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Start	Dur.	Speaker	Transcription
0:00:01.37	21.7s	Ingrid Nuttall	You're listening to HD Higher Education and Real Diversity, a podcast sponsored by Acro. In this episode, we'll talk to Doctor Keith Mays at the University of Minnesota about the roots of diversity, equity and inclusion de I committees and initiatives and the tension between navigating institutional constraints while trying to make real change. Let's get started.
0:00:29.82	3.7s	Ingrid Nuttall	Hi, Agro Community. Welcome to Herd. I'm Ingrid Nuttle
0:00:34.4	1.6s	Portia LaMarr	and I'm Porsha Lamar
0:00:36.22	1.7s	Tashana Curtis	and I'm Tashana Curtis.
0:00:38.29	55.1s	Ingrid Nuttall	And today we're excited to speak with Dr Keith Mays about the roots of diversity, equity and inclusion. Doctor Mays is an associate professor at the University of Minnesota and currently serves as an associate dean in the Office of Undergraduate Education for DE I Initiatives. He is the director of the Center for Race, indigeneity, disability, gender and sexuality Studies in the College of Liberal Arts, former Chair of the African American African Studies Department and the Horace Timorous Alumni, distinguished teaching. Professor, Doctor Mays earned his phd in history from Princeton University and his teaching and research interests include civil rights education policy and history, black holiday traditions, critical ethnic studies, pedagogy, and the history of African Americans. Doctor Mace has published a new book entitled the unteachable disability rights and the Invention of Black Special Education Avail in January 2023 Doctor Mays. Welcome to Hurd.
0:01:33.90	3.2s	Keith Mayes	Uh Thank you guys for having me. It's a pleasure to be here.
0:01:38.26	15.2s	Ingrid Nuttall	So, Doctor Mei is one of the important parts of our podcast is connecting professional work and lived experiences. And we shared your professional biography just now with our listeners. But what else would you like the acro community to know about you before we get started with our conversation?
0:01:54.83	49.3s	Keith Mayes	I am a native New Yorker born and raised in New York City, Harlem, principally uptown, as we say. And I, I came to Minnesota years ago and discovered there was a community called Uptown. I like. What kind of uptown is that? So I went and checked it out and I'm like, oh, it's a nice, nice neighborhood, but it's not the same. So, but so um but I am from the east coast and you know, that means a lot when it comes to understanding, you know, race and poverty and issues around access and, and systematic oppression. And I'm a working class kid. So uh yes, I may be a middle class professional today, but I grew up as a working poor, working class kid from New York City and that in many ways informs my work um and really kind of defines who I am.

Start	Dur.	Speaker	Transcription
0:02:44.89	17.8s	Ingrid Nuttall	When we were prepping for this episode. We talked briefly about um the history of de I, you and I did and you shared with me that it began in the 19 sixties with the civil rights movement and has grassroots origins. And I'm wondering if you can share a little bit more about that history with our listeners
0:03:02.66	367.9s	Keith Mayes	for sure. So when I think about Dei, I think about, you know, the ways in which it calls for certain kinds of institutional access. So <b>it's</b> about diversity and inclusion and equity and all of those are great <b>sounding</b> words, but they have antecedents and much of what we come to understand about be I is rooted in black and brown grassroots struggles. <b>Uh</b> certainly coming out of the sixties. But even predating the 19 sixties that, you know, <b>I</b> always tell my students that you, you always have to pay attention to what grassroots movements are doing because they are always active. <b>Uh</b> They are always agitated and calling for justice. <b>Uh</b> Black folks <b>have</b> been doing that since they, you know, were taking off those slave ships <b>uh</b> back in the 16 hundreds. But the 19 sixties was special in that it is going to coalesce different kinds of civil rights movements in the plural black and brown being one <b>that's</b> women's movement. <b>The</b> second <b>wave</b> feminism, there was the new left movement. <b>Uh</b> There were <b>uh</b> all kind of <b>uh</b> Asian <b>American</b> and <b>Latinx</b> movements, all coalescing, calling for racial justice. On the one hand, justice for women justice for <b>uh</b> gays and lesbians. <b>We</b> <b>got</b> Stonewall in 1969. So these movements are really principally at the heart of de I because what those communities <b>called</b> for, they wanted freedom, they wanted liberation, they wanted equality. And what we did when I say we, the collective institutions across the country, by the time we got a hold on them, particularly <b>Pwis</b> <b>uh</b> or <b>Hwis</b> <b>uh</b> <b>Pwis</b> pre