**Your Mind on Hierarchy, with Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson**

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0:00:04.4 Ava Ma De Sousa: Welcome back to Minds Matter, a podcast sponsored by the Monash Centre for Consciousness and Contemplative Studies. I'm Ava.

0:00:11.9 Beth Fisher: And I'm Beth. And on Minds Matter we explore the research in neuroscience and psychology, whilst talking through our own personal experiences.

0:00:21.5 Ava Ma De Sousa: So in this episode, I spoke to Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson, who is an assistant professor at UC Berkeley's Haas School of Business. We talked about how people's perceptions of hierarchy and power influence their empathy and counter-empathy towards others, depending on those other people's social status.

0:00:38.5 Ava Ma De Sousa: We also discuss Dr. Hudson's theories and some of her empirical work looking at intersectionality, which in psychology is really just examining more than one social identity at a time and trying to understand how considering multiple identities simultaneously influence attitudes, perceptions and behaviour.

0:00:57.2 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: My name is Sa-Kiera Hudson, but I go by Kiera, and I am an assistant professor at UC Berkeley's Haas School of Business. I just started, so I'm a newly minted tenure track faculty. And my work broadly focuses on hierarchy. I study how hierarchies are formed, how they are maintained and how they intersect, and in particular I focus on the psychological processes involved in those three things.

0:01:23.6 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so in my work, I focused on the role of emotions in justifying societal harm. I've looked at the role of stereotypes in the treatment and perceptions of people, and I looked at the role of legitimising myths in why people believe that there is social progress or not.

0:01:43.8 Ava Ma De Sousa: Could you expand a little bit about why you think hierarchy and power are so important to study in inter-group relations or in society in general? Just 'cause I think a lot of the time it's more of an implicit thing that's being studied, but a lot of time it's just racial groups or social class, but it's not explicitly about power.

0:02:01.1 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: That's a great question. So hierarchies are everywhere. I think humans are in some ways naturally disposed to organise things in terms of hierarchies, we need to understand where our place is in the world and our place in the world is dictated by how much status and power that we have.

0:02:18.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: I think all of our relationships have some element of power in them, so you have parent-child, the parent has more power than the child does, and then know that hierarchy or that power relationship change over time, as the kid gets older, get their own voice and also has different thoughts about how much power they should have and when, compared to the parent. The parent's like, "You are not old enough to talk to me that way," and the child is like, "Oh, I'm 18. What does that have to do with anything?"

0:02:46.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So clearly power is everywhere, and I think when we forget... Or I don't wanna say we forget, but by not centering the power dynamics that are at play, I think we miss a lot of really important dynamics. So when we think about race and gender as identities that might have their own cultural values or own cultural norms, etcetera, etcetera, I think we miss the fact that part of the reason why gender and race play out the way that they do is because of a difference in the social, economic and political power that these groups have.

0:03:18.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And if those power dynamics weren't there, would gender be the way gender is? No. Would race be the way race is? No. And I think that understanding of hierarchy has been influenced by my advisor's work on social dominance theory that talks about these different forms of hierarchy, but if you think about gender and race in using these hierarchies and why they show up the way that they do, there's a lot of different dynamics between people that don't have hierarchies in the same way.

0:03:47.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Why don't we talk about people who are red-headed and people who are brown, have grown hair? That could be a hierarchy, but it doesn't really map on that strongly to these social, economic and political things that we care about. Why? Because that's the way that hierarchies have have formed.

0:04:05.7 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so that's why you can't just think about identity, identities are underscored by hierarchy and power, and if we forget them, we might think that the differences between red heads and blond-haired people are the scene as between White and Black people, because these are both identities you can hold, that have their own culture, their own stereotypes, their own norms, but they're not the same at all because of that underlying power difference.

0:04:31.0 Ava Ma De Sousa: Okay. So we've been talking about hierarchy, how important it is, but as psychologists obviously we have to measure these things somehow, and so typically is something that you use is a concept called social dominance orientation or social dominance theory. So before we get into the work that you've done, I was just wondering if you could explain that concept, how you measure this and why it's so important to understand our perceptions of hierarchies?

0:04:53.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Awesome. Social dominance theory is a theory that Jim Sidanius and Felicia Pratto developed back in 1995? I should probably know that date. Anyhoo, that explains why hierarchies are ubiquitous in human societies. And so it's a pretty... I don't know, it has completely impacted my work, but it talks about how there are hierarchy attenuating leading and hierarchy enhancing forces that happen on the interpersonal level, the inter-group level and the societal level, that keep certain hierarchies intact.

0:05:28.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so social dominance theory argues that there's only three types of hierarchies. You have age, gender and arbitrary set. And so age is a hierarchy that exists in... And so when they talk about what hierarchies are ubiquitous, they're saying across human, the history of humans on this Earth.

0:05:45.0 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so while there might be differences in the level of patriarchy, for the most part, most societies are patriarchal, that is that the male species or people who identify as male tend to have more power than people who identify as being a woman. Now, that means that there's a fundamental difference between race and gender, because race is arbitrary, and what Sidanius would say that he means by arbitrary is that you don't find racial differences across human history.

0:06:16.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: It isn't the case that people who had brown skin were always treated with less power and resources than people who are of fair skin, as an example. Also thinking about what is race, how we decided to cleave race, is based on again, arbitrary distinctions that had historical meaning, but not fundamental meaning.

0:06:36.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: How do people from Egypt identify? It depends on who you talk to. [chuckle] Because of that history around what race could be replaced by we have cocktails and that determines who is a member of one group and who's a member of another group. I don't know, it's like the yellow belly Sneetches of the Dr. Seuss story, as an example of just how arbitrary group membership is.

0:07:01.2 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so when you think about how to measure people's preferences for hierarchy, social dominance theory talks about hierarchies are really important, we have these three different types of hierarchies. Okay, why is it that humans care so much about hierarchy? We can measure people's preferences for hierarchy, do I like hierarchy, do I think hierarchies are the way that groups should be organised, and that is where a social dominance orientation comes in.

0:07:24.1 Beth Fisher: So social dominance orientation measures the extent to which people accept and promote group-based inequality, and people who have relatively higher levels of SDO and we tend to call them social dominance, they care about maintaining their current social hierarchy and believe that some social groups should be at the top of that hierarchy and others at the bottom. And so when...

0:07:45.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: I think the example item in the SDO scale is some social group should be at the top of, some social group should have more power than others. That is a very explicit item. And so when you look at how people tend to respond on the scale, most people don't want to agree with it.

0:08:04.2 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: The mean of the scale, which tends to range between one being strongly, I think it's like favor and opposed, strongly opposed versus strongly favor on that one to seven, the mean tends to hover around 2.5. And yet social dominance orientation is one of the most predictive ideologies that we have in our arsenal because it predicts so many things, and I think it predicts so many things because of just how fundamental hierarchies are in our human and group interactions.

