

Episode 3.12 Not Nice, Not White, and Not a Lady with Tara Robertson

December 18, 2018

Hannah (Host): [00:08](#) [Music: "Mesh Shirt" by Mom Jeans] Hi, I'm Hannah McGregor and this is *Secret Feminist Agenda*, and welcome to the last episode of 2018. I'm taking a short break over the holidays, so we're going to skip a few weeks of episodes. Don't worry, we'll be back on January 11th with the next minisode, and then starting off the 2019 seasons strong with an interview on January 18th with Vivek Shraya, which I've already recorded, and which is super great. I actually already have a bunch of the interviews for 2019 recorded because I've been, I was going to say "stockpiling interviews," and I feel like that's an inappropriate word to use, but you know like getting the head on interviews in December because the spring 2019 term is going to be busy. Anyway, so we've got amazing interviews coming up with Julie Frances about tattooing, and with Zena Sharman about queer and trans inclusive health, and with Taylor Crumpton about being a young, black femme doing activism on the internet. There's so much good stuff coming up, but in the meantime I'm going to take my own advice and do some resting. I am, I'm committing really hard to actually taking the time between Christmas and New Year's off. I'm going to put on an away message on my email. I might even leave Twitter for a week, we'll see how I'm feeling. And, and I'm really, really looking forward to it. When I was sick last week, I started telling myself that because I was sick and I was falling behind that meant I couldn't take that week off. But you know what, I've talked myself out of that very absurd form of weird self punishment. So I will be taking some time off. I really hope wherever you are and whatever you're up to, the holiday season also affords you some time off, some opportunities for rest, for recuperation. This is the time of year when I really do like to sort of take stock of what the year has been up to and, of what the year has been up to. What has 2018 been up to? Nothing good. And sort of, you know, store up my energies for the next year. I also know that this is a really hard time of year for a lot of us, and even though this is an interview episode, so it doesn't have a Self Care Corner, I am including in the show notes, I'll link to a really great article that Kaarina shared on Twitter about different ways to practice self care during the holiday season. It's got some really, really great suggestions for how you can draw healthy boundaries and really articulate what it is you need at time of year. So check that out. It's going to be

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an extra long show notes this week because this conversation touched on a rich, exciting variety of topics.

Hannah (Host):

Before we get into the interview, one other note, I mentioned in a previous episode that I was thinking of doing a meetup while I was in Chicago, which I'm going to be in early January. I'm there for a conference, the MLA conference. And if you were about to ask, yes, it is the same MLA as the style guide. Anyway, I was thinking of planning to meet up and you know, some listeners even generously reached out to, to help me find a venue. But I'm actually, while in Chicago, going to be there with a really dear friend of mine, and I thought about it and I was like, "you know what, I want to prioritize spending time with this friend when I'm not at the conference." And so instead of a meetup, I just want to let you know that I am actually doing a public talk while I'm in Chicago. Public talk is part of the MLA. It's one of their open sessions. So it's free and open to the public. It's a panel called "Readers and Fans Write Back to Books." I'm one of three speakers. The other two speakers are absolutely amazing. Shawn Christian's going to be talking about the Harlem Renaissance and Janice Radway is going to be talking about girls, and reading, and fandom, which is, obviously Janice Radway is a huge inspiration for my own scholarship. So I'm really stoked to be hearing her speak. And then I'm going to be talking about Harry Potter reread podcasts, and about my own experience making, *Witch, Please*. So if that sounds interesting to you, the session is on Thursday, January 3rd in the Hyatt Regency in Chicago, in a room called Crystal Ballroom A. I have no idea where that is, but if you go to the Hyatt Regency there will be lots and lots of people around ready to point you in the right direction. It's at 5:15 PM from 5:15 PM to 6:30 PM. I won't be able to hang around for a super long time afterwards, cuz I actually have to head to another session right after that that I'm chairing. But if you do come, please come say "hi" afterwards. It would be lovely to meet you and it's a cool open session. I really want lots of people there. So if that sounds interesting to you, you should definitely come by. And that is enough preamble for me, so it's time to meet Tara. [Music: "Mesh Shirt" by Mom Jeans] Tara Robertson is an intersectional feminist who uses data and research to advocate for equality and inclusion. Currently working as the Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Partner for Mozilla. She has more than 10 years experience making open source and tech communities more diverse and welcoming. [Music: "Good as Hell" by Lizzo]

Hannah (Host):

[05:50](#)

We are in a very beautiful boardroom, of sorts, with exposed brick and black trim. It looks like a lot of accounts that I have

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

seen on Design Instagram. It's very current, very of the moment. This is the Vancouver Mozilla offices.

Tara: [06:17](#) Mozilla.

Hannah (Host): [06:18](#) Moh-zilla. [Huffs].

Tara: [06:19](#) [Huffs].

Hannah (Host): [06:19](#) I'm learning how to say things all the time. I really thought it was Mozilla like mozzarella.

Tara: [06:24](#) There's no "T".

Hannah (Host): [06:25](#) There's no "T" in "mozzarella," either! But there are two "Z"s, which changes how you pronounced it, the "Z" sound. Anyway, Mozilla makes a lot more sense.

Tara: [06:33](#) Like, rhymes with "Godzilla".