predominantly white institutions or um <b>higher ed</b> white institutions <b>and</b> corporate institutions, private, the private <b>sector</b> sector did this as well. What they did was they appropriated the language of the movement and they could not deal with calls for freedom <b>and</b> liberation and equality and justice. And so what they gave us was diversity. You guys may remember that multiculturalism was very popular in the 19 eighties and that came out of the 19 seventies <b>in</b> this emphasis on cultural pluralism, which <b>it</b> simply means that we <b>kind of</b> , you know, look at all of these different racial <b>and</b> ethnic groups side by side, <b>they're</b> not part of a melting pot. They are, they each bring their own individual community experiences to the table and they should all be respected as equal. So that comes out of the 19 seventies with this emphasis on pluralism and multiculturalism in the eighties. <b>It's</b> just a rebranding of cultural pluralism, but it gets recast as diversity and as inclusion. And I think that most dominant institutions, they have limitations on what they are. Willing to do. And <b>there's</b> always a question of <b>what is it?</b> Do they have the <b>wherewithal</b> or do they have the desire to wanna call for and extend what ordinary people and movements want? What <b>mo</b> what people want in movements is revolution institutions will never deliver that right? They can only give you reform. So you got revolution on the one hand, what folks call for movements call for but institutions may give you reform. <b>It's</b> not even a guarantee they'll give you that. But it translates into an incrementalism that's based on giving folks crumbs at best. We'll give you tweaks and we'll do small changes to our systems to allow people in. So we'll let's take the <b>d</b> for instance, in diversity. So we'll engage in token forms of diversity and representation <b>of</b> change because that's all we will. That's all we wanna do at the <b>moment</b> moment. It may take another social movement to open up that safety valve more. So you could get more diverse bodies into the room, but it's always incremental. <b>Uh</b> The same thing is true for inclusion. Yes, we'll bring you in. But <b>you know</b> how much power and how much voice do you have in the space. How impactful can your voice be in the space? So that means that folks have to fight again at another level once they get into the institution. And of course, the other aspect of diversity is retention. Will we retain you you know, so <b>the, the, the</b> one part of the fight is getting you in, the other part is, you know, are you heard in the space? And then how long are you gonna stick around? And of course, <b>uh</b> people of color, especially professionals of color are always <b>engaged</b> in a war of attrition, which means that many of them are unlikely to stay because of the politics of the institution itself. So just <b>to</b> , um, sort

Start	Dur.	Speaker	Transcription
			of putting a, but a button on this particular uh answer for, for, from your question is that racial justice in de I work has long been forgotten and we have people now well minded people who want to return us to that. And, you know, every, you know, five or 1010, some odd years, we have inflection moments whether it be the murder of George Floyd or other things that will sort of, you know, place us back to the moment to rethink what we're doing uh in the racial justice space, which is, again, it, it is an extension of the movement. It's a, an ode to the movement. It's a reminder of what those ordinary people call for some 30 40 50 60 years ago.
0:09:12.59	47.2s	Portia LaMarr	Wow, you all, we have come out the gate hot. Ok. That, that was a lot. And, and if you want to, and when you were explaining that it made me think of for those who may be sensitive sometimes in hearing the the, the truth or the background behind diversity inclusion. And, and if we throw it to higher education, it, it, it sounded very similar to how sometimes admissions recruit students, you go out and you recruit all these students, but then you don't retain the students, you didn't figure out how the student would better fit in your university or stay there. So it just, it just really was very, it was a, in my mind, a comparison to that, but on a larger scale. So um
0:09:59.97	32.2s	Keith Mayes	absolutely. And so when we think about admissions work, right? And bringing the students in being mindful of how one can do that, what are the strategies to diversify your first year class? But what is the, so do you tie that to the first year and the second year experience so that they can stay and thrive? And I think institutions try to do a better job. They're trying to do a better job of that now, but they have not always been intentional about linking the two, get them in and making sure they stay.