0:08:34.3 Ava Ma De Sousa: Just to a question about people responding on the scale. When people are responding that they don't believe that hierarchies should exist, do you think that's genuine, or do you think that's like maybe demand effect where people are like, "I kinda like hierarchies, but I'm not gonna tell you."?

0:08:51.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: I absolutely think that's true. And I think that's where... But even then, in that little bit of variance that does exist, there is predictive value. There is a graduate student at the law school at UC Berkeley who's actually working on implicit measures of SDO, trying to see if we can tap into how people understand hierarchy, how much preferences they have for it on this implicit level.

0:09:14.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: In my own work, I have probably broken what I'm supposed to do as SDO and started to measure people's preferences for group hierarchy, but in a particular domain. So I've started to look at, for example, political SDO. Can we see differences in what group should be at the top of the hierarchy and what group should be at the bottom in smaller domains.

0:09:37.2 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And the reason why I'm breaking the foundation of SDO is because SDO is meant to be a group level phenomenon, it's not supposed to be about one specific group. And that was one of the biggest critiques of SDO when it first came out that, "No, this preference for hierarchy, this is just about race, this is just about gender."

0:09:58.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And it's not. It's really this broad ideology of how people understand the world, and people who have high levels of SDO tend to see the world in this dog-eat-dog competitive worldview, and it's generally this broad worldview that they see in all these different aspects.

0:10:11.7 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But one thing that I have found is when I ask about political groups rather than groups, then you get a normal distribution of SDO, which very rarely happened when we use the traditional, the traditional measure. And so from that perspective, I think people are willing to share some beliefs that they have around do they think that some groups are better than others.

0:10:33.2 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: It's really about the context that might impose this social desirability aspect, but it just seems to dampen the response, rather than alter the way that it looks. So the people who might genuinely be a seven on the scale are now a four.

0:10:47.9 Ava Ma De Sousa: In a 2019 paper, you did several studies looking at SDO, so the social dominance orientation, and empathy towards things happening to other people. Specifically, you found that people who are high in SDO showed less empathy and more counter-empathy, so that's just like feeling the opposite emotion in a sense, that they should feel. So feeling good when something bad happens to someone else and feeling bad and when something good happens to someone else. These have fancy German names that I'll let Kiera say.

[laughter]

0:11:15.6 Ava Ma De Sousa: So you found that this was also especially strong in inter-group context, this effect was stronger for White participants who were high in SDO responding to events occurring to Black and Asian targets. So could you just explain a little bit more about the study and why you think we found those effects?

0:11:30.2 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Great question. So in this study or these sets of studies, I was interested in the relationship between SDO, empathy and counter-empathy. Just for a little bit of definitions, I am focusing on the affective forms of empathy. So empathy can be cognitive, like how I understand people's emotional states. It can also be how I feel.

0:11:53.4 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so if you've ever, I don't know, watched somebody on walking along a tight rope and your body also sways, that is that embodiment of empathy, I'm feeling something similar to what I assume you are feeling. And so empathy is the, a congruent emotional reaction that someone has in reaction to the assumed emotional state of another person.

0:12:16.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So it is a little bit of an assumption. I have to assume that when you are feeling bad, I'm then feeling bad, that is negative empathy, and I think that's our more colloquial understanding of empathy. When you're really sad about getting, I don't know, a 60 on a test and I feel really bad because you're sad, I feel negative empathy with you.

0:12:32.0 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But I can also feel an empathy towards you. So if you get a 100 on an exam and I'm happy because of your happiness, that is a positive form of empathy. And so when you think about empathy is not just negative, and the reason I'm bringing this up is that we measure both types in this study, so now it relates to counter-empathy.

0:12:50.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So counter-empathy is when I feel the assumed, the opposite, the opposite, the... Sorry. Yes, the opposite emotion that I'm assuming that you feel. So in the case of schadenfreude, is when I think that you're feeling bad and because of you feeling bad, I feel good. That would be "schadenfreude". And then you have gluckschmerz when it's the reverse of that. So if you feel really good and because you feel good, I feel bad, that is "gluckschmerz".

0:13:20.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so even though the relationship between empathy and counter-empathy, they feel like opposite sides of the same coin, when they're actually not. So the relationship between empathy and schadenfreude... Or sorry. Empathy and counter-empathy in my work, the correlations rarely go above 0.4, and sometimes they're not significant at all.

0:13:39.6 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So it's not the case that me feeling a lack of empathy has to mean I feel counter-empathy. There is like this indifferent state that's in the middle where you can have these two orthogonal dimensions. I can feel empathy and I can feel counter-empathy. And I think we feel conflicting emotions all the time, so it makes sense that you can be high on both or low on both, high on one, low on one, etcetera, etcetera.

0:14:06.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Just as, I don't know, as an example, you might have an arch nemesis who, something bad is happening to them, they're stuttering on stage or something. Okay, they're stuttering on stage and you feel good because you're like, "That's what they get," but you also recognise just how rough it can be stuttering on stage, so you do feel some empathy too.

0:14:26.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Anyhoo, that was a lot of background just to say what I found. So what we ended up doing is measuring people's levels of SDO and then measuring how much empathy and counter-empathy they felt towards in-group and out-group members on really mild things. Like I introduced a target, let's just say George, and I would say, "Hey, here's George and George stubbed his toe. How good does this make you feel and how bad does this make you feel?"

0:14:52.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Because stubbing your toe is a negative thing, by asking how good I feel that is me expressing my schadenfreude, and asking how bad I feel, that's me expressing negative empathy. But if George also... George could have eaten a really good sandwich, that's a good thing happening to George. Me indicating how bad I feel will be gluckschmerz, and me indicating how good I feel would be positive empathy.

0:15:14.9 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so we measured the amount of empathy and counter-empathy people felt towards White, Asian and Black targets experiencing these really mild positive and really mild negative events, and all participants in the study were White. And what we found was that as a function of their SDO, so the more that people felt that certain group should be at the top and others at the bottom, the less empathy that these people felt and the more counter-empathy that they felt overall, but especially towards Asian and Black out-group members.

0:15:45.2 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Now, it's important to note that this effect of, this interaction between SDO emotions and target race only happened when we primed competitiveness in people's minds. So when we first did, when we had no prime, we found the relationship between SDO, empathy and counter-empathy, but no moderation by race. So race didn't matter for these relationships.

0:16:11.4 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: It was only after we started to prime groupiness in participants' mind that then this relationship between SDO, empathy and counter-empathy started to differ by race. And so the first thing that we did was remind people about their in-group by having them fill out a racial identification scale before they did the task.

0:16:30.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so in this study, participants indicated how much they liked their in-group, how much they identified with their in-group, and there we found that only empathy was changed by race. So as SDO increased, participants felt less empathy towards out-group members, but there was no relationship between SDO and empathy for White in-group members.

