with young people as part of the educational parameters, I guess. While in the theatre and education in the United States, much less so. And when I see folks who are doing that work, I think, you know, why is this so important? And why is it so transformative? And it is that you're allowing folks to use the stage in order to give voice to their own thoughts, ideas, creative sensibilities, in a very particular and important way. And so for folks who are listening, I think it's just really important that everybody has a sense that the work that they are doing in whatever capacity, whether they're a student, whether they're a practitioner, a facilitator, a teacher, whomever they might be, that their work has value to more folks than the people in the room. I mean, I decided to get my PhD because I was working at a high school where I felt like I was having tremendous success with the students who I was working with individually. But I was at a school that had 5000 students. And so for the folks who I was working with, and I knew sort of what impact I was having on their kind of academic performance, in their artistic development. But also just in finding a space for them, I had this sort of like, diverse group of oddballs, who I sort of brought together and made them feel like they had a home and a sense of belonging. And as soon as they walked out of my classroom that was not supported. So they kept coming back to me. And if I couldn't change the school structure, I wasn't going to really have the impact that I wanted to have. So I said, I'm not doing this anymore, I need to go out and work with teachers so that that way, when they're in their environments, they're going to be able to make that change, that's going to have more of an impact on the folks. So I knew that I had more capacity than I was aware of, that I could reach more people. And so I think, you know, finding that within yourself, what is the value in the work that you're doing? And how can you share that with others and finding whatever way to make that happen? And if you're not sure, I'm here, reach out to me, please. You know, there are those folks who are out there who are willing to provide you with a platform and a space to speak. And so find the helpers and get to them, because we're here and ready and willing to-to provide you with that.

**Matthew Reason**

And that's a really generous offer. But I think it's one that almost senior academics, in some sense, maybe implicitly think they offer, you know, think we have opened doors, or we think we're open to be contacted by people. But maybe we need to be more proactive in making that offer and saying to people actually, you know, reach out to us to ask for help, to ask for mentoring, or support in all sorts of ways. And often where I think academics our position are very willing and eager to lend our support or our platform or our help do what we can to other voices as well, we're aware that I'm certainly aware that my voice shouldn't be the only one that's heard. And then often cases isn't the one that should be heard in different contexts.

**Jonathan Jones**

And to know that when you're putting on an artistic piece, when you're editing a volume, like whose work you're putting in that is kind of transmuting to the audience, do you have a space in this environment, in this journal, whatever it's going to be, and that that's really important. You know, when you put on a performance of all people of colour, written and directed by people of colour, that lets your community know, oh, they value those voices, I might have a space for that. And just because you invite people to be in your audience or to be among your readership, if they're not seeing themselves reflected in that artwork or in that scholarship, then it's just not going to have the impact that you intend.

**Matthew Reason**

In the same way when teaching students, who need to hear the examples and the reading and so on that reflects them and their experience as well and that their voices are heard. Thank you very much, Jonathan. That's great speaking to you. I look forward to reading your chapter and your work as it comes out. And it was-was great talking to you. Thank you very much.

**Jonathan Jones**

Thank you, Matthew. It's great talking to you as well.