

00:00:10:03 - 00:00:26:18

Sarah

Hello! Today's mini-episode is a conversation with Doctor Jill L Creighton, a higher education professional and the host of SA Voices from the Field podcast. She came to talk with us about her experience as a transracial adoptee, and how she would like to see adoption represented on film and television.

00:00:26:20 - 00:00:46:02

Heather

Before we begin, we want to acknowledge the lands from which we recorded this podcast and from where you are listening are part of territories that have long served as a gathering place for diverse indigenous peoples. And we are thankful as guests on this land to be able to live, work and gather here together. We continue to learn about the history that came before us and encourage you to do the same.

00:00:46:04 - 00:01:01:00

Sarah

Quick reminder to our listeners that this interview should not be taken as medical advice, and it is for informational purposes only because everyone's brain is different. Please consult your health care professional if you have any questions.

00:01:01:02 - 00:01:03:17

Heather

Hello, Jill, and welcome to Braaaains.

00:01:03:22 - 00:01:05:08

Jill

Thank you so much for having me.

00:01:05:10 - 00:01:08:11

Heather

Can you tell us a little about yourself and what you do?

00:01:08:13 - 00:01:31:11

Jill

That is an incredibly, complex question. identity. Identity is something that I spend a lot of time thinking about on a daily basis because of the population of human beings that I spend my time with. and how we define identity and what that means and how we choose to put certain identities forward first or not, depending on the environment.

00:01:31:17 - 00:01:53:06

Jill

So I host another podcast for my profession. And so I was realizing, as I was sitting down to the

mic that my lens for this conversation needs to be extremely different than my normal lens for my podcasting space. And I'm in my regular podcasting chair with my regular podcasting headphones on. So it's kind of interesting to have to shift my ontology and the framework from which I talk about this.

00:01:53:06 - 00:02:14:01

Jill

So I guess the first answer is I am a professional podcaster. I host a podcast called Student Affairs Voices from the field, which is hosted through, US based 501 C3 nonprofit called Naspa, which is a 501 C3 that supports higher education and student affairs professionals. So that's kind of how I got my start with this big, fancy microphone.

00:02:14:03 - 00:02:35:17

Jill

I think my second identity right now would probably be as an expat and figuring out what that means and what life looks like and what joy looks like in these spaces. but I'm also a hobbyist musician. I'm a partner. I'm, a traveler. I think first in, in my, personal life, I'm a partner, and second, a traveler, for sure.

00:02:35:19 - 00:02:57:10

Jill

I'm a sister. I'm a daughter. I'm a person who values friends and deep relationships. I'm not a huge fan of small talk. but I'm also becoming acutely aware in my expat life that I'm super American. Way more than I thought I was. even though I think of myself as a very global human, I'm also a dual citizen.

00:02:57:12 - 00:03:02:12

Jill

so many, many layers. to the question of who you are, but I think that's where I'd start.

00:03:02:14 - 00:03:22:09

Heather

Amazing, I love that. I will say one of the things that I am finding joyous about, Jill being abroad is that, she is trying all the different flavors of Oreos where she is. And, I really am enjoying, the flavors that I don't have to try. So thank you.

00:03:22:11 - 00:03:24:04

Heather

For sharing that content.

00:03:24:06 - 00:03:31:06

Sarah

Well, you have to share your handle, so everybody can follow along and know which Oreos to

avoid.

00:03:31:08 - 00:03:38:20

Jill

Pro tip do not eat the rice wine, Oreos and the peach grape Oreos. Also not my jam.

00:03:38:22 - 00:03:39:13

Sarah

Interesting.

00:03:39:13 - 00:03:47:06

Jill

But the vanilla bean Oreos you can't get in the US. Those are amazing. And, the the Mango Oreo is pretty good.

00:03:47:10 - 00:03:52:03

Sarah

Can you tell us a little bit about your adoption story, however much you feel comfortable sharing?

00:03:52:05 - 00:04:13:06

Jill

Sure. So let me recenter that with the identity based answer first. which is one of my identities is as a trans racial adoptee. So my trans racial identity is as a trans racial Korean American adoptee. So what that means is that I was born in Korea. I was adopted as an infant, to, my parents in the United States.