0:16:52.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But the counter-empathy stuff, schadenfreude and gluckschmerz, no difference by race. It was only after we primed a competitive sense between groups by having participants fill out a realistic threat scale that talked about the dangers that ethnic minorities pose to White interests, that's where we found the difference by race per schadenfreude.

0:17:13.9 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So as SDO increased, participants felt more schadenfreude, but especially towards Black and Asian targets. And so just to give a sense of the effect, if you take someone with the lowest levels of SDO and the highest level of SDO, and look at the difference in the amount of schadenfreude that they felt towards these different targets, I think that difference was about eight points for White in-group targets, but 27 points for Black out-group targets.

0:17:42.9 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So people, as a function of their SDO, are feeling almost a fourth of the scale, this is run on zero to 100 scale, were almost moving a fourth of the scale on how much schadenfreude they were feeling when George stubbed his toe.

0:17:55.8 Ava Ma De Sousa: Could you talk a little bit more about why you think that priming competition makes such a huge difference? And also given that you didn't see those effects when you didn't prime competition, do you think that this means that generally we wouldn't really be experiencing these types of emotions for out-groups?

0:18:16.0 Ava Ma De Sousa: Or do you think this is just showing that anyone who maybe is primed to you as competition, that you could feel this kind of counter-empathy for if your social dominance orientation is a bit higher?

0:18:23.6 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Absolutely. So you're on the track that I've been thinking of, which is schadenfreude is often felt in competitive settings. Makes a lot of sense that we feel good when [chuckle] something bad happens to somebody that we feel in competition with. And SDO, like I mentioned, reflects a competitive view of the world, and so it makes sense if these two things are related just in general.

0:18:49.4 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But SDO is also about groups, and so when you take a competitive setting that's also very groupy, it makes sense that these two things are interrelated. And so I tested that, this idea that competition is an environment that activates this relationship between SDO and schadenfreude by taking, by doing a minimal groups paradigm.

0:19:13.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: That was the last study in this packet, where we were trying to do two things. One, we were trying to see whether or not we can move beyond the racial context, but also thinking whether or not this is about groups or is this about status. Because when you have White participants looking or sharing their emotions towards Black and Asian targets, that could be about group dynamics, or it could be about high status, low status, high power, low power.

0:19:38.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so by going into a minimal groups paradigm, we're at least removing the status and power component and just leaving the groupiness. And so what we did was have people randomly assigned to be an Eagles or a Rattlers, which is like taking homage to old school social psych, and the important part is the Eagles and the Rattlers were either competing for a prize or cooperating for a price.

0:20:01.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Now, this is a novel groups paradigm, not a minimal groups paradigm. I can't remember if I said it's minimal. It's not, it's novel. Because there was from the point of the participants, some basis for the groups. So we have them fill out this bogus personality scale and said, "Oh, because of your personality, you are an Eagle versus you are a Rattler."

0:20:21.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: That was a lie, but in their minds, there were some reason for the groups. And so if the Eagles were competing versus cooperating for this prize is what we told them, and then we said, "You know what? We just want you to get to know your teammates." And so then they did that same state empathy task that I described before, where you had George, George stubbed his toe to he was eating really good sandwiches, and how good and how bad did that make you feel.

0:20:45.1 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And what we found was, in the case where people were competing for a prize, the same effects that we saw with race occurred. That as a function of people levels of SDO, they were feeling more empathy towards. Or sorry, less empathy towards out-groups and more counter-empathy towards out-groups. It got a little bit different for empathy towards in-group members, but I'm not gonna talk about that.

0:21:11.6 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But the more interesting part was what happens when these two groups were cooperating, and there you found that SDO was not related at all to how much empathy and counter-empathy they were feeling towards both in-group and out-group members. And so while it seems that just like not knowing anything about people, SDO is likely related to trait levels of counter-empathy and trait levels of empathy, just on the surface, this is how I'm feeling.

0:21:39.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But the important part of measuring empathy and counter-empathy in the moment and towards particular targets, is because just because in general, I don't feel empathy or just because in general I feel counter-empathy, doesn't mean I'm gonna feel it all the time and towards everybody.

0:21:54.7 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so what we're finding is in a cooperative setting where I need you and you need me, that some group should be at the top and others at the bottom, leading to these emotions gets broken, that link is attenuated. And it makes a lot of sense for it to be attenuated because why should SDO be related to empathy in the first place, is because if you really believe that some group should be at the top and others at the bottom, you can't really feel empathy, especially for those at the bottom, because they need to be there.

0:22:24.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So if you do feel empathy towards them, you're likely going to engage in pro-social helping behaviours, which then pulls it out of their low status positions, which reduces the hierarchy. And you don't think that's how things should be.

0:22:37.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Now, from a counter-empathic point of view, counter-empathic emotions are really spiteful and nasty, that lead you probably to harm other people, and so that makes sense why if I really believe in hierarchy, I'm gonna aim those emotions again, towards people at the bottom of the hierarchy to unify the hierarchy that I really believe should exist in the first place.

0:22:58.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But as soon as you wrap all of that in a co-operative setting, all of that logic goes to pieces, and it makes sense that the connection between SDO and these emotions also then goes to pieces.

0:23:08.5 Ava Ma De Sousa: So in this other paper, you talk about how empathy and counter-empathy can be related to different outcomes, in what you're hinting at in that answer. And so I was wondering if you could explain that paper and just talk a little bit about your findings there? But also speaking to the answer you just gave, how motivated do you think this type of reaction is?

0:23:27.8 Ava Ma De Sousa: So are they doing this on purpose in a sense? Or is it because, as you said, it's in their best interest as someone who believes in hierarchy to not be expressing empathy and to show counter-empathy, but is that because of that kind of wisdom, which I think is no longer wisdom maybe, that empathy is effortful, so there's no point in you expressing it? Or can they choose if they wanted to be empathetic or to not express counter-empathy?

0:23:52.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: All great questions. I'm gonna answer the second one first, which, is this motivated? I believe it's motivated, and I remember as I was writing my dissertation constantly talking about "the functional relationship" and my advisor, Mina Cikara, kept saying, "Kiera, you have not measured functionality, stop it." [chuckle] It got to the point where she's just tested, "Go measure it, if this is really what you think."

0:24:15.9 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so there's some cool work by Nour Kteily and I think it's his student at the time, where they find that SDO could be positively related to empathy, but for advantaged groups. So if you're telling me that advantaged groups are being harmed, empathy can increase as a function of SDO.

0:24:32.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And then my last study in that paper, I found that there was a positive relationship between SDO and empathy for in-group members. And notice that in that context, there's actually no... There's no hierarchy yet, because these two groups are fairly equal.