0:10:32.71	83.1s	Tashana Curtis	Yes. And you know, you also made a good point when you, because, you know, when I first, when Ingrid first brought up the grass roots and the first thing I asked her was, did de I exist then, you know, because I've never heard the term during the civil rights era, but you made some good points when you said the token, you know, the token piece and representation. And like, how do we, you know, for, I'm gonna use me my past experience. Um when I was offered the registrar position, I was so excited, you know, because I've always been like the assistant registrar, the associate registrar and to be the registrar, I was just like, really excited. But then you get to this institution and you're like, ok, I'm the token because I'm the only person that looks like my, you know, that looks like me here. And how do you end with the retention? Because to be honest, I was there maybe 23 years. And I laugh, how do you keep someone at your institution where they don't feel like they are the token or they are the person, you know, to just show face behind the round table with a whole bunch of other Caucasian men. You know,
0:11:55.78	153.9s	Keith Mayes	I think you uh listen to Shana. That's a really good question. So your question is so important to me as I journey into this new space because I'm the only African American sitting at, at my table. And it's not comforting. But what gives me some comfort is that I have powerful white people. Hm, are like minded in their thinking when it comes to doing DE I work and that can make the difference. Now, I won't tell you that they are revolutionaries for de I, they're not that but what they are is people who are well intentioned about changing the institution. So it could be a more wholesome place for bo students uh staff and, and faculty, less faculty because they don't necessarily impact that. But it's mainly staff and students and they had AD E I operation already in place before I was brought over. So if you have, well, meaning white people who are doing the work, let's put to the side how well they're doing it, right. I think that's a sep separate question. But if you're the only African American or Latinx or asian-american or indigenous person in the space, working on issues around uh racial advancement and no one else is doing it. Chances are you won't last in that position long. Not because they may want to get rid of you. But again, I talked about that war of attrition. You just decide that no one really is interested in the work. And so let me just go go elsewhere and make a contribution. So if you don't have a critical mass of black and brown folks around you, hopefully you have, well, you do have always have a critical mass of white

Start	Dur.	Speaker	Transcription
			people. Hopefully some of those folks are working on, on those issues with you so that you won't feel as though you're sitting at a table with a particular voice only expressing uh certain issues to advance certain causes and no one else at that table is and, and so that's my experience now. And if, if it wasn't for those folks at the table. I would already be questioning how long could I last in a row? So that's a very good question.
0:14:30.78	90.2s	Ingrid Nuttall	So I want to poke at that a little bit more too as a like I would say as a well meaning white person. And I think the thing that has um that I have come to recognize for myself is that because because of my identity, there is like an unconscious pull towards structures and sameness that are like familiar and comfort, comfortable that I might because of who I am think are revolutionary when in fact, they're like not super disruptive and um and maybe they result in, in fact, my own professional development, my professional growth, me being someone that is sought out to participate in things which then continues to promote that, that sameness. So like I'm curious about how OK, so in that situation, Tashana finds a group of people who may look like me who want to affect change. But how does that, what are some ways that that needs to work that can get closer to revolution? And what do people who are well, meaning who are familiar and comfortable with those structures? Like how, what should they look at disrupting, you know, like, how, what should they be paying attention to if that makes sense in order to not kind of continually have the gravitational pull towards s sameness?
0:16:01.20	331.4s	Keith Mayes	Really? Also important question Ingrid, I would say one of the places I may want to start is looking at language, the employment of language because I've already heard language that I don't particularly like coming from well meaning people. So the question that I have that other people may have is that OK, so how much of an educational campaign must I engage in with my colleagues who can I actually talk to? And, and what, what level of, of, of tone, uh how much sophistication I have to bring to the conversation, how much and how intentional can I be in what I'm saying? I can already tell you just by meeting you one time and maybe ha having two conversations with, with you Ingrid that I can talk to you in a certain way about certain things relating to de I, I already know that I can't do that with some of my colleagues again. No, knock on them, but it's just where, where they may be in their own educational development and journey. They may not be on one. But let's say that they, let's, let's say they're not, they're not hostile, but let's say that they are indifferent to de I advancement. So how do you work on folks like that? I think you have to use the appropriate language to educate them to say that de I is blank, right? De I is not what you think it is de I has so many more dimensions to it that we ought to be paying attention to how DE I is operating at the departmental level, right, at the individual departments. Let's take one and certainly how we as an exec team may be thinking about it. How have we been processing uh some of the ways in which, you know, we understand, let's say black and brown students who are, who may not be able to access the University of Minnesota or it, once they do, once they get in, they may struggle, you know, in their classes or they may struggle around issues around climate and, and then we cause we, one of the things we have Tashana and Porsche is that we have a retention issue uh uh uh with BP students and they're, they're not completing at the same rate. And they, we, we take surveys, we have something called the C survey. So one of the questions on that survey is, you know, how, how do they feel about the university? It's a series of climate questions and African American students always have the lowest uh percentages in terms of how they feel about their institution, right? Being a 60 something percent tile with other students, maybe in the eighties or what have you. OK. So if, if that's the reality, then the question I have for my colleagues is that what may be going on with African American students or with Latinx students that may be causing that. And so it is language, it is education it is bringing new sets of understanding to an issue that will bring, that will move them Ingrid from point A to point B I think you gotta do it slowly and methodically, especially when you have a group like that, the people who I work with who,