Hannah (Host): [06:35](#) Mod-zilla. Moh-zilla. It doesn't rhyme with "Godzilla!" [Laughs]

Tara: [06:44](#) [Laughs] The "zilla" bit does!

Hannah (Host): [06:44](#) [Laughs]. I'm gonna start calling it "mod-zilla." It's a very glossy and beautiful space you work in.

Tara: [06:50](#) Yeah.

Hannah (Host): [06:51](#) Yeah.

Tara: [06:52](#) It really is.

Hannah (Host): [06:53](#) Was Mozilla, your first, sort of, left the library world job.

Tara: [06:57](#) Yeah.

Hannah (Host): [06:57](#) Was it weird moving out of libraries into beautiful glass cubes?

Tara: [07:03](#) Yeah, but it was also really exciting. Like, this, this is the most beautiful place I've ever worked in.

Hannah (Host): [07:08](#) It's most beautiful place I've ever been. There's just a snack area, a snack nook with free snacks!

Tara: [07:15](#) Yeah. We don't have that in public universities.

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- Hannah (Host): [07:18](#) [Laughs] Oh no, we don't. My god, all we have is, is Ziploc bags full of the leftover vegetables from the reception the day before shoved into our 35 year-old mini fridges.
- Tara: [07:31](#) Dry, cracking carrots.
- Hannah (Host): [07:32](#) Yup. Yup. Yeah, exactly. So what were you doing before you moved over here?
- Tara: [07:38](#) So I was a librarian and I ran an accessibility organization that served students with print disabilities in postsecondary. So we took print materials, like textbooks and course readings and put them into digital formats that students could use with assistive technology.
- Hannah (Host): [07:52](#) Oh wonderful.
- Tara: [07:53](#) So also weird, like not what you think of when you think of library.
- Hannah (Host): [07:57](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [07:57](#) But it's about access to information. That was my last job.
- Hannah (Host): [07:59](#) And how did you--We're going to keep backtracking and then we'll come back to Mozilla. And how did you, how did that become the kind of work you did as a librarian?
- Tara: [08:06](#) Ah, I think, so I've always done, I wanted to be a children's librarian, but I ended up doing technical work because I was interested in it. It paid better and I was good at it. So I did like the IT support within the library, as well as migrating library systems, like the library catalog that you would search to see if there's books, or the library staff would use to check things out. Helping libraries migrate from proprietary, expensive, crappy systems to open source versions where libraries at least have a voice and can help determine what the software is going to look like.
- Hannah (Host): [08:42](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [08:42](#) So that was kind of where my interest in open source started.
- Hannah (Host): [08:45](#) Gotcha. And I feel like that's where I first heard about your work, is as a librarian and as somebody who was well known in the, sort of, open education, open source, open access world.

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Tara: [08:58](#) Cool. [Laughs]

Hannah (Host): [08:59](#) [Laughs] You're like, "yeah, no, I don't know."

Tara: [09:01](#) "Well known?" I'm not sure if--

Hannah (Host): [09:01](#) I don't know when you first heard my name, how would I know that? [Laughs].

Tara: [09:05](#) Yeah. I think "open" has been a theme in my career, it aligns with my values. Like, I became a librarian because I care about access to information.

Hannah (Host): [09:14](#) Yeah.

Tara: [09:14](#) And like the public library is one of the last free places in society that anyone can go to get information or access information.

Hannah (Host): [09:22](#) Yeah.

Tara: [09:22](#) And increasingly as public spaces are becoming privatized, like that's really, really special and really, really important.

Hannah (Host): [09:30](#) Yeah.

Tara: [09:30](#) So a lot of the work I've done has been around like those kind of values. And Mozilla is a open source company, and the diversity/inclusion work that I do is directly tied to our mission, which is to keep the internet open and accessible for all. So that's all good stuff.

Hannah (Host): [09:47](#) Yeah. It is all good stuff. So that's how you, so like what was the move for you out of the, sort of, public university libraries into Mozilla? The tech world, this glossy, glossy tech world.

Tara: [09:59](#) With free snacks.

Hannah (Host): [09:59](#) Yup.

Tara: [10:01](#) In the library tech world, I was involved often in working to make our conferences and communities more accessible to different kinds of people, and lift up voices of people who, you know, weren't the white men at the head of our industry, as well as get stuff like codes of conduct in place, and think about diversity of keynote speakers. So I was doing that diversity/inclusion work. So the opportunity to do that like, as a

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

full time job and to learn more about what that could look like in a company that wanted to make change was super exciting.

Hannah (Host): [10:35](#) Were you just doing that work because you cared about it like, on the side of your desk kind of thing?

Tara: [10:40](#) Yeah.

Hannah (Host): [10:40](#) Okay. And this was a chance to make it actually the job that you do?

Tara: [10:45](#) Yup.

Hannah (Host): [10:45](#) All right. So what does it involve? Like what is what, what is, what falls under your responsibilities here?

Tara: [10:52](#) [Laughs].

Hannah (Host): [10:52](#) What do you do? What's your actual job? As far as I can tell you travel extensively and give a lot of keynotes.

Tara: [10:59](#) [Snorts] That sort of addition to my day job. I think this year has been a lot of getting the infrastructure in place. So we measure things that we care about, and when we talk about diversity, that's the makeup of who works here at Mozilla. And if we don't have good numbers, we can't tell if the things that we've tried have improved things or make them worse. So it's working with our HR ops team to get the data to be really good, and have good quality data. And working with it to build out a dashboard so that we can see the patterns and glean insights from the data.