0:24:47.4 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so the way that I thought about that finding, and I haven't followed up on it, is when there is no hierarchy, you actually do want to feel empathy towards your in-group so that you can engage in these pro-social behaviours, to have in-group favouritism so that the hierarchy goes in the direction that you would want it to. Makes a lot of sense why you would aim empathy towards in-groups and aim counter-empathy towards out-groups.

0:25:11.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So I do think it's motivated, and I have tried to test this a bit in a paper that's also under review, where I ask people, "Okay, so let's get some targets," and I use the stereotype content model as my targets. Because the stereotype content model has also been related to schadenfreude. We tend to feel a lot of schadenfreude towards groups that are seen as cold but competent. And so I wanted to see, "Okay, does SDO matter in these dynamics?"

0:25:39.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And what I did was do the same paradigm where I'm asking about George and how do George stubbed his toe, but in the first study I just ask people, "What do you think George feels?" Because if this is motivated, I need to first make sure that people with higher levels of SDO can actually recognise the emotions in others.

0:25:58.7 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So if I recognise that you're probably in pain, I just don't care, that needs to be present for motivation. And that's pretty much what we find, that SDO is not related to how good or how bad George feels, but is related to how good and how bad I feel.

0:26:14.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Then we asked, "Okay, how much empathy and schadenfreude do you want to feel?" When you ask about "want", there's actually no difference between how much you wanna feel and how much you actually feel. Now, a null effect is hard to say, "Okay, that's the thing." And so what we then did was gave people a choice.

0:26:30.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: We said, "You know what? Hey look, we're gonna tell you this target, imagine you have a target," and we either did targets that were always cold, but either high in competence or low in competence, again from the stereotype content model. And we said, "Okay, so you know George is either a drug addict or George is an investment banker. That's all you know about George. Do you wanna feel empathy towards George, schadenfreude towards George, or nothing at all?" And we defined what empathy and schadenfreude meant.

0:27:00.0 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: What we found is as a function of SDO, the higher your levels of SDO, the less likely you wanted to feel empathy and the more likely you wanted to feel schadenfreude. So what are you actually choosing to feel? Like, "I'm choosing I wanna feel schadenfreude towards George."

0:27:16.6 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But what was interesting is that relationship was even sharper for these low status groups compared to the high status groups. All of that together, if you take some work by Dr. Kteily, other things, it does seem like there is some motivation going on. That people with higher levels of SDO can recognise emotions of others. They can feel higher love of empathy if they want to, but it's only in particular situations that I think are in line with their ideology, which is, "I believe that some group should be at the top and others at the bottom." So that kind of answers hopefully the ideology question.

0:27:51.1 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Then you had a separate question, which is how do these... Almost the "so what" question. So why do we care that SDO is related to empathy and counter-empathy? That's a really good question. 'Cause I'm like, "Ooh, look what I found." It's like, "Why do we care that you found those things?"

0:28:07.1 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And I think we care because these emotions lead to important behaviours. So there's been decades of work, right? That empathy leads to pro-social behaviours. That's why empathy is almost always targeted in these inter-group contexts, that we want people to feel empathy for out-groups so that they are treating them kindly and helping them, etcetera, etcetera.

0:28:27.7 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But as I've been reading and thinking, I'm like, "But what is the opposite of empathy?" If you go to that question, the relationship between empathy and counter-empathy and how that correlation is not that high, and I think the lack of empathy is indifference. Indifference doesn't lead to these violent inter-group conflicts that we're seeing all over the place. So empathy can't be the only story. So you need something else.

0:28:51.6 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so what I started to research is the importance of counter-empathy in explaining some of this inter-group harm. And so you find that SDO is related both to not helping and to harming. That relationship has already been established. What I have started to think about is the role of empathy and counter-empathy as a mediator between SDO and these types of harmful behaviours.

0:29:17.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so if you think about why is it bad that people don't help is because that's a form of passive harm. If I'm not helping you and you are drowning, I'm essentially letting you drown. That is a problem. But also if I actively harm you while you're drowning, I pick up this big rock and drop it on your head and makes it even harder for you to get to the surface, that's also harm.

0:29:36.6 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so you find that again, SDO is related to these things, and what I have been researching is that empathy is almost a unique mediator between SDO in helping behaviours, but it's counter-empathy that's the unique mediator between SDO and these more harmful behaviours.

0:29:54.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so in this paper I studied policy support and how certain policies are helpful and certain policies are harmful, and what emotional reaction mediate the relationship between SDO and these helpful and harmful policies. And so I found that empathy is a stronger mediator between SDO in helpful policies.

0:30:15.1 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: I looked at towards undocumented immigrants, LGBT people, poor people, welfare recipients, so a whole bunch of different targets. Across them, you find that empathy as the mediator between SDO and not supporting helpful policies, but schadenfreude is the mediator between SDO and not supporting... For supporting harmful policies.

0:30:36.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And the harmful policies that I measured, I use a scale called the posse scale, which measures the extent to which you are willing to engage in behaviours that increasingly harm the out-group. So I had people imagine that immigration is gonna be outlawed, "To what extent would you... Is it true that you would support the law? Would you tell your neighbours about it? Would you support torture for undocumented immigrants to tell on other undocumented immigrants?" The extent to which would be willing to form a posse and target those groups.

0:31:07.7 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: You find that it's schadenfreude and not empathy, that is the driver of why people support those policies as a function of their SDO. Broadly speaking, thing that I think about this work is, empathy is not enough to explain why people harm others or members of other groups, and I think we need to think about other emotions.

0:31:28.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So I'm not saying that schadenfreude is the only emotion that can do this, but clearly it's not just about empathy in trying to resolve these inter-group conflicts.

0:31:38.2 Ava Ma De Sousa: It's just a question of even if we know this, what can we do about it? 'Cause I feel like empathy interventions in general, often fail. I've seen a couple talks in the last couple of months where the biggest barrier is that people don't wanna engage, they don't care. So how do we actually get people to stop feeling counter-empathy or to feel more empathy for out-group, and have you thought about that?

0:32:00.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: I absolutely have thought about that. I think the answer lies in why competitive and cooperative settings differ so much. And I think that if we can get people to see their outcomes as interdependent, that might be one of the best things that we can do. I don't have to change how you feel about the out-group or whatnot, but the extent to which I think my fate is tied up with your fate? That changes the nature of things.

0:32:30.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: I think about family and how you might not like your younger brother. I don't know if you have a younger brother. I love my younger brother. But imagine I didn't like him whatsoever. I can recognise that my behaviours towards him is gonna impact me because we're part of the same family. I can't just go wild out on him, because our mother is gonna go, "Really Kiera? What are you doing? Be nice to your brother," blah, blah, blah.

0:32:52.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But if he was not a member of my family, like just some random person? I would have much more freedom to do what I would want to do towards him. And actually in many ways, that's in part why gender is a unique hierarchy in social dominator theory, because men can't just go eradicate women. [chuckle] If they did, the human race would just be over. Because of that interdependence between men and women, it forces a different type of interaction.