Start	Dur.	Speaker	Transcription
			<p>which are people in positions of, of, of power. So one of the things I wanna do is bring a whole set of readings to this group and to oue and I want them to really digest some really smart people in the DE I world. And one of the people who I would love for them to read is uh I don't know if you guys ever heard of Estella <b>Beaman</b>, but she is um a professor of Educational Equity and she's the founding director of the <b>Center</b> Center for Urban Education. So I was gonna read a few things that she wrote just briefly which will help us understand the first question that you asked. She said, she said equity <b>ones viewed</b> suspiciously as racially divisive and associated with the activism of social justice movements that academic purist disdain as advocacy work is now being enthusiastically embraced on the academic scene. But she says, does this embrace of equity signify and embrace of its critical and anti <b>racist</b> foundations? So her answer to that is no, she says, or does the proliferation of this term instead represent the appropriation and the dilution of equity? And she, she goes on to say that I want, I want to reclaim racial justice uh as a focus <b>in</b> its right meaning and intent and equity work. This meaning and intent was advanced in the agendas of movements initiated by and <b>for</b> minoritized groups. And she <b>talks</b>, she talks about <b>the</b> civil rights movement. She goes on <b>talk</b> about <b>the</b> Brown Berets and the Black Panthers. So this is <b>a</b>, a higher education expert in de I who is trying to push us to think about, <b>you</b> know, what of the cardinal principles of our work. And so it's this kind of intention that I wanna bring to my work at the UFM <b>and</b> oue because I think that people have written and said some really smart things who are in higher ed and I don't know if we ever get a chance to, to grapple with them as uh higher ed uh professionals uh who may be in and around this work.</p>
<b>0:21:46.2</b>	21.5s	Ingrid Nuttall	<p>So, Doctor <b>Maze</b>, you talked um about sort of how de I shows up in higher education after its initial roots in the civil rights movement. I'm wondering if you can tell us a little bit about intersectionality and the term <b>intersectionality</b> journey um in the same way, like where did it come from and how should our listeners think about intersectionality?</p>
<b>0:22:08.93</b>	192.2s	Keith Mayes	<p>So, intersectionality was a term coined by uh legal scholar and professor Kimberly Crenshaw in 1989 and this is what she said uh in 1989. She says that intersectionality it emerges as an analytical framework. Uh <b>And</b> so we think about intersectionality as this is me talking <b>on</b> that, we just think of it as sort of this uh the way in which we have multiple identities. And I think we have sort of diluted her definition. And so having multiple identities based on race, gender and sexuality and later disability and other kinds of uh interlocking and intersectional multiple identities. <b>It's</b>, <b>it's</b> yes indeed part of the definition, but her de definition was centered around black women <b>and</b> it was focused on power issues around power. So, uh in the late 19 eighties, uh as an analytical framework uh capable of attending to a particular positionality of black women and other women of color in both the civil rights uh movement. And of course, <b>the</b> civil rights legal community um that it was the most visible and enduring um aspects of what it meant to be oppressed as a black woman and all of the markers of oppression, right? So this sort of single focus on race, <b>was</b> it going to cut it? Because how <b>do</b>, how do we address the issue? How do we address issues around race when I have other parts of my identity uh that are operating <b>um</b> uh at the same time. Um So, the question of this intersectional moment <b>and</b> thinking is something that has always been at the core of the Black Freedom Movement. And <b>it's</b> something that other scholars uh before Kimberly <b>Crenshaw</b> have, you know, <b>have</b> talked about whether it's been Mary Church <b>Terrell</b> or Anna Julia Cooper and even going all the way back to uh Harriet Jacobs who talked about uh what it meant for black women to be uh uh oppress and what is it meant to, for them to be put upon by white men within the systems and the structures of racism <b>and</b> slavery? Um And how does that look like? And how is it different from, from black men? So, uh I think Kimberly Crenshaw just did something um that was so revolutionary. She just put this into <b>an</b> intellectual and <b>an</b> analytical framework that we all can understand. But principally at the heart of her definition is an examination of systems of power, not just looking at multiple identities and how they may uh interact. <b>It's</b> certainly</p>

Start	Dur.	Speaker	Transcription
			uh it's not about looking at uh a single identity or a single axis as, as you said in, in that 1919 89 interview,
0:25:22.7	56.5s	Portia LaMarr	what you said is so powerful. I mean, and, and I felt as if you are in my life talking to me as a woman who, you know, is African American. Um We've talked about this before, you know, when you have your um infinity groups, you know, around campus and all that stuff. And, or even within acro myself, I am associated with the Black caucus and I have yet to be associated with the women caucus because I feel like I gotta get over the hump of being black first and then, then I could get to being a woman. You know, sometimes it's just, it's ii I don't even know how to bring both worlds together sometimes. Um But it's, it's difficult how, how would you suggest someone moving in higher ed in these spaces with uh all the things that they identified by?