Hannah (Host): [11:33](#) Okay.

Tara: [11:34](#) To kind of, or better understand and diagnose the problems are.

Hannah (Host): [11:38](#) Yeah. So what kind of data are you gathering? Like what are you actually trying to figure out how to measure?

Tara: [11:44](#) We've got two goals around increasing women in technical roles participation, as well as for American stuff, folks from underrepresented minorities. So looking at the data there.

Hannah (Host): [11:58](#) So that's what, it's like, that level of inclusion. Like, there's a gender problem and a race problem and we want to figure out how to address those?

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

Tara: [12:05](#) I wouldn't say "problem," I'd say underrepresentation. I think sometimes the word "problem" implies that the, it's at the individual level and this is a systemic thing, so it's not okay.

Hannah (Host): [12:15](#) Yeah, okay.

Tara: [12:15](#) The problem is not with individuals from those groups.

Hannah (Host): [12:17](#) Yeah.

Tara: [12:17](#) The problem is systemically--

Hannah (Host): [12:18](#) Yeah.

Tara: [12:19](#) --our representation doesn't match the labour pool, so.

Hannah (Host): [12:22](#) Yeah.

Tara: [12:23](#) I love the research focus here. Like we're an engineering organization so, and all this work happen before I came here, like--

Hannah (Host): [12:30](#) Yeah.

Tara: [12:31](#) --my manager did some amazing groundwork getting people on board, and getting aligned, and understanding how this ties to our business.

Hannah (Host): [12:39](#) Yeah.

Tara: [12:39](#) Like we're a company that makes an open source web browser and we're fighting against big folks like Google, so we need to be super innovative.

Hannah (Host): [12:50](#) Yep.

Tara: [12:50](#) 1200 people sounds like a lot of people, but compared--

Hannah (Host): [12:52](#) No, it --

Tara: [12:52](#) --to our competitors, like--

Hannah (Host): [12:54](#) --is little compared to other, yeah.

Tara: [12:56](#) Like how many faculty are at SFU?

Hannah (Host): [12:58](#) I've no clue.

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

- Tara: [12:59](#) Probably more than 1200.
- Hannah (Host): [13:00](#) Probably more than 1200 and I'm guessing Google has more than 1200 employees.
- Tara: [13:04](#) Yeah, a lot.
- Hannah (Host): [13:06](#) [Laughs].
- Tara: [13:06](#) I think Microsoft has 120,000, so like, they're are a thousand times bigger than us.
- Hannah (Host): [13:11](#) Oh gosh. That's wild.
- Tara: [13:12](#) So there's research, social science research to show that there's a connection between the diversity of a group and radical innovation. So the more diverse a group is, people will think through their arguments more strongly, or more carefully. They'll be really explicit about their assumptions because they're not assuming that the person across the table has the same background as them or thinks the same way. And there can also be more conflict because you've got difference in the room.
- Hannah (Host): [13:43](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [13:43](#) And if people feel comfortable bringing that difference to work, which kind of needs to happen. So that's the inclusion piece.
- Hannah (Host): [13:50](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [13:50](#) Like really amazing things can happen.
- Hannah (Host): [13:54](#) Mmhmm. That was going to be my next question is that the sense of the need for diversity and inclusion in a company like this. Like we can talk about it, on the one hand, as being an equity issue, which is certainly, I think how we frame things in the university a lot of the time, right? That like education is a public good and should be equally accessible to everyone, and we take a lack of diversity within the university as an, as an equity issue. It's interesting to hear it articulated also as, not as a sort of, it's a loss to not have this, but also like it is a significant benefit to have more diversity in a company like this.
- Tara: [14:32](#) Yeah, and I think that, that, there's a bunch of reasons why we do this, but I think the first one is the, The Business Case for Innovation. And Dr. Katherine Phillips, a Business School

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

Professor at Columbia, I believe, has an amazing article in Scientific American.

- Hannah (Host): [14:47](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [14:48](#) Around diversity and innovation, and like the business case on that, and that informs a lot of our work. I think the second piece is that we're a mission driven organization.
- Hannah (Host): [14:58](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [14:58](#) And like, how are we going to fight to keep the internet open and accessible to everyone if we only have one group of people, or a really, like narrow slice of everyone at the table, like?
- Hannah (Host): [15:10](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [15:11](#) And then the third thing, it is the right thing to do, but that's not what we're leading with.
- Hannah (Host): [15:15](#) Yeah. You're reminding me. We're at now the a random tweet I saw of Anil Dash's on Twitter, like maybe a week ago, where he was just like, "most of what is wrong with what's happening on the internet today is the very clear path we can chart, from the 90s until the present day, away from open access." And people tried. People were like, "well that's outrageous. The internet is still open and available to everyone." And he was like, "cool. When's the last time that you changed the banner color on Facebook?" Like that premise that the internet is a thing that is owned by corporations who get to decide the shape that it's going to take and the spaces that will exist, versus the Internet is a sort of open tool that people can intervene in, presents a pretty fundamentally different philosophy of what we think this this thing is for.
- Tara: [16:01](#) Yeah, and like I was, I heard something on the radio yesterday. It was an activist in the Philippines talking about like, Facebook is the internet for some folks in some countries because of the way that internet is bundled. Like you can access Facebook for free and if you wanted to access the rest of the internet, you need to pay.
- Hannah (Host): [16:20](#) I taught a really interesting article about this when I first came to SFU, that's about Facebook's walled garden internet.
- Tara: [16:27](#) Yep!