00:04:13:08 - 00:04:34:11

Jill

my parents are both white identified. my father comes from, an Irish English, French genetic heritage. And my mother comes from a Scandinavian genetic heritage. Norwegian. So if I were a biological product of my parents, I'd probably be a very small blond person. but I am not. And so, my brother and I actually are both transracial adoptees.

00:04:34:17 - 00:04:55:19

Jill

And that means that culturally and ethnically, although born not in that context. That's the context that is my family and my home and my identity. And trans racial identity is one of the most complex and unexplored identities in academic literature. it's unexplored in terms of racial bias. It's unexplored in terms of inclusion. in terms of the mainstream.

00:04:55:20 - 00:05:18:10

Jill

Now, there are some amazing scholars doing good work in this area, but it's not something that has, made its way into the Zeit geist in terms of real dialog, other than people co-opting the term and actually creating more confusion for the general public. but trans racial identity is something that is so complex that we don't have the language to talk about it in a lot of places in our lives.

00:05:18:12 - 00:05:44:11

Jill

And most trans racial people experience discrimination based on their, perceived identity. both by the identity that there's, quote unquote, supposed to be perceived as an, as the identity that we actually identify through. And so those spaces mean that we are actually more closely aligned with multiracial people in terms of our daily experiences than we are with, kind of monolithic identity.

00:05:44:13 - 00:06:12:22

Heather

One of the things in that we've talked about around adoption before is just like we always try to look at the positive spin, but really the misrepresentation, I think, on television and film. And beyond that, I ask the question like, is anyone getting it right? I feel like the answer is no, but I'd love to have your thoughts on like, you know, how do you think of what we're seeing right now in terms of like, as you said earlier, not even scholars are talking about your adoption experience, but then even just adoption appears across the board.

00:06:12:24 - 00:06:19:07

Heather

I feel like, you know, it's like a very complicated subject. But, you know, what do you think about what we're seeing right now?

00:06:19:09 - 00:06:44:09

Jill

The number one pet peeve of mine in adoption stories being told in mainstream media, and this is typically fictionalized, written narrative TV and movies is the heroism angle on adoption. almost all adoption stories are told through the lens of the parent, not through the child. And the lens of the parent is that that I'm saving this baby from a terrible fate.

00:06:44:11 - 00:07:08:20

Jill

and it's actually the savior ism is just frustrating. It's misrepresenting. And it really makes me quite angry when I see those stories being told. Because it it does. It does the story dirty. It's the only way to. I know several other adoptees who share feelings in this space. who who wonder when representation will come to screen.

00:07:09:00 - 00:07:35:24

Jill

And part of that is that writers who are writing adoption stories don't know anything about adoption, and that is hugely problematic in media. it's kind of the exact same problems that we replicated from, white writers writing black stories or having, straight writers write LGBTQi stories without having any of these contextual elements. So whenever you have a person in majority identity who is completely naive or, you know, rising to the top of the Dunning-Kruger mountain.

00:07:35:24 - 00:07:56:08

Jill

Stupid, right? Writing for these populations that don't know anything about what it's like to be a person, a member of that, identity, you get stories that are misrepresenting, you get stories that are inaccurate, and you get stories that, are really designed to make the receiver of those stories feel good. So, like, The Blind Side is one of the worst offenders.

00:07:56:10 - 00:08:15:23

Jill

Michael or story? He's adopted by the character Sandra Bullock plays. I can't remember her name, but listen to me. and that is a transracial adoption story, technically. Michael was adopted in, teenaged era of his life, almost adulthood. And, you know, the way that the writers frame that story for The Blind Side is that they saved him.

00:08:15:23 - 00:08:36:18

Jill

And if you listen to Michael or talk about his story now, he would never tell you that he was saved. And so it's just an interesting twist. we also see this happen really anytime you see a blended family on TV that way. I've only seen maybe 1 or 2 shows, actually attempt to be honest with adoption stories.

00:08:36:24 - 00:09:01:21

Jill

One of them is because it's not mentioned. Actually, there's a film from the mid 2000 called Dan in Real Life. That's when Steve Carell is starting to break into drama. It's almost like a bottle movie. It takes place all in this cabin for the most part, or this lake house. And one of the characters, I think that the sibling of Steve Girls character, has a transracial adopted daughter, and they don't talk about her identity.