0:26:19.41	223.3s	Keith Mayes	That's a very good question because one of the difficulties uh with moving in and out of different spaces is that we really find spaces that are affirming all of our identities. So as this uh black man, if I can find a space that affirms that then I may be relatively good. But if I am black female disable, I need a space that will affirm all of those, right? And I can't have a, a space that just affirms one. So if I can't create community with people based on all of my intersectional identities, and then when I walk into that space, let's say if I do find that space and they are not speaking a certain kind of truth to power that will affirm all of my interlocking identities, then it's hard for me to create community with people. So when you said it's hard for me to, to move into a space, that's all women. One has to kind of Presuppose that if I had to assume what you were saying, I would say that those spaces are, are white female spaces, right? They're not, you know, uh uh not black women or Latinx women. So, yes, I think that that's what Kimberly Crenshaw was trying to get at that. These structures of power have a way of mediating our relationships with other people based on uh how they're set up. So, you know, I was telling somebody about this, I'll give you guys a, a great example of this and this is just, you know, a, a simple example. So I can go to a meeting where I walk in the room and there's all black people, mostly black people, right? And I can go into another room that's mixed race and I'll go to another room and another meeting that's all white. I feel different in each space, right? For the reasons that that have to do how the space is constituted who's in it and of course the racial makeup of the space. So, you know, they give a perfect example. So when we first just got on right in the zoom space and we were introducing ourselves. So II, I opened up the computer, hit the link and I, I know Ingrid was gonna be on it. So that wasn't a surprise but, and I knew that I, I maybe I had an idea that two people who were, were black women, one wasn't sure right until I saw you guys. OK. Boom. Then we start talking and introducing ourselves. And then there was a certain kind of communication style. So that's what I'm saying. And I think that's what you're trying to get at. Is that? How do you actually? So then the question becomes for people who walk into a friendly space, you automatically say to yourself, OK, I can actually create community with them because of who they are and how they operate. Now, not only, you know, you guys have heard of this, not every uh person who shares your, your skin color is an ally. So we know that but you have to be oriented in a certain kind of way in your thinking. And that's why I told Ingrid, I said, OK, I, after sitting down talking to her once or twice, I can understand where she's coming from. So I think that when we walk into AAA place and we don't have that kind of affirming experience coming from the people who are in the space. We just can't, we can't be productive in the ways in which we would like to. And, and that's unfortunate.
0:30:03.0	4.9s	Portia LaMarr	I agree. And how much of that do you think is dealing with our biases?
0:30:09.73	6.9s	Keith Mayes	Oh, so our biases and how we, how we perceive people in the room
0:30:18.6	28.1s	Portia LaMarr	because it's a relationship, right? So you have to like just as you, as you explained, you know, even though you saw us, it was still a formality that had to be crossed over for us to establish something, you know, sometimes I can't, sometimes I,

Start	Dur.	Speaker	Transcription
			well, I'll speak for me. Um I come in already thinking like, oh, here we go, you know, but I never even initiated anything to find out if, if, if it's an ally or not.