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

- Hannah (Host): [16:27](#) And it was in India that this was happening, that Facebook was providing free internet access, but it was only their walled garden internet. So it was like you got Facebook and then anything Facebook decided to let you have. And it was like internet.org I believe is the service. Which is such a sneaky fucking URL.
- Tara: [16:45](#) It's like, "the Internet, internet.org. It's an organization."
- Hannah (Host): [16:50](#) Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's an organization of Internet.
- Tara: [16:52](#) Everything good. Yes.
- Hannah (Host): [16:53](#) And India ended up banning it, because they said it was a violation of net neutrality and they took a stance on, on net neutrality. But there's lots of other places in the world where like, people can't afford access to the open internet and so they use this proxy that Facebook gives you for free. When you think about like, we have a fairly good sense at this point that the politics of corporations like Facebook are not great. So like, feel pretty uncomfortable with people only accessing what Facebook wants them to see.
- Tara: [17:21](#) And like, I feel super proud of how Mozilla is showing up as really opinionated, both in our product but also around policy. So Mozilla, I don't know the exact legal word, but it was like leading the lawsuit at FCC around net neutrality.
- Hannah (Host): [17:35](#) Oh wow.
- Tara: [17:36](#) And I think that's really bad ass and it makes me feel really proud to work here.
- Hannah (Host): [17:40](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [17:40](#) And in libraries or like the last couple of years people have been talking, finally, about like are libraries neutral?
- Hannah (Host): [17:47](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [17:47](#) And of course they're not. So it makes me really happy to work somewhere where we know we're not neutral.
- Hannah (Host): [17:52](#) Yeah.

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

- Tara: [17:52](#) And as the world gets more kind of fucked up that we're planting our feet and taking a stance, and being opinionated are around what our values are, and that makes me super excited.
- Hannah (Host): [18:08](#) [Laughs] Okay. Let's talk about the language of neutrality. That's really interesting, because the thing that we're fighting for is net neutrality. So literally has the word "neutral" in the name and is, I think for obvious reasons, something that championed as a sign of a freedom of expression, right? Like, we do not want governments to have the freedom to curtail access to information on the internet. That seems like a pretty, a pretty good core value. And then, at the same time, we are argue that libraries are not neutral, so like, and, and don't and shouldn't be neutral, right? Not, not that they're not neutral and that neutrality is a goal, but that non-neutrality is the goal. But I feel like maybe we're using the word neutral differently in these two cases.
- Tara: [18:51](#) Yeah, I like I'm, I'm no expert in net neutrality, but I think it's less around the subject matter of the content and more around the providers. So I was in New Zealand a couple of weeks ago and I bought a sim card there because I didn't want to pay the outrageous roaming charges. And with the sim card I got six gigs of data or something, but unlimited use of Twitter, and Instagram, and Facebook. So like that's...
- Hannah (Host): [19:19](#) Gotcha.
- Tara: [19:21](#) I can't remember the word. There is a technical term here to describe what that is, but it's giving free access to some things on the internet and sort of charging the data for others, so that that's not neutral.
- Hannah (Host): [19:33](#) Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. And it encourages you, it drives you more towards certain platforms than others.
- Tara: [19:38](#) Yeah.
- Hannah (Host): [19:38](#) As opposed to like what, cuz that feel like we have been talking about what's in Vancouver a lot in the past couple of weeks, the idea that libraries are not neutral. That we were talking not talking about like, access to particular kinds of platforms. We're talking about ideas.
- Tara: [19:52](#) Yeah. And I think nothing, nothing is neutral [laughs].
- Hannah (Host): [19:54](#) I know, right?

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

- Tara: [19:56](#) I don't know. Like how for me, for me, feminism has been a really useful lens in seeing the world. And I remember when I was a teenager and like first started reading about feminism and talking about feminism, it was a really useful lens for me to understand the power dynamics in my family, to understand what was going on at school, and swim club, and why certain people got some things, and other people didn't get other things. Like, it gave me a really useful lens to see power and understand that, or have a critique of that.
- Hannah (Host): [20:35](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [20:36](#) So I think like with the idea of neutral...[sighs]
- Hannah (Host): [20:37](#) We're never in spaces that aren't saturated by power.
- Tara: [20:41](#) Yeah!
- Hannah (Host): [20:41](#) Like, those spaces are impossible. Yeah. So to, so to work in a space that understands that, that really acknowledges that and that uses that as a starting point to be like, "there is a power differential here and that's a problem. Let's move forward," seems like, like a good fit?
- Tara: [20:56](#) Yeah.
- Hannah (Host): [20:58](#) Yeah. So let's go back to like when you talked about Mozilla being mission driven, what does that mean? What does it mean to work for a mission driven company? What's the mission?
- Tara: [21:07](#) The mission is to fight to ensure the internet is open and accessible to all.
- Hannah (Host): [21:13](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [21:13](#) So we do that through product, products like Firefox, or different flavours of Firefox, like Firefox Focus or...
- Hannah (Host): [21:22](#) Flavours of Firefox. I like that.
- Tara: [21:23](#) The Electronic Frontier Foundation. I don't know what their mission is exactly, but similar-ish. But they do that through legal action and advocacy.
- Hannah (Host): [21:36](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [21:36](#) But we do it kind of through product.