00:09:01:22 - 00:09:18:05

Jill

They don't talk about the fact that she's adopted. She's just in their family, which is how my experience was. I was just that's just my family. And so one of the other things that bothers me about narratives around adoption is that it has to be made a big deal of all the time. And in families that are truly integrated.

00:09:18:05 - 00:09:43:02

Jill

And I use that word, I know that's a very loaded word. I use that word, fairly intentionally in this case, but that have done the work of blending the family. Well, it's not a topic of regular conversation, because that only serves to alienate the child, or to serve as a heroism story for the parent. Now, the other side of this is that the adoptee community and the social work community and the foster community.

00:09:43:02 - 00:10:07:15

Jill

So even in, non transracial adoption stories, where you might place a person of, perceived race with a family of that same perceived race, those stories are also riddled with challenges in mainstream media. Those stories, though, real people who actually live that life, there's a lot of neglect. There's a lot of abuse. There's a lot of, manipulation of the system.

00:10:07:17 - 00:10:33:10

Jill

And so the reality for people that are adopted of any identity to a family of any identity, there's a higher, higher risk for adverse childhood experiences or Aces. The one thing to center here is that for many adoptees, this is not a generalized overall statement. But for many adoptees, the adoption itself is a traumatic childhood event. And I'm not saying we should go the other way and dramatize stories of trauma.

00:10:33:12 - 00:10:54:00

Jill

We have a lot of that in media as well, but there's not really been a great, accurate portrayal, that I've seen. But the one that is probably tried the best is actually Shonda Rhimes. this there's a story in Gray's Anatomy. There's a character named Maggie, who is actually, like the biological, child of Richard and Ellis.

00:10:54:02 - 00:10:56:16

Jill

for those of you who stuck around with Gray's like, more than.

00:10:56:18 - 00:10:59:01

Heather

You, it's very like.

00:10:59:03 - 00:11:23:06

Jill

She's adopted to a family that's just her family. And that, for me, was a more healthy portrayal. and she's choosing whether or not to discover a connection with the biological identity that she carries. but for many adoptees, there's a language piece that also I find just absolutely

infuriating, which is, oh, your real parents that that is, so insulting.

00:11:23:06 - 00:11:46:08

Jill

It is incredibly insulting. not only to me as a human, to my parents, and to the biological, parental lineage that I carry with me. It's insulting to everybody. so if, if any, what any of you are doing social justice work with language changes in your life, please never say your real parents to a person who is of adopted descent.

00:11:46:10 - 00:12:05:03

Jill

you could use the term biological parents. That's accurate. but for me, I refer to my parents just as my parents and the people who I have genetic lineage from as my biological parents or some people will even be more pejorative and say, egg donor, sperm donor. but that's really up to that person to claim their own language.

00:12:05:05 - 00:12:12:00

Jill

but as a person who was not adopted, please, please never say, quote unquote your real parents to somebody. It is deeply offensive.

00:12:12:06 - 00:12:20:11

Heather

My question after that, like, what kind of representation that you've talked a little bit about it throughout, but what kind of representation would you like to see?

00:12:20:13 - 00:12:43:03

Jill

I would like to see representation that is complex. because there is no so the adoptee community is spoken about as a monolith, but no two stories are alike. So, we as a society, especially in Western and American Canadian society, have a tendency to really try to force people to fit inside of a box. And those narratives come out of that box.

00:12:43:05 - 00:13:06:19

Jill

you know, if you go back to the history of comedy, there's something like, you know, only allegedly seven kinds of comedy. And so then all of those comedies fit into those seven boxes, but it doesn't leave room for thinking outside of those boxes. so I would love to see a story that, represents somebody where their adoption story is not about their trauma or not about, the heroism of the people that adopted them.

00:13:06:21 - 00:13:27:00

Jill

There are a lot of people for whom, adoption is part of their identity, but it's not their first or forward identity. but it's a it's a component that all of us bring to the table every day in different ways. And it could be something. that is something that creates pride. It could be something that creates shame.