0:33:22.7 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Now, clearly, it doesn't eliminate pain and harm and overt violence, 'cause we see violence towards women everywhere, but it decreases the ceiling of that harm. You can't go so far because it just, it wouldn't work. And in many ways, I think the carrot, the benevolent sexism exists because honey always gets what? More flies than vinegar.

0:33:46.2 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So I do think there's something important about a competitive setting, but that also to me underlies that we just need more work on schadenfreude. We've done so much work on empathy, and I think as psychologists we shy away from the darker stuff. We're like, "We don't wanna talk about blatant racism and blatant sexism. That's in the past."

0:34:05.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: It's like no, that exists right now, and I think we're doing a disservice to not focus on it. We don't wanna talk about contempt and spite and schadenfreude, because we want to think that humans are good people. And they are good people. But we absolutely feel these emotions and because we feel these emotions and we don't even have a word for it.

0:34:22.4 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Like why doesn't English have a word for schadenfreude? Why did we have to go to the Germans in order to figure it out? We know the power of labelling, that when you're able to label something, we have a better handle on it. I think after former President Trump got COVID, the percentage of Google searches of the word "schadenfreude" increased by 10000% because people are like, "Wait a second, there's a word to explain what I am feeling right now? Yes there is."

0:34:53.4 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so I think that with more work, I think we'll be able to answer that question of what to do, but I think it's important to know that schadenfreude might be part of the reason why that you have this inter-group conflict. I think it's important to know is there inter-group conflict because I'm just not interested in helping you, or I actually want to harm you, or I'm interested in your pain?

0:35:16.1 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And I think that difference might explain why when I think about the COVID-19 pandemic and people were calling on folks to be empathic towards people who didn't get vaccines or whatnot, that backfired for a lot of people, and I think it backfired because it wasn't that it was a lack of empathy. It was, "I am pissed at you. I'm angry and so I'm actually getting some pleasure at your misfortune. And this is not just that I don't really care. It's I do care, I care a lot that you are being harmed."

0:35:49.4 Ava Ma De Sousa: Okay, so you don't think that the answer lies in being like you should try to be more empathetic or feel less counter-empathy, it's more sneaky interventions that affect more of the structure of how they're perceiving the inter-group situation in general, and not just being like, "You should feel more empathy or you should not feel these negative feelings."?

0:36:09.7 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: I think in general some of the best intervention that you can do, deal with the air that people breathe. Like people, that's like you think about implicit bias, it's better to deal with the structure around the context so that you put people in different situations and you naturally let contact do its job.

0:36:28.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Yeah, you can force it, but I think when you do force it, you end up in situations where it backfires or it doesn't last. And it doesn't last because the environment itself can't support the intervention. Now of course that's harder... It's much easier said than done, but I do think that a structural approach is better, but that doesn't mean that there can't be a intervention on schadenfreude, I just don't know what that would necessarily look like.

0:36:55.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Because just saying that schadenfreude is not normative, doesn't mean that people don't feel it. In general, people don't want to admit that they feel schadenfreude in the first place. So you're already dealing with a very sneaky emotion that people only admit when they feel psychologically safe to admit.

0:37:10.4 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so I don't know what a target emotion towards a person would be to not feel schadenfreude. The only thing I got is hopefully a empathy intervention might also impact schadenfreude. It's not necessarily clear though, if that's the case. We need more research. More research should be done on schadenfreude.

0:37:32.2 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But people are... I actually think we're gonna be in the age of schadenfreude. That sounds terrible. But I think more people are focusing on schadenfreude as a really cool emotional study.

[music]

0:37:46.1 Beth Fisher: So one of the things I've noticed here, Kiera is talking about schadenfreude, but I was listening to this and thinking, "Oh, I've never experienced this. I consider myself a good person. I would never feel joy at someone's suffering." A real strong reaction to that.

0:38:05.2 Beth Fisher: And then she mentions the example of Trump getting COVID and there was this "ah" moment. Yeah, it's so funny you don't even want to associate with feeling happy, but you kind of, given the whole context, were. Or it would be like... Yeah, so I thought that was a very good example for those of us who don't want to identify with [chuckle] someone who experiences this emotion.

0:38:28.6 Ava Ma De Sousa: With Trump, I feel like it's an interesting example also, and maybe can make you feel better about yourself, because I think one of the main points that Kiera was talking about was that she's looking at people who are high in social dominance orientation, so who believe that there should be hierarchies, and those people tend to really feel schadenfreude also for low status targets, so people who are not in positions of power, such as being the President of the United States.

0:38:58.9 Ava Ma De Sousa: So I feel like as long as you at least can tell yourself that you don't feel those emotions for people who are of lower status who might need your help, then you're probably okay.

[chuckle]

0:39:12.1 Ava Ma De Sousa: And I think a really interesting thing that came out of what Kiera was saying was this idea of this experience of schadenfreude being motivated, and there's some other work by Mina Cikara, who was one of Kiera's advisors, which show that we do have these sort of motivated responses to out-group members and specifically Kiera was saying, out-group members that we feel like we're in competition with.

0:39:37.7 Ava Ma De Sousa: Which, with a political climate, I think it's a very clear example of a moment in time in which we are feeling competition with a different group. So at least you can tell yourself your egalitarian values are very internalised, but that maybe this does have an impact on you being able to bridge party lines or something like that. Though that is of course extrapolating a lot.

0:40:00.1 Beth Fisher: I guess that's a good thing. Another thing I was wondering in terms of this social dominance measure and how people feel about that, do you think that is something that we grow to learn? Or it's something that people are just naturally born with more over others? Or it's impacted by the culture you're in? I was wondering if there's research in what influences the level of this you have?

0:40:27.3 Ava Ma De Sousa: That's a good question. I would say that there's evidence, at least that it's learned to some extent. Kiera also mentioned the fact that men on average, White people on average, rich people on average, tend to have higher social dominance scores, meaning that they believe that there should be hierarchies, and I think that is obviously due to the fact that they are in these positions of power and they want to believe that there's a reason for that.

0:40:54.0 Ava Ma De Sousa: There's another concept called "just world beliefs" which is thinking that the world is as it should be and it's unpleasant for us to think that the world is unfair. And especially if you're in a position of power, it's detrimental to you if you're already doing well to be like, "Oh, something is wrong here," because you're benefiting from the system.

0:41:09.6 Ava Ma De Sousa: So I think it definitely has to do in part with your position in society. I think norms of a society definitely also influence how people respond to these questions. So when we discussed what people actually mean when they are responding that they really don't have a preference for hierarchy, when they really don't want hierarchies in society, I think a big part of that, as Kiera said, is that there's very strong egalitarian norms in the US.