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

Hannah (Host): [21:39](#) Okay.

Tara: [21:39](#) So I see us like, in the same neighborhood of like, people who are trying to make, keep the internet awesome.

Hannah (Host): [21:46](#) Yeah.

Tara: [21:47](#) And like keep civil society...

Hannah (Host): [21:51](#) Yeah.

Tara: [21:51](#) Good. Oh, tone policing!

Hannah (Host): [21:53](#) Tone policing.

Tara: [21:53](#) Oh crap.

Hannah (Host): [21:54](#) Yup. Nope. You got there. Speaking of keeping civil society good, tone policing.

Tara: [21:58](#) Yeah. The tone in that article was a little intense or maybe you should tone it down so people can hear your critique. Like fuck that.

Hannah (Host): [22:05](#) Yeah.

Tara: [22:06](#) Like yeah. [Laughs].

Hannah (Host): [22:09](#) I experienced something really interesting last year in the first time, for the first time I taught a Publishing and Social Change class, and we were looking at like the history of social change and how it's connected to publishing as a, as an industry and as a set of practices. And then we were looking at a bunch of like, concrete instances of marginalized communities using publishing to, sort of, push forward a civil rights agenda, for the most part. And one of the examples that we were looking at is the manifesto, the genre of manifesto, as a sort of powerful political statement of a particular stance. And I had my students read this thing called the *Femme Shark Manifesto*.

Tara: [22:50](#) Yes!

Hannah (Host): [22:50](#) Okay, great. *Femme Shark Manifesto* is fucking incredible.

Tara: [22:53](#) Chomp, chomp, chomp.

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

- Hannah (Host): [22:53](#) Yeah, it's so good. It's such a, just a radical, incredible piece of work. And I had my students read it thinking that they would be as excited as I was the first time I read it. And they were, for the most part, very put off by it. They found it very aggressive, and many of them said that they thought that the authors had, had misstepped, because you would never convince anybody to take you seriously or to listen to your concerns if you spoke in that tone.
- Tara: [23:24](#) But it's the Femme Shark Manifesto!
- Hannah (Host): [23:26](#) And like how have you internalized this notion that people must politely request rights? Who taught you that? Literally anything in history has changed by people knocking and saying, "Oh I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Could we have some civil rights please?" Like that's not how anything changes.
- Tara: [23:46](#) No, but like this, maybe this is making it too much about me, but--
- Hannah (Host): [23:50](#) This is all about you. We're here to talk about you.
- Tara: [23:52](#) One of the things I noticed, I guess I'm, I'm kind of in a reflective state right now cause it's the end of the year, and wrapping up stuff and planning for the next year. In libraries there was something about the culture, and the institution, and the structures where I made myself smaller and more quiet, and it's been really challenging this year to find my voice. And at first I was really excited because I'm mostly working with Americans. Everyone's super smart and really good at what they do, super passionate. And I realized I didn't have to temper myself or turn my volume down.
- Hannah (Host): [24:35](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [24:35](#) And I've had the volume down for so long, it's just become part of who I am, and I didn't even realize that I had been making myself smaller and more quiet and more polite, and tone policing myself.
- Hannah (Host): [24:48](#) yep.
- Tara: [24:48](#) Sort of like internalized homophobia, like this internalized nice white lady bullshit. Like I'm not nice, I'm not white, and I'm not a lady.
- Hannah (Host): [24:59](#) [Laughs] I am none of these things.

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

- Tara: [24:59](#) And I don't think anyone thinks I am, but I think there was part of me that was culturally policing myself. Like if I say my radical critiques in academic enough and polite enough language, maybe that will be okay. And I was like, no. Like there's some things that are really, really wrong and like we should be outraged about them. Like--
- Hannah (Host): [25:25](#) Yep.
- Tara: [25:26](#) So--
- Hannah (Host): [25:26](#) Yeah. I mean, you're making me think of about Baharak's episode, right?
- Tara: [25:28](#) Yeah.
- Hannah (Host): [25:28](#) The idea of bringing your whole self into the workplace and how some workplaces manage to communicate to you that you can't do that even if nobody's actually ever said it. If nobody's said like, "you need to be quieter," you somehow you get the message.
- Tara: [25:43](#) Well you're not exactly quiet yourself.
- Hannah (Host): [25:46](#) [Laughs] No, I'm not.
- Tara: [25:48](#) So like how, how have you, how have you received those messages? How do you resist and how do you keep your voice awesome?
- Hannah (Host): [25:54](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [25:54](#) And your fashion fantastic, and your politics sharp and amazing?
- Hannah (Host): [25:58](#) I had to, that was a transformation for me because I got the message very explicitly of how I should behave. Like that was communicated to me overtly by mentors who told me that the thing that I have been told more than anything else by mentors is that I am too confident, too full of myself getting above my station, pushing myself forward too much. Academia--
- Tara: [26:23](#) Those seem like assets for academia [laughs] to be honest.
- Hannah (Host): [26:26](#) It's not. Academia is about, especially when you're a woman, obviously academia is about hierarchies. It's very much about knowing your place and kowtowing to the people who are above you, and knowing when you're allowed to speak and