00:13:27:02 - 00:13:55:02

Jill

It could be something that creates anxiety or fear, or it could be also a space for people that is full of joy, depending on their own story, or their blended story. So I would like to see, somebody really try to capture the authenticity of someone else's adoption story outside of a documentary. Now, there are plenty of good documentaries about the adoption stories or the roots tracing stories of, adoptees.

00:13:55:07 - 00:14:12:20

Jill

But there's this is another thing I'll go back to, actually, which is there's, so if you're not in the trauma or you're not in the heroism, you're in the quote unquote, finding your roots story, which forces adoptees to believe that their only way to being a whole person is to, quote unquote, figure out where they came from.

00:14:12:22 - 00:14:33:24

Jill

And that is not a true narrative for all people. especially a little adopted people. And so I would love to see that be broken and, and really figure out where else that can be. there are a couple of, celebrities right now who have transracial adoptee identity that are doing really well in Hollywood. And Lana Condor, I'll give a shout out to her.

00:14:33:24 - 00:14:47:00

Jill

She's a transracial Vietnamese adoptee as far as I know. she was in, to All the Boys I love before, and she's got she just had a movie with one of the Sweet life twins. the spouses, Dylan and Dylan.

00:14:47:02 - 00:14:47:16

Sarah

Cole.

00:14:47:17 - 00:14:50:21

Jill

Cool. There we go. We got there.

00:14:50:23 - 00:14:51:07

Heather



But one.

00:14:51:07 - 00:15:11:01

Jill

Of them just did, moonshot, I think with Lana Condor. So she's out there. you know, making a name for herself and doing well. as an actor. And then also, one of the Top Chef winners recently. Kristen, her last name is going to escape me right now, but Kristen from Top Chef. she is a Korean adoptee as well.

00:15:11:01 - 00:15:39:07

Jill

Transracial bringing it up to, And she has told her story in various ways, but her first identity is as a chef. at least her public identity is as a chef. so allowing for people to be themselves first is part of what I'd like to see in those representative stories. And I'd love to see more trans racial adoptees in writing rooms actually telling those stories, in a way that is not intended to represent everyone with a similar background.

00:15:39:09 - 00:15:59:16

Jill

we do a lot of that, kind of pedestal thinking where this person's story is supposed to represent all people with a story, and that doesn't allow for the complexity of humanity. And those are these are the exact same problems that repeating with other people of marginalized identities. So it's not new.

00:15:59:18 - 00:16:12:17

Sarah

Every person we speak with on our podcast says we're not a monolith. And it's like it's very apparent to people in marginalized communities. But yet our media and entertainment is not catching up to that.

00:16:12:20 - 00:16:30:22

Heather

Well, what happens to is like, I was just talking to my showrunner today and the pressure that sometimes they're like, well, we have to get we want to have, room with different people from different experiences, but we only have five people we can have in the room, or four people can have the room, and then you can't capture all the experiences.

00:16:30:22 - 00:16:51:10

Heather

And then what happens is, you know, there is a amazing show called Porter that was at CBC. It was an, black writing room. it was a story about black porters in Canada. And their people were like, oh, thank God, for the first time I get to just be myself south, and I don't have to represent suddenly all the people.

00:16:51:12 - 00:17:06:23

Heather

and I feel like that happens a lot. You're in a room and you only get to write that story instead of being able to say no. There's pieces of my experiences that are human, that belong to all the characters. And I'm not just here to write one. Whereas you as a showrunner, get to write everybody.

00:17:06:24 - 00:17:29:22

Jill

Looking at them is not a solution to your diversity problem, right? And I think that's what we see in corporate boardrooms. We see that tokenism play out for people. Any person who's ever lived on the margins of society. And I'm stealing that quote from Doctor Tumi. I just had a conversation with her on my show, about what, living in America as a brown woman is, like, right now.

00:17:30:00 - 00:17:57:10

Jill

So when we see that tokenism play out, it means that you still are actually creating an oppressive environment for your writers. Yes. It still means that people are fighting to be heard for whatever mystical reason that you're creating. And it also means that you're not going to have the complexity of the human story. And if your people in the room of whatever marginalized identity you've chosen them to fill.