0:30:46.52	96.2s	Keith Mayes	Right? Well, because there has to be some dialogue and some interchange between folks. So, so you get a sense, I always tell uh folks in my workshops, I said, and I, and I tell the white people and I say, imagine being a person of color every time they meet another new white person, they have to determine what kind of work white person are they dealing with and and they gotta do it in real time, right? So, and they gotta hear something so they can look at you because so you say biases. So I, I think that's a really important term because yeah, we may be predisposed to think about people in a certain way before they open their mouth, but we need them to confirm who they may be potentially, right? So I need Ingrid to tell me that she's an ally. She doesn't have to say Keith, I'm an ally. She has to exhibit that and exude it in a certain kind of way that I could become comfortable and I can make some decisions on how we are able to work together. Ingrid and I did that about a month ago. That's exactly what we did. Keith, we're gonna meet come over. Uh no, she took and then she took me, gave me a tour. We talked along the way, sat down, talked, ok? By the time the end of that meeting, I'm like, ok, Ingrid is cool people and I think I'm gonna like working with Ingrid around these issues. You, you, you gotta get that from people right away and maybe you don't need to have it, you know, get it the first day, but you need to get it at some point. If you are going to determine whether you can do the particular kind of work, you can struggle with people if that makes sense.
0:32:23.3	118.5s	Ingrid Nuttall	Yeah, it does. I think I wanna like, I also want to offer a perspective as a white person for white people. That is, that is like a yes and to that, which is um like that interaction that you described of, you know, how long do we spend together an hour? Like you spent a half an hour, we spent an hour. That's not like that's not that much time. Like there was, we have a shared context of the university, like we have shared work that goes around that. And I think I told you when we met, I think of there was a quote um in a video I saw in a class it was an interview with James Baldwin and he said about white people, maybe I know more about you than you know about me. And so I do actually think it is like, I think the work of white people of establishing trust and establishing solidarity and establishing allyship. That is a long road that is not produced in a five minute conversation in a one hour conversation. And you might have the good fortune of having shared context where you can do that. But that's not like transferable. You know, my relationship with Porsche and Tashana is not transferable to my relationship with other black women because I'm like, but you guys, I got port to, I think I said I'm OK. And I think that that I think because of intersectionality and the power that relationship to power is that feels at times invisible to white. I don't walk around thinking I'm close to power, right? But it is. And so the work to do that is different and is, and I do think that while establishing relationships, the work for white people in building that trust is like ge like generationally so very different,
0:34:21.61	86.4s	Keith Mayes	it really is. It really is. And, and, and then, but it's a lot of work for people who are seeking allies or co-conspirators across a racial divide to try to determine if they, if they are co-conspirators or allies. It's just to have to do that all day in a predominantly white space is really hard. It's a hard lift and that's why I'm talking about the war of attrition and being worn out. And and figuring out that like, man, I gotta throw my hands up and do something else because, and then don't, now we are in the moment now where the, the hostile white folks are showing up in these spaces, right? They should now be a little bit muted. Now, people are showing up in boldly saying that I don't care about the work and I don't care about you. So you're having to make those determinations. But yes, and once you said what you did a little bit about who you were and if that James Baldwin drop is gonna be important because I'm like, this is a white person reading James Baldwin, then I know that they are oriented in a certain kind of way already. And that's important. That's, that's a, that's an important sign, right? So that's why I say that that folks need that sign uh about what kind of white person they may be dealing

Start	Dur.	Speaker	Transcription
			with that. That's th those are the little signs that are helpful for people of color who are
0:35:49.47	2.1s	Ingrid Nuttall	Yeah, you, <b>Tashana</b> , you go ahead. You know
0:35:51.59	31.8s	Tashana Curtis	what I was gonna say is how can we get of Ingrid, you know, because it's hard. Um And especially when you're dealing with tenure, people, people that are set in their ways, they've been here 40 years and your voice, I mean, you sit at the table and your voice is silent. How can we educate them when, when they don't, you know, because of their tenure, that they're set in their ways. How can we get other Ingrid out there?