0:41:34.4 Ava Ma De Sousa: In the US, in general, there are these myths where everyone is supposed to start from the same place, you work hard enough, you can achieve the American dream, anyone can do it. And so the US is based on a very non-hierarchical view of the world, even though we can argue also that like the meritocracy in itself is a hierarchy, because we believe that people who work harder, who are better should be at the top of society. It's a different topic.

0:42:00.5 Ava Ma De Sousa: But I think that there is a cultural influence for sure, and I think what we've seen in general in cultures is that norms are not always internalised, but they often are. So I think that in societies where hierarchy is more important, I'm sure there are studies that show that there is higher SDO in general, that there are cultural differences in how much a given culture is oriented towards hierarchies.

0:42:25.3 Ava Ma De Sousa: So I think for the most part, it's probably something that is learned, but don't quote me on that.

[chuckle]

[music]

0:42:38.6 Ava Ma De Sousa: I was just wondering if you could talk a little bit about what intersectionality is and why you think it's important? And how it has maybe been under-studied or not studied at all in psych?

0:42:50.0 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Oh yeah, I can get on a soapbox for hours and talk about intersectionality. So intersectionality is this idea that hierarchies are intertwined. That when you think about racism and sexism, phobia, homophobia, that the processes involved in one hierarchy influence the processes involved in the other. And that logically makes sense.

0:43:10.7 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: In terms of psychology and how psychology approaches it, there are fields in some psychology that have thought about intersectionality for decades. Critical race theory, feminist arguments, like all of that has been seeped in intersectionality for forever. And so it's not that psychology doesn't touch intersectionality, I think there are just some fundamental aspects of psychology that make it difficult to study.

0:43:37.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: For example, intersectionality is a theory that is simultaneously falsifiable and non-falsifiable. Intersectionality is almost a way of thinking, a way of approaching problems, a way of asking, "Who is in my sample and does that matter?" And psychology doesn't always think about those things, and we get into the weird samples that a lot of psychology research done on Western educated industrialised countries, that are rich and democratic. Right? So we already recognise our work is not representative.

0:44:10.6 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But then what intersectionality would say is, why does that matter? Why does it matter that we did it in democratic versus non-democratic spaces? So once you start to ask those questions, you're in the realm of intersectionality. Once you start to ask, "Why does it matter that my sample is all White people? Would this effect be different for Black people?" Once you start to ask those questions, intersectionality.

0:44:30.9 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so that's why that's a non-falsifiable thing, to say that people's experiences differ at the intersection of identity. You can't really falsify that. Which is why psychology, I think struggles with it. But also you then have theories within, you have intersectional theories that start to put parameters around how do these things interact, that can be falsified, such as the theory of gender and prejudice.

0:44:56.7 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: The other reason why I think psychology struggles is, think about the quintessential psych experiment. That would be that you changed a single thing. That everything else is the same, you change one thing and show that change predicts some downstream consequence. You can't study intersectionality that way. [chuckle]

0:45:16.2 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Or if you do, you have to be... You already have to be in subsets of subsets. I can take women, but let me take people who identify as a lesbian and people identify as straight, and then that's my one change. Okay, let me see that. But I already have to recognise that women are not a monolith, in order for me to even get to that subset to change one thing.

0:45:35.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so I think that's why in psychology, intersectionality has struggled. It shouldn't. I think there's been an explosion of research on intersectionality, people are starting to really take like how should we predict the intersection? I think the more that we do that, the more, the richer our science will be and actually more accurate.

0:45:55.1 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: For example, when we talk about gender, what do we mean when we say that men and women are different? Are we talking about gender, meaning their gender identity? Are we talking about their gender expression? Are we talking about the clothes that they wear, and that's really the driver of the effect? Are you talking about the roles that society has placed on them, and that is the effect? Are we really talking about sexual orientation, that we've aligned with gender in all these ways?

0:46:22.4 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: As soon as you start to take this broad concept that really has a whole bunch of assumptions underneath it and start to break those assumptions, we actually get to a better sense of what's going on. Why do women feel stereotype threat in math domains? Is it truly because they're women, or it is this assumption about roles, would lesbian women not feel stereotyped in math domains? What about gay men, do they experience it because people put femininity on them? So you just do, you get much better questions.

0:46:50.0 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Okay, so that's intersectionality. Then I'll say a little bit about the theory of gendered prejudice, which I did not come up with. I have argued with my advisor. I really think the day we met, [chuckle] we argued about the theory of gendered prejudice and just never stopped. Because I have some really strong thoughts about it.

0:47:08.6 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So what the the theory of gendered prejudice is, it takes social dominance theory and intertwines it with parental investment theory. And parental investment theory is just that men and women have different parental investments in children, such that men have much less investment into a child than a woman does. Purely from the how long does it take a man to contribute to a baby, as long as it takes him to ejaculate, whereas a woman has to gestate that baby for nine months. But then there's also...

0:47:36.9 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So that's a physical toll on the body. And then you have, okay, once the baby is out, who's gonna feed it? This baby can't eat regular food. So the mom still has to provide milk, whereas the dad technically doesn't have to provide anything. And I think once the baby is weaned, then technically the man and the woman could give equal amounts of parental investment, but they don't.

0:47:56.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Okay, so if you take that, what that means is men and women have different reproductive needs, like survival of the fittest, blah, blah, blah. Men need to amass resources in order to get mates because women are the choosier sex. They're the choosier sex because nine months is costly, so they really need to aim in order for them to increase their reproductive fitness, they have to make every baby count. Every baby has to be as healthy as that baby can be in order for that baby to survive. How is that baby gonna survive? I need nutrients, so I need to have a mate who can provide.

0:48:30.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Men don't have to be choosy. Their reproductive fitness is increased by giving the least amount of resources as they possibly can to as many people as possible. So let's take those different motivations of men and women and collide it with inter-group conflict. When you collide it with inter-group conflict, that means that it's really only men that benefit from inter-group conflict.

0:48:52.0 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Why is a woman fighting with another woman of a different social group over men? It doesn't actually behove them as much. Whereas men do need to fight in order to get the land, the money, the... Whatever resources are valued in that particular society, men have to fight over that.

0:49:10.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so when you look at historically, conflict is a male-on-male phenomenon, it is the men that are going off and fighting all these wars against other men, blah, blah, blah. That's where inter-group clashes happen. And so what the argument of theory of gendered prejudice is that coalitional violence, that arbitrary set group conflict is a male-on-male phenomenon, and what women primarily receive is sexism, not necessarily that coalitional violence.

0:49:37.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So my advisor would argue that Black women receive predominantly sexism, we don't really receive racism, at least not nearly to the extent as Black men receive. That is the argument of gendered prejudice. I fundamentally disagree, and it's been a lot of fun to argue with him. I miss arguing with him about it.

0:49:58.0 Ava Ma De Sousa: Could you share a little bit about what you think is going on? And do you think that this is an effective way to also be thinking about intersectionality in terms of it being about the ways that people find mates?