00:17:57:12 - 00:18:24:13

Jill

do not get the opportunity to be broad thinkers. You're missing out, and you're forcing them to explain why they are marginalized on repeat. And so it actually becomes bigger labor than, people of those majority identities probably are aware of. And there's another great quote that I can't remember who it's attributed to you. Now, but somebody said, why do people of color or people from marginalized journeys, have to make a spectacle of our pain in order to be heard?

00:18:24:15 - 00:18:27:18

Jill

And that is a consistent message in Hollywood?

00:18:27:23 - 00:18:49:21

Heather

Yes. When you create those spaces that, you know, we're gonna tell the story, and the story's being led by the person that this story is supposed to be reflective of versus it being like, come on, you know, we just want your trauma. Or a lot of people think if to get into a program, at any of the studios, you have to like to, like, give all your trauma because it feels like that is what they're asking for in there.

00:18:49:23 - 00:18:57:23

Sarah

So it's yeah, but that's what it seems like in every application. It's like, why are you unique? Tell me about what terrible things happened in your life.

00:18:58:00 - 00:19:08:00

Jill

Like, yeah, let me just please disclose all of your private details. Yeah. So I can decide if your trauma is worthy of my space. and that is a weird way to frame things.

00:19:08:02 - 00:19:16:04

Heather

Yes, yes, yes. And it's as long as you're okay, as long as you're not in your trauma space, though, like. Right. You ever had trauma, but now you're okay.

00:19:16:06 - 00:19:18:16

Sarah

To be still dealing with it?

00:19:18:18 - 00:19:22:09

Jill

Yes. You have to have been damaged, but you can't be dazzled.

00:19:22:11 - 00:19:26:05

Heather

Yes. Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah.

00:19:26:07 - 00:19:43:23

Jill

I so I'll, I'll also throw out, Marcus Harvey Green quote. He, was a writer for the Seattle Times. when I saw this. I actually don't know what he's doing now. but he said something to the effect of there's a substantial difference between all are welcome here. And this was made with you in mind.

00:19:44:00 - 00:20:10:20

Jill

And I think we are always working towards the latter, and we're not very successful at it. And so when we talk about stories of inclusion or processes of storytelling that are resulting in inclusion, I think we're still kind of stuck in the we believe all are welcome here. Why don't you feel welcome versus we intentionally created and curated an environment where voices are honored, where people are welcome to share their experiences.

00:20:10:22 - 00:20:41:18

Jill

one of my, most recent favorite films actually is an animated feature from Pixar called turning Red. and it was a great, Chinese Canadian story of a young girl growing up. That was one of Pixar's first films ever fully written by, a woman of color. Actually, it might be the first. And, her name is Domi Li, and, Domi, was just touted by all of the creators that she worked with for creating one of the most inclusive sets ever, that they'd ever worked on.

00:20:41:18 - 00:20:58:19

Jill

And so we also see different ways of leading when we invite voices that haven't had a chance to be in the front of the room. And also does leadership have to be in the front of the room? that's a very Western patriarchal model of leadership. And so there's a question to me too, is what does it look like?

00:20:59:00 - 00:21:05:22

Jill

when we work from a more restorative place or a more circular leadership or domain based leadership place?

00:21:05:24 - 00:21:06:18

Heather

yes.

00:21:06:20 - 00:21:22:09

Sarah

I was just talking with my daughter and my husband today about what makes a good leader. And so it's just funny that you bring this all up and we're talking about, you know, leaders help other people grow and get better, and you're helping the group to do the best thing. And it's not about who's telling who because she's like everybody so bossy.

00:21:22:11 - 00:21:45:23

Sarah

But anyway, it was just like an interesting way that my husband brought up and explaining what a leader is because he's a leader in his role at work, and that it's about him making sure his staff is able to do the best. And I think that is it is making an inclusive environment so people feel comfortable. I think the environments that we create on set, and I've experienced that with some of my, you know, people I've worked with in my world as an editor and working with marginalized folks as directors.

00:21:45:23 - 00:22:01:15

Sarah

I always have a different experience than working with the typical, what was once the majority of

all directors. Right. it's just a different environment. Completely. And it's so my name day. Sometimes it's wild.