0:36:23.68	99.2s	Keith Mayes	So, II, I look for the Ingrid and people like her and I say, OK, I'm gonna try to see if we can work together so we can move the institution or the department in a certain kind of way. Now, I think, and I told Ingrid this, I think I picked up on some things that actually the first time we met was over a zoom meeting, right? And so I was able, I couldn't, I wasn't, they were all in the same room. I wasn't, I was on, on the screen, but I can pick up on certain things that were being said by certain people, but I couldn't really see who was who. And I said, Ingrid, I think there was somebody uh in, in, in this side of the room cause I, when I met her in person that it was the same room that they had the meeting at. I said Ingrid, there was somebody on this side of the room and I was explaining where it was who said this. And she was like, oh that's so and so or that was me, I'm like, oh OK. So I would answer that question uh to Shana, I would say that I gotta find the one or two people who I can work with and through to try to figure out how we can convince the others because I may not be able to do it right away in a one on one with them. I may need some help to do that. And, but let's say I'm gonna take your question a step further. Let's say that there are no ignorant in the room. Then. What? Well, you may, it may take you a little longer to try to figure out who you can work with. And I really don't know what it means to not have anybody in the room over a long period of time. That doesn't seem to be a space that any of us would wanna work in because um that, that we, we are really isolated if we find ourselves in in that situation,
0:38:03.92	47.5s	Ingrid Nuttall	I think that's an, that's a super important point and kind of brings us maybe to a a concluding question. And I, I think worth saying that to kind of put a pin on that a little bit like there is work for, there is work for everyone to do that is different in the space in some ways because of their identity and their relationship to power. And then there is work to do together. Like I think so, you know, it is not if <b>Tashana</b> is the only person of color in a room full of white people, it is not on to <b>Shana</b> to educate to it, it might be finding the ally. But like there is like there is stuff for white people to figure out regarding racism that they got to do, like, they've got some problems to solve with themselves,
0:38:52.6	2.5s	Keith Mayes	their own. You're absolutely right.
0:38:54.84	29.0s	Ingrid Nuttall	So, um, to kind of, to kind of move into like some parting thoughts, I think one of the things we're hoping that listeners get is some sense of like, ok, so what do I do? We've had lots of, lots of bits in here about what people can do and how they can show up. But um kind of want to leave you with that big question is like, what is to be done? Right? Like in de I, what is the work to be done um that, that people should walk away with so
0:39:24.34	12.5s	Keith Mayes	well, I, I've been thinking about that question a lot and I'm not sure if I have an answer, but I'm gonna, can I throw out a couple of more names that people would, it would, in terms of this work
0:39:37.63	2.2s	Tashana Curtis	would be helpful to do?
0:39:39.89	229.5s	Keith Mayes	Yeah, because II, I always feel rejuvenated when I read Estella <b>Beaman</b> . But another person, Paul Gorski, Paul Gorski Gorsk, I, he has an essay in the journal called Educational Leadership published in April 2019. It's called Avoiding Racial equity detours. And it's a great piece because it talks about what should we not do and what actually the, the, the piece is about what we do and then what is it that

Start	Dur.	Speaker	Transcription
			<p>we should not do when, when engaging in uh equity work. And you know, he says, I'll just read a little bit. I found that most initiatives and strategies that pass for racial equity efforts in schools pose less of a threat to racism than to the possibility of racial justice. He says, uh he said he calls these uh these de I initiatives uh uh equity detours and what he means by inequity detour is that it avoids doing the hard work. He said they create an illusion of progress toward equity while cementing or even exacerbating inequity. Uh He says they are anti, anti racist and, and, and this is, they're not anti racist. They actually do the opposite of anti-racism, anti anti. Uh He says, rather than being passed to equity, they are detours. The reason why I'm pointing these, this, this out. There's a, another, another essay by Clifford uh Edelman. Uh Divers walk the walk and drop the talk and that's in a magazine called Change Change. Uh You guys may know, change just a magazine of higher learning. But Clifford Edelman, Divers walked the walk and dropped the talk and change in 1997. And then I own uh Ingrid our own Sam Myers who was a professor in the Humphrey School uh and Change magazine as well. He wrote an essay called Why Diversity Is a Smokescreen for Affirmative Action. Uh And that was published in 1997 as well. The reason why I point out these four pieces is because I can't answer the question that the last question that you posed. Uh and I can only grapple with that question. Bye asking myself. What, why is DE I so hard to advance the reason why it's hard to advance according to these four authors is that we assume that DE I is racial, social justice work and it's not, it's not. So we have to tell the people who we work with that. We're not doing social justice that DE I is an approximation at best. Uh It's an appropriation and it's not meant to do the kind of revolutionary work inside predominantly white institutions. So if we can start and agree on that, I think we can begin to map out a blueprint that is much more engaging, much more justice oriented. It may actually have a longer lasting and uh and, and better benefits around change than the current de I uh practice and it's no knock on it. II, I think for me, I, I know that DE I has its limitations. I think that if we understand what those limitations are, we can uh make the ei a much better practice and discourse and in higher education, I really believe that, but we got to understand what it's not</p>
0:43:30.63	8.5s	Ingrid Nuttall	so step one live in reality. Acknowledge the reality that we're in. I do want to actually talk to you about your book and you have spent one more minute with us doctor.