0:50:12.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: I do think that it makes sense to think about how humans have evolved because there are traces of that in what we do. So why do we crave sweet things, we crave sweet things because in the wild sweet things tend to have higher core density, and so it makes sense that we love it.

0:50:32.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But of course in modern societies, that urge does not behove us very much because there are sweet things everywhere, and that's how you get people eating more calories than they probably should. So from that perspective, evolutionary psychology has some use. I think the use of evolutionary psychology here, I think it's interesting, and I think it leads us to different predictions than we would have gotten elsewhere.

0:51:00.1 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And it's falsifiable, from the sense of we can see the patterns of racism and sexism and homophobia, all these different things, and map it on to the predictions of the theory of gendered prejudice. From that perspective, Jim would say he has so much evidence. He's, "Look at police shootings. It is men predominantly shooting men. That is just true." "What do you mean?" "Women are just not getting any of this stuff."

0:51:25.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And I have struggled with the gender of gendered prejudice and it took me a lot to articulate why I struggled with it. And so at this point, I think that the theory of gendered prejudice is for the most part, correct. But the issue with it is that it's incomplete. So the way that I see it is that Jim and his colleagues have investigated a spotted cow of intersectionality, has the only investigated the black spots and have concluded that the cow is black.

0:51:48.0 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So all the evidence that comes to bear when the black spots are there, those spots exist, but somehow they systematically forgot the white spots. And I think what those white spots are is, going back to parental investment theory, would be, how would you discriminate against a man and a woman?

0:52:07.7 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So think about it, if I'm trying to reduce the reproductive fitness of a woman, what I would do is reduce her ability to choose. That would be sexual violence, that would be stereotypes that relate to sexuality, etcetera, etcetera. And guess what? Isn't it surprising that ethnic minority women are almost historically attached to stereotype that talk about their promiscuity, whereas White women are seen as simply liberal. Ooh, isn't that fascinating?

0:52:35.2 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So you get this sexism, but the sexism is racialised, that sexism is coloured by their other identities. But again, we're using the same logic as the theory of gendered prejudice, right? That reproductive fitness matters. Theory of gendered prejudice always focus on how to increase it, but if you really think about coalitional conflict, it would be to decrease it.

0:52:53.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And if you stick again about the reproductive fitness of women and lowering their ability to choose, how would that benefit both in-group and out-group... Or sorry. How that benefit both in-group men and women? Now, men get to spread their seed to people that they don't have to provide for.

0:53:10.2 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Because if you are sexually promiscuous, no one is gonna hold me accountable for my actions towards you, because you brought it on yourself, and you see that happening all over the place. But that also means that in-group women benefit because they are then the recipients of more resources. Because this man is not spreading it to more people, because we've changed the way that these stereotypes operate along a group continuum.

0:53:38.4 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: How do you reduce the reproductive fitness of men? You reduce their ability to amass status and resources. You lock them up, you up don't allow them to have economic resources. And we see that towards men, and that's a lot of the evidence that my advisor has a massed, towards men of different groups.

0:53:54.2 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But women still receive sexism. And so women also still get that excluding from amassing their own status and resources. And so you're able to see how double jeopardy can fit in to this dynamic, that it makes sense that when you're first thinking about a woman, especially a woman who is from a different group, that I don't know where the norms are established.

0:54:18.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Sure, towards them we're gonna do all of the reduced reproductive fitness, the sexual harassment, all of that stuff that exists, but then as soon as they either can step away from that or work around that, they still get smacked down with good old sexism.

0:54:35.4 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so I think in general, and this is actually something I'm trying to write out now, which is that there is this tension between the types of discrimination that men and women receive is not a difference of degree, it's a difference of kind. That they receive different types.

0:54:53.9 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And I don't think it's fair for someone to say that one is worse than another, and I think that's what my advisor fundamentally did. He is saying it is worse to be killed than to be raped. And I don't think you can make that distinction at all. I think these are a difference of kind, and to say that one is worse, I just don't think it's necessary to understand how inter-group conflict might be impacted by these evolutionary pressures on people.

0:55:22.6 Ava Ma De Sousa: I was just wondering if you could talk about the empirical paper that you did on intersectionality and whether you feel like you applied the theory of gendered prejudice in that, or whether it was just more of an exploration of how different identities intersect?

0:55:35.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Good question. So I would say both. So the paper is on normative stereotypes and how normative stereotypes, what they are at the intersection of race and gender and sexual orientation. And so what I was just curious about is, so normative stereotypes are what people should and should not do, and there's a whole bunch of work on gender normative stereotypes.

0:55:58.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So what men and women should do, so that's prescriptive stereotypes, and what they shouldn't do, which is proscriptive stereotypes. For example, women shouldn't be leaders, like they shouldn't be agentic, they should be warm and kind. And men should probably be warm and kind, but they don't have... That is not as applied to them. But they should be agentic and they shouldn't be weak, for example.

0:56:24.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And so the reason why we care about normative stereotypes is because normative stereotypes, especially when you're violating proscriptive ones, is where you get a lot of backlash. So if you think about a woman and being a leader, descriptively, I can say that women are not leaders, but that just suggests that I have a bias of thinking that women are not leaders.

0:56:44.3 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But if a woman can show that she has the necessary traits, experience, blah, blah, blah, of being a leader, that should be fine, but it's not, because now she's violating normative expectations and then she receives backlash so that she can be where she should be.

0:56:58.4 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Now, I think when you start to ask those questions at the intersection, things get a little complicated. So we take that men should be assertive. Should Black men be assertive because they're men? Or does their race alter the normative nature of assertiveness? Of course it does.

0:57:18.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: We know this, but then we still talk about men and women in work are normative stereotypes. I just don't think it applies. But there hasn't been any work on normative stereotypes, at least in a systematic way. There definitely has been work on normative stereotypes at the intersection, but what I wanted to do was to get a landscape of normative stereotypes.

0:57:38.0 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: So let's ask about a whole bunch of stereotypes at the intersection of gender, sexual orientation, gender and race. And see how they match up to, one, a control condition where we just use men and women. And then also to the prototypical group in the United States. So for sexual orientation it will be straight, and for race, it would be White.

0:58:00.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: And what we found overall is that one, gendered stereotypes exist, normative stereotypes exist and persist. So looking at the difference between men and women, you get the same things that we've been seeing for decades. But the group that most matches on to that control conditions are the prototypical ones, which would be straight men and women, and White men and women.

0:58:24.5 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: What you also find though, and this is the thing that I think is really important, is that gender becomes muted for non-prototypical groups. Meaning that the difference in the desirability of a given trait, so let's just take assertiveness, the difference between a Black man and a Black woman on assertiveness is minuscule compared to the difference between a White man and a White woman on assertiveness. Or between a man and a woman on assertiveness.