00:22:01:17 - 00:22:05:24

Jill

And I want to clarify to you, I've never worked professionally in film or television.

00:22:06:01 - 00:22:09:03

Heather

And I like pop culture.

00:22:09:09 - 00:22:25:04

Jill

When I was writing my doctoral dissertation, I started taking breaks, by reading and consuming, entertainment, quote unquote news, because it was the exact opposite of doctoral research. And, then I kind of got sucked in from there.

00:22:25:06 - 00:22:26:21

Sarah

Yeah, sometimes it's it's just.

00:22:26:21 - 00:22:28:22

Heather

An article, but that's okay.

00:22:28:24 - 00:22:33:10

Heather

It's just I'm like, this is a press release. This is a press release.

00:22:33:12 - 00:22:37:04

Jill

Or that is a sentence that is definitely a sentence.

00:22:37:06 - 00:22:40:15

Sarah

And what am I learning now?

00:22:40:17 - 00:22:46:01

Heather

You mentioned, Kristen, I think it's Kish because you shared a really great article.

00:22:46:03 - 00:22:47:09

Jill

The top Chef winner. Thank you.

00:22:47:09 - 00:23:08:05

Heather

Yes, yes. And you, you shared a great article with me or not? Sorry I said article, but it was a Facebook post because she went back to she returned to Korea for the first time since she was adopted. And I think you'd said at the time that you felt like it was maybe one of the first mainstream inauthentic adoption stories of that, like of that experience.

00:23:08:07 - 00:23:14:22

Heather

And so how did seeing that story or the potential for that story make you feel? What do you hope comes from that?

00:23:15:00 - 00:23:37:03

Jill

So as far as I know, it hasn't come out yet. Or maybe I just super missed it. but at the same time, there's pandemic era, right? So pandemic era when this got announced and we all know that projects got picked up and dropped a lot in that period of time. So I'm not really sure if this will ever come to fruition at this point or if it did and they're in editing or whatever.

00:23:37:05 - 00:24:02:08

Jill

but the the story, what I meant by that was, we don't see a lot of authentic adoption stories in mainstream. We again see it in the documentary space quite a bit. we see it in the, independent space a lot, but we haven't really seen it picked up by a giant like Netflix. So I was excited to see that, the giant decided to care about this story more than anything.

00:24:02:10 - 00:24:21:24

Jill

Now, I don't know Kristen Kish personally, and I don't know a ton about her other than what she has chosen to put out in the media. I also know that, you know, like all humans, we are all very flawed, and there are some people that really resent her for doing this. And the adoptee community, I'm more of the mind of go get yours.

00:24:22:01 - 00:24:23:11

Heather

Somebody is going to pay for you.

00:24:23:13 - 00:24:40:04

Jill

And you want to do it. Take the money and go, but there are others who say that it won't be authentic because it's being produced by an entertainment giant. So I think that people that

have, thoughts about this that are strong on both sides. But until we see the product and to be fair, maybe it came out and I missed it.

00:24:40:04 - 00:24:43:23

Jill

I want to acknowledge that too. And if it did come out, I'll go back and find it. Yeah.

00:24:43:23 - 00:24:48:12

Heather

I didn't see anything. That's why I was like, I just I haven't seen anything yet.

00:24:48:12 - 00:25:17:18

Jill

So, but I'm excited. Like I said, that a mainstream, entertainment, mega giant at this point really has decided to, frame this as important for their narratives and the stories that they want to tell. Because that's an indicator to me that maybe the tide will shift a little bit. and we'll be seeing more stories like that, because really, when we talk about quote unquote diverse stories in media today, the conversation really began as white and black stories.

00:25:17:20 - 00:25:39:24

Jill

We did not see the inclusion of people of other racial identities in those stories. And we also did not see people coming to the forefront, with stories of multiracial identity. And this is just in the, kind of marginalized, protected class of racial identity. We're still missing these stories and ethnic identity. We're missing these stories and disability story.

00:25:40:01 - 00:25:48:23

Jill

And, you know, you name it. women's stories are still weird. I just saw an analysis to about Oscar winning movies and how much women speak in them.