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

when you're not, and who to cite and who not to. Not for good political but because of the politics of whose work you're aligning yourself with. And my tendency as, just personality-wise, is to take the lead, take control, do the thing that I want to do. Do it first and get in trouble later and walk around and being like, "hmmm. so sad that I'm in trouble for this," but do I learn my lesson? No, [laughs] but that's like the way, the way that I default is being like, "well I am not sure what I'm supposed to do here so I'm just going to do this thing and we'll just see how it works." And I was taught very deliberately and scrupulously not to do that, and then got to the job that I have now at SFU and was like, "okay, I need somebody to tell me what to do because I'm not allowed to do things without being told what to do." And people were like, "you don't have a boss. That's not how the university works." Like, you've been a student for a decade and you always had a boss, and now you have no boss and there's nobody here who you are answerable to. It's wild. Like, you go from just being at the bottom of a hierarchy and then suddenly it's like, and go. Just figure it out yourself. So I was like, "cool, I guess I'll just do a bunch of stuff that makes people really mad." But not, again--

- Tara: [27:55](#) You've been successful.
- Hannah (Host): [27:55](#) Never deliberately! Never like, "I'm going to shake things up." It's just like...
- Tara: [28:00](#) "I want to follow this like line of research. I'm curious about these things," and then--
- Hannah (Host): [28:05](#) And listening to people.
- Tara: [28:05](#) You've been good at pissing off some people in the establishment.
- Hannah (Host): [28:10](#) I sure have. But so much of it for me is like I listen to people and I care about people. And when people tell me what their lives are like and what the world is like for them, I get angry and I want to do something. And that, I think for a lot of us that's just sort of a thing that you feel, right? And I think it's, it's taking that, you know, for me as a not nice white lady. Am I a lady? Who knows. Taking that--
- Tara: [28:35](#) [Laughs] That needs to be a Twitter poll: "Am I a lady? Yes or No."
- Hannah (Host): [28:37](#) Yeah.

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

- Tara: [28:37](#) Question mark.
- Hannah (Host): [28:37](#) [Laughs] I'll put it up after this. But like, figuring out how to take that impulse and then not do the classic white lady thing, which is be like--
- Tara: [28:49](#) Cry.
- Hannah (Host): [28:49](#) "Let's make this all about me." Cry, cry publicly, center myself in all of the conversations like, but like starting with that, that just that sense of like, I dunno, outrage like, just, or anger, or, or, or a refusal that is built in, in empathy and in listening and in caring and then being like, okay so that's my starting point. So where do I get from there? And it's a different, it's a really different thing when you are working in an institution that maybe doesn't want to hear that. Cuz I think the university has an institution, for the most part, doesn't want to hear that, versus like, it's really interesting for me to hear you articulate that movement out of an institution that doesn't want to hear that. That wants to profess a particular politics but doesn't want transformative anything within it, into, I mean tech in general. It's a young industry. It's a fast industry. We know that it is, can be an industry with a lot of problems, but it doesn't have a lot of the problems that the university has.
- Tara: [29:52](#) It has different problems.
- Hannah (Host): [29:52](#) Has different problems.
- Tara: [29:54](#) I wouldn't say the, well the last institution I worked in, I had an amazing boss. I was a great institution. I think it was the profession of librarianship where I felt stifled.
- Hannah (Host): [30:05](#) And that's what I mean by the university as an institution. Not even,.
- Tara: [30:08](#) Yeah, it's not your university.
- Hannah (Host): [30:09](#) Simon Fraser University as an institution, I actually think SFU is a really rad to university. I think it's also really young and pretty committed to good politics. I think it's possible to do work there. I mean the university writ large.
- Tara: [30:21](#) Yeah.
- Hannah (Host): [30:22](#) And how academia operates. So similarly, how does librarianship operate, such that it manages to like, it's so

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

insidious and hard to put your finger on. It's like, how are you managing to say one thing and do another? But this has come, I mean raging to the forefront in Vancouver recently, when the Vancouver Public Library is literally saying out of one side of their mouths, like, "we value relationships with Queer and Trans community. We want to be a safe space for trans people." And then out of the other side of their mouth saying, "our primary value is freedom of expression, and so we will not cancel, I'll put some links to this in the show notes, but we will not cancel a booking from a well known TERF who uses her platform to fuel hatred against trans people." Like, and it's that like that for me has really crystallized that like, oh, this is how you manage to say one thing and do a very different thing.

- Tara: [31:21](#) Well, and UBC as well. Someone pointed this out, so Jordan Peterson has a sold out speaking engagement at the Chan Center. How does UBC hold up Truth and Reconciliation while having a white supremacist, an academic white supremacist--
- Hannah (Host): [31:35](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [31:37](#) --at a sold out event. Like is it about the money? Is it about like, this idea of like, academic freedom.
- Hannah (Host): [31:43](#) It's about the idea of academic freedom. I know a lot of male academics in particular--
- Tara: [31:48](#) But that's where power comes in!
- Hannah (Host): [31:48](#) --and think that Jordan Peterson is just an interesting provocateur, because there's no fucking stakes for them, right?
- Tara: [31:53](#) Well that's where we need to go back to an intersectional feminist lens.
- Hannah (Host): [31:58](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [31:58](#) Like who has power? Are we punching up or punching down?
- Hannah (Host): [32:02](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [32:03](#) And I think with the Vancouver Public Library, trans folks and sex workers in society generally don't have a lot of power. So that institution providing a rental for a well known transphobe and so-called feminist who punches down on sex workers, like there's an institutional violence there as well. And that's not neutral.