0:58:53.8 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: The gendered nature of these stereotypes in terms of how normative they are tends to go away for the non-prototypical group. What that then means is you see a huge gap between men, in line with the theory of gendered prejudice, that the normative stereotypes of a White man versus a Black man, huge gap. The normative stereotypes between a White woman and a Black woman, super small.

0:59:19.6 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: Jim would say, "Look, I found that they're gendered prejudice." The way that I see it though, you also find smaller gender gaps amongst Black people. So I could say actually Black women only receive racism, they don't receive sexism. Who is correct? Who knows, but to me what the biggest thing is Black men, Black women and White women are all at the same level, and White men are privileged in terms of these stereotypes, which would suggest that there is some...

0:59:48.1 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: You could think about it more as White men are privileged and everybody is seen as low status comparatively. So whether or not your gendered prejudice was supported, I had been finding more and more of my work is that there is a de-gendering of groups at the intersection. Non-prototypical groups are not really seen as women or men first, they're seen as their marginalised group identity first, and from there gender gets added into the mix.

1:00:19.1 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: But I think gender gets added into the mix in this way that I talked about before, which is we want to discriminate against you because you're an out-group. How we're going to do it does depend on your gender, but I'm really thinking about you as this out-group member first.

1:00:35.4 Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson: That is something I've been muddling around with in my head, I still have many more studies and things to think about in order to formalise that, but I have been getting to this idea that gender doesn't seem to predict as much as you would expect it to for non-prototypical groups.

[music]

1:00:58.6 Ava Ma De Sousa: I thought that the theory of gendered prejudice, which we didn't talk about too much in detail, but I think there was a good overview given. I guess what I found interesting about it was that it was a kind of actually sort of rare integration of something that's very social psychology-y with something that's very evolutionary psychology based with this parental investment theory.

1:01:22.6 Ava Ma De Sousa: And in evolutionary psychology, the prevailing wisdom is that gender, sex differences and patriarchy are a natural kind that you can't get rid of or would be more difficult to get rid of, whereas race and race-based differentiations are really just co-opting a coalitional mindset. So race is just one more way to build coalitions, whereas gender is something that really is a category that is ingrained in us.

1:01:51.6 Ava Ma De Sousa: I wasn't expecting this theory to have that kind of stance where like gender was the central construct in some ways. Not that it's the central construct, 'cause I don't think that's really the case, but it's that it comes to the conclusion, which Kiera said she doesn't necessarily agree with, but comes to this conclusion that men are the ones that really suffer from racism, whereas women are the ones that suffer from sexism and don't suffer from racism.

1:02:16.3 Ava Ma De Sousa: It's pretty clear that that's not the experience of women of colour. And I think also in terms of, at least my lived experience as a mixed person, which I know there's a lot of discourse about the fact that Asian-American women, for example, we actually make more money than White women on the dollar, which is crazy.

1:02:34.9 Ava Ma De Sousa: So there's all these different status things there. But even in that case, I feel that my Asian identity or my person of colour identity, because I'm half White, but I think no one categorises me directly as White when they meet me, I think that always comes first for me, than my identity as a woman, and I've heard that from a lot of women of colour as well when we talk about identity.

1:02:58.1 Ava Ma De Sousa: So I thought that it was really interesting that in this theory, in some ways it should predict the opposite, and I'm not sure that Kiera or Jim would agree with that. But that you would think that women would feel the effects of their gender moreso than their race, which I don't think is the case.

1:03:17.3 Beth Fisher: So it's interesting when you're describing your experience. That's really funny, 'cause first of all, I would feel more strongly that I identify as a woman, and I wouldn't feel strongly... It's not something that I would be proud of, identify as being White. So I think, first of all, I feel more like more close to or I didn't really know how to describe it, of being a woman first. So it's funny that our experiences are the opposite in that sense.

1:03:42.4 Ava Ma De Sousa: There is this phenomenon in psych with mixed race people, that's called "hypodescent", and this is a little bit different, but it shows that people who are mixed race, so the paradigm case is usually Black-White biracials, or any biracial really, are more likely to be perceived as their most marginalised identity.

1:04:01.3 Ava Ma De Sousa: And that's also the reason that I would identify more as Asian than White, which is similar to how people perceive biracial people. I also feel like I identify in that way. And I think maybe there's something to that with these other types of identities, but I don't think that people would look at me and think Asian person first before anything else, because I don't think that's the case.

1:04:25.4 Ava Ma De Sousa: But I think maybe here in terms of identification, there's just something to being attached to, in a sense, a more marginalised identity or an identity that you feel it's more salient because there's more work to do, or you perceive that there's more work to do in that avenue and you're more likely to identify there.

1:04:42.0 Beth Fisher: And I think that could be let's say if you identify with a group that has suffered more or any of these things, it might be something that you would put to the forefront of your identity as, yeah, being proud that you are a part of that community and wanting to be more of a voice for that. So yeah, it could be. But yeah. Who knows? But maybe that could be one reason.

1:05:04.7 Ava Ma De Sousa: So I was also talking to one of my friends about this, she is a woman, she identifies as a woman. She grew up in India and she was saying that even now she feels like she still identifies as a woman first before identifying as Brown. Because around her when she was growing up, that was the salient identity since everyone else was also Indian, and so being Indian or being brown wasn't salient, but her female identity was much more salient and also caused her to suffer more as well.

1:05:34.3 Ava Ma De Sousa: What I thought was interesting was that she also said that moving to the US did shift that for her in some ways, because once she came to the US, her female identity wasn't as salient as being Indian or being Brown. And she was also saying that sometimes in some of the interactions that she's had, that she also is not sure whether she can attribute something to racism or sexism at times. So the race and gender are both important identities for her now.

1:06:09.2 Ava Ma De Sousa: But I thought it was really interesting that in the cultural context or just the environment, that salient identity can really shift, and I think it still speaks to this kind of point that we were talking about, of your more marginalised identity being the one that you identify with most, and I wanted to add that in because I feel like up until now we've been saying pretty Western-centric things.

1:06:27.7 Beth Fisher: I think that's super interesting. And I can't imagine how I would feel experiencing the other way. I'm thinking I just can't connect with that version of Beth that would identify White first. Yeah, it's just interesting to think about.

[music]

1:06:52.2 Ava Ma De Sousa: Thank you to Dr. Sa-Kiera Hudson for joining us this episode. Our intro and outro music is, Nobody Stayed For the DJ, by Glassio. Our transition music is, Back For More, also by Glassio.

1:07:03.3 Ava Ma De Sousa: Minds Matter is mixed, edited and created by Beth Fisher, she's the Australian one. And me, Ava Ma de Sousa. We'll be back in two weeks with a brand new episode of Minds Matter.

1:07:14.3 Ava Ma De Sousa: In the meantime, find all our episodes and show notes on mindsmatterpodcast.com.

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