00:25:48:24 - 00:25:51:22

Heather

I saw that graph. Yeah, that graph.

00:25:51:24 - 00:26:20:05

Jill

And it was so intense because I think women spoke the most like 30% of the time in Oscar winning movies. And it just shows us, implicitly, what bias looks like. So I think for me, as we started this conversation centering on adoption narratives in media, ultimately you can have the exact same conversation about most marginalized identities in any industry, and the conversation probably sounds pretty similar.

00:26:20:07 - 00:26:38:20

Jill

The needs are the same, right? The needs are that people of marginalized identities need allies to speak up, because the labor cannot always fall on the person who's experiencing the marginalization. We need allies to do their own work and research and not put the labor on the backs again of the people that are experiencing that marginalization or oppression.

00:26:38:22 - 00:26:59:09

Jill

And we also need people to see each other as complex human beings and really from an intersectional space. If you've never read Doctor Kimberly Crenshaw, she's really the person that coined that term. And the idea is that, in society, because we like labels, boxes, and organizations so much, we only allow people to wear one identity at a time.

00:26:59:09 - 00:27:12:03

Jill

And Doctor Crenshaw's work really calls on us to say, don't make me choose, because I don't divide those things from my own being, so you don't get to divide them for me. You don't get to choose who I am first and foremost. I choose that for me.

00:27:12:05 - 00:27:13:18

Sarah

00:27:14:01 - 00:27:31:08

Heather

Yeah I like that. I like that a lot. And I think to this idea again like we kind of circle that of like being the soul of the soul person or being only seen with the lens of here's the one trait like that idea like you are more than there's intersectionality in us and we can't separate those things.

00:27:31:08 - 00:27:50:07

Heather

But we spoke on earlier podcast with a wonderful woman, who has cerebral palsy, and she said, the best day of my life was when my nephews were born. In the worst day in my life was in my friend died. Those have nothing to do with my disability. And she like, that's the story. Those are the stories I want to tell.

00:27:50:12 - 00:28:09:07

Heather

That's what I want to see represented. Like you even said earlier, when we're talking about adoption stories, it isn't. The adoption doesn't have to be front and center. People can be adopted and exist in the world. And those are the stories. And through the lens, it's one lens that they have one language, but it's not all of the languages.



00:28:09:09 - 00:28:23:01

Jill

And it doesn't mean you don't include that component of the narrative. It just means that it can be an element. It doesn't always have to be a focus. Like if you're featuring an adopted character in your story, their adoption does not have to be the only thing that that character's about.

00:28:23:06 - 00:28:31:13

Heather

Now, I realize that we are getting closer to our time with you. So what is one thing that you would like people to take away when they're thinking about the impact of adoption?

00:28:31:19 - 00:29:05:01

Jill

I'll maybe get three things one saviorism, heroism. Stories of the parents are trash. Stop telling them to do your own work on the narratives of people of all marginalized identities, and don't try to represent them, without them, or don't try to represent us without us, depending on what you're talking about. And the third is, if you get to be the leader of those spaces, do your work to understand what tokenism is and how you might be perpetuating that and the spaces that you have control over.

00:29:05:03 - 00:29:14:02

Heather

That's fantastic. Where can people listen to your podcast, find out more about you, follow you, whatever you'd like to share with our listeners. Sure.

00:29:14:04 - 00:29:32:21

Jill

my podcast is called Essay Voices from the field essay stands for Student Affairs. it is very niche and specific to my profession. So if you're not a higher education administrator, probably will not be at all interesting or meaningful to you. But hey, come check us out. and then, you can find me on LinkedIn. Doctor Jill Creighton.

00:29:32:23 - 00:29:43:22

Heather

Fantastic. Thank you so much, Jill, for coming on. And just enlightening us on such amazing information. And please, if you're in higher education, Jill is the bottom, so please listen to her.

00:29:43:24 - 00:29:47:06

Jill

Thank you so much. Appreciate you having me on.

00:29:47:08 - 00:29:52:15

Sarah

Braaains is hosted and produced by Heather and Sarah Taylor, and our theme song is by our little brother Deppisch.

00:29:52:17 - 00:30:10:18

Heather

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