0:43:39.12	1.5s	Keith Mayes	Oh yes. For Sure.
0:43:40.75	25.5s	Ingrid Nuttall	So that your book that's coming out in January, the unteachable disability rights um and the invention of Black Special Education, we talked about intersectionality already, which it seems like there might be some connection between at least the, the concepts of identity. Um and how they relate to power in your book. So how, how does I mean, how does the history talk about either relate to intersectionality or what should we know about the history that you're covering in that book?
0:44:06.42	233.4s	Keith Mayes	It's a good question. So I actually look at the overrepresentation of black students in special education mainly around uh EBD emotional behavior disorder LD, learning disability and something in intellectual disability. We don't, we call it that now, but we used to call it uh EMR educable, mentally retarded. And the question was why were we black students overpopulated, overrepresented in those classes? And what looks like a 19 nineties and early 21st century phenomenon turns out to be uh a mid 20th century phenomenon and that it e and even it goes back before then, early 20th century when special education was created back in the early 19 hundreds, I argue that special education became a way for white, middle class parents and those with money and privilege to avoid being in the same educational spaces as black and brown and poor whites. Um because of compulsory attendance laws in the early 1900 hundreds that said that all young people need to go to school. It's, it's mandated by law. The question became, how do we actually begin to separate them inside of schools? So, uh, EMR educable, mentally retarded was one of the first, uh, uh, disability categories. And all, all of retardation meant was that you were one or two or three grades behind, uh, your

Start	Dur.	Speaker	Transcription
			peers. So, if I'm one or two grades behind, why does that have to be a mental retardation? Why do you, why do you have to say that there's something wrong with me uh genetically and and mentally. But you know, the history of eugenics and the turn of the 20th century when all this ugly stuff was coming out about black pe people being inferior. Special education was created now because of the Jim Crow system of education, this dual system of education, they created these categories around what kind of Black people, particularly young black people constituted uh learners. And back then they were either badly behaved. Uh They were Externalizing juvenile delinquents, they were uh behavior disordered and then they were intellectually inferior. And so the book documents and charts that history. So what looks like a late 20th century phenomenon with all these black students overpopulated in special education classes? I detail that it started much earlier. And so you're right there is the interlocking uh story around disability rights and civil rights. But who guess who the disability rights uh was for at the time, it was for struggling white students who were Underachievers and white families not really knowing what to do with them or what to call them. So they wanted services from the government and learning disability. Although it becomes uh overrepresented with black students actually starts out as a white category in the sixties um when black students were mainly EMR so yes, I talk about an early educational disability rights movement working on behalf of white students and the civil rights movement, working on behalf of black students and how they those two movements uh worked at cross purposes uh to achieve the same end. But because everything is segregated um including our schools, uh even the social movements were segregated. So the the disability rights movement was concerned about uh the invisibility of white students who struggle scholastically and, and so I chart that in the book. So I it really is a, is a book that is concentrated over a 50 year period, but I do kind of uh start the, the book. The first chapter is in the early 20th century.
0:48:01.96	2.0s	Ingrid Nuttall	Do you? Oh, go ahead, Porsha.
0:48:04.72	2.2s	Portia LaMarr	I was just gonna say added it to the book list.
0:48:07.37	5.5s	Ingrid Nuttall	Yeah, we should have, we should have a January episode where we all read the book and then we talk about it and bring you
0:48:12.91	1.0s	Keith Mayes	back and bring
0:48:13.98	1.7s	Ingrid Nuttall	you great.
0:48:17.5	0.6s	Keith Mayes	I love that
0:48:18.31	7.2s	Ingrid Nuttall	Dr May. Thank you so much for joining us today and for taking the time. It's been a real pleasure. And we look forward to having you back to talk about your book.
0:48:25.58	5.0s	Keith Mayes	Oh, thank you. It was, it was a blast. I appreciate it. Thanks to you. It's a lot.
0:48:40.75	15.7s	Ingrid Nuttall	Thanks for listening to HD. A podcast sponsored by Acro. We'd love to hear from you. Share your episode, ideas or feedback for us at HD at acro.org episodes are produced by May OA Inna. Thanks. May oa we'll see you next time.