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

- Hannah (Host): [32:27](#) It's not. It's not an, and again, if we, if we let freedom of expression and neutrality become synonymous, right? If we let this idea that like, what it means to have a free and open public sphere in which everyone can participate means having total neutrality on politics, like those are, it's a false equation. It's a false equation that fundamentally doesn't understand what it means to create a public in which everyone can meaningfully participate.
- Tara: [32:57](#) Like our chairwoman at Mozilla, Mitchell Baker, who's such an amazing, amazing, amazing woman, talked about, you know, we didn't create the internet for people to dox and harass each other. That's not the kind of internet that I want.
- Hannah (Host): [33:13](#) [Laughs].
- Tara: [33:13](#) And the Missoula Foundation's amazing internet health report looks at online safety as well. So I see these things happening like at our local public library at a large university in our town, but also in this internet space where--
- Hannah (Host): [33:29](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [33:29](#) --I think across society we're fighting about, you know, who gets to take up space, what ideas are okay, and--
- Hannah (Host): [33:38](#) Yeah, yeah.
- Tara: [33:38](#) I think it's okay, and I think we need to take a stance and say white supremacy, and transphobia are really not welcome, and not tolerable, and they're not very nice.
- Hannah (Host): [33:52](#) [Laughs] It's just not nice, is the thing, is the thing. I mean it's just like, again, it comes back to like, do I value like, people of color and trans people and do I want a world in which they are also able to participate? Yes. Cool. Then there is actual work that needs to be done to make that possible. And you can't just say like, "this is a value that I just kind of have. So anyway." Like there's work to be done and number refusal to do the work or an insistence that freedom of expression counts more than the lives of the most vulnerable people in our world. Like that's a really political stance.
- Tara: [34:36](#) And it's not theoretical. It's people's physical, emotional, and psychological safety. It's their wellbeing. It's their economic health. Like we're not talking about intangible things. Like these

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

are real, real measurable, important things. And I hate how institutions like libraries and universities, abstract these things--

- Hannah (Host): [35:03](#) Yeah.
- Hannah (Host): [35:03](#) --into a purely academic sphere. Where were we forget that it's about people who like live here with us and yeah, in some cases whether they get to live are dying at an extreme level.
- Hannah (Host): [35:19](#) I'm trying to remember who wrote this very interesting thread about like, trans inclusion a little while ago, but it has stayed with me. This is the problem with Twitter is that I learned a huge amount through it, but I have a really hard time citing it because it, like the actual tweets are so ephemeral.
- Tara: [35:36](#) Like a breeze through your hair.
- Hannah (Host): [35:38](#) The ideas stick. They sift just like a breeze through my hair. But I it was somebody saying like ,the primary problem with the theoretical way that cis people like to talk about gender identity and like, "well what's, you know, what are the implications for feminism and well, if we're disagreeing with gender binary and saying that gender has played in, it doesn't make sense that you would want to change your gender. "Like this is all in scare quotes. This is in huge scare quotes. That like the problem with that is that trans people are real. Trans people exist. Trans people are experiencing massive forms of violence as a result of transphobia. So your theoretical ruminations about what gender is or is not actually don't fucking matter in this case. Like, it sounds like it's a line out of *Jurassic Park*, it sounds so fucking melodramatic, but like people are dying. Literally like trans women of color are murdered at an astonishingly disproportionate rate. Like I don't care. I don't care about your fun theoretical article about gender and the way that it's being talked about in Queer Studies, and how that's transformed over time and how you feel this is some shit that's going down in the Queer Studies world right now. These like, two--
- Tara: [36:44](#) I don't know about this.
- Hannah (Host): [36:44](#) These two cis white gays wrote this like ad feminam attack on Grace Lavery, who is a trans literary scholar at one of the UCs. I don't remember which one, where they basically were like, "we are allowed to misgender people as a form of academic freedom," and she's, you know, this is--
- Tara: [37:04](#) No, that's a form of violence!

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

Hannah (Host): [37:04](#) --intellectual. Yeah. He was like, they were like, "this is intellectual fascism and insisting that like people have to believe your interpretation of gender and queerness over..." And it's like, it's not fucking theoretical. It's real people's lives. This is where, and this is when academia and just like loses me. When people are like, "well what is gender as an idea?".

Tara: [37:26](#) Okay, so...

Hannah (Host): [37:26](#) And I'm like, "burn this whole thing down.".

Tara: [37:30](#) But we have our community participation guidelines at Mozilla. And it's kind of our code of conduct, which includes things that we don't want to see, as well as behaviors that we do want to see. And we specifically call out that using a pronoun or a gender other than what a person identifies as--

Hannah (Host): [37:47](#) Yeah.

Tara: [37:48](#) --is not okay.

Hannah (Host): [37:49](#) It's not.

Tara: [37:49](#) Like it is not, not okay.

Hannah (Host): [37:52](#) No.

Tara: [37:52](#) And when we did two webinars, for which there was a huge amount of interest, around understanding gender and gender transition in the workplace, and how to be respectful and inclusive of trans and non binary colleagues.

Hannah (Host): [38:06](#) Yeah.

Tara: [38:06](#) We set out right at the very beginning of that in the introduction remarks that this isn't up for debate.

Hannah (Host): [38:14](#) Yeah.

Tara: [38:14](#) That that's outside the bounds of today.

Hannah (Host): [38:16](#) Yeah.

Tara: [38:16](#) Not allowed.

Hannah (Host): [38:17](#) That's great.

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

- Tara: [38:18](#) And I got that advice from our employment lawyer and she's like, "it's really important that we are clear about this and people were awesome."
- Hannah (Host): [38:28](#) Yeah. So it's so, it's, so, I resist sometimes the that like exciting innovation can come from the private sector as a public university employee. I'm like, "no possible way of capitalism is bad." But like...
- Tara: [38:46](#) the, the other, the other big thing I noticed is that in libraries, money was the limiting factor.
- Hannah (Host): [38:51](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [38:51](#) And it was like, okay, how do we, like, how can we do new things without using any money?
- Hannah (Host): [38:57](#) Without spending any money?
- Tara: [38:59](#) And now the equation's flipped for me. So things move very, very quickly.
- Hannah (Host): [39:03](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [39:03](#) There is money, some money to do cool things and to try things.
- Hannah (Host): [39:07](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [39:07](#) But time's really limited.
- Hannah (Host): [39:10](#) Ah, yes, yes. Speed is of the essence.
- Tara: [39:13](#) And I don't think there's any industry or any culture or any group of people who've got diversity and inclusion solved. And tech certainly has had a lot of high profile cases in the media.
- Hannah (Host): [39:26](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [39:27](#) But at least we're taking that same kind of curious mind of like using data to identify our problem. And that data can also include people's stories, trying interventions and seeing if they work, and building on the things that work in tossing out the ideas that don't.
- Hannah (Host): [39:40](#) Yeah.

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

- Tara: [39:40](#) And we, I don't think we'll solve it, but even if we can get a few things right and share that, like we can build on them together.
- Hannah (Host): [39:49](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [39:50](#) And I don't see academic institutions doing the same thing.
- Hannah (Host): [39:55](#) [Sigh] Yeah, no. And it's, I think speed is a big part of, of what you've pointed to here. Like the university moves so slowly, so slowly.
- Tara: [40:04](#) I went to an academic conference in September and I'm still waiting three months later to be reimbursed like--
- Hannah (Host): [40:11](#) [Rueful laugh] Yup.
- Tara: [40:11](#) That's not okay.
- Hannah (Host): [40:12](#) And everything, right? The publishing process moves slowly. The hiring process moves slowly. Payments move slowly. Change moves slowly. It's a slow, slow institution. And that, you know, in some ways makes it less vulnerable to like, I don't think the university is ultimately vulnerable to things like the Jordan Peterson phenomenon. I don't think he's going to have that much influence on the actual shape of the institution. So it's, it's slow movingness protects it from bad as well as good in some ways, but it already started more bad than good. So it's got to, I mean I'm talking like, in the long history of things.
- Tara: [40:50](#) Who got to go to university.
- Hannah (Host): [40:51](#) Who got to go to university.
- Tara: [40:53](#) Who didn't get to go?
- Hannah (Host): [40:53](#) Who is it for? Who is the intellectual life meant for? How does class and race and gender play out and who has access to this institution? So you know, it's moving and it's moving like the fucking Titanic trying to dodge an iceberg. It's just...
- Tara: [41:06](#) When is the New Zealand, someone said something that really stuck with me. Courtney Johnston, who's the director of customer experience at Te Papa, which is like their Smithsonian. It's their national museum that has all kinds of treasures in it.
- Hannah (Host): [41:20](#) Yeah.

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

- Tara: [41:21](#) She said something about, you know, tech, the, the saying used to be "move fast and break things," and maybe that's good and relevant for a specific domain of problems, but I think when we're talking about people and culture, the cost of breaking people or breaking our culture, like that's a really big cost. So I, I think for some of the cultural pieces and human centered change, they need to move a little more slowly.
- Hannah (Host): [41:50](#) Yeah. This is the, so the first episode of the season was about *Jurassic Park*.
- Tara: [41:54](#) [Laugh].
- Hannah (Host): [41:54](#) And I rewatched, it's my favorite movie. And I rewatched it with my friend Megan, and after we finished, have you seen *Jurassic Park*?
- Tara: [42:02](#) I don't think so.
- Hannah (Host): [42:03](#) It's my favorite movie, you should probably watch it.
- Tara: [42:07](#) [Laughs].
- Hannah (Host): [42:07](#) But basically the story is that like a small group of men with a lot of wealth and a lot of technical expertise decided that they were going to clone dinosaurs and create a dinosaur park.
- Tara: [42:19](#) What could go wrong with that?
- Hannah (Host): [42:21](#) And didn't, and there's a line in it when Jeff Goldblum, who is this, this cay, cay, chaostition? A theorist of chaos, who has come into the park to be like, "this was a fucking terrible idea. You're idiots."
- Tara: [42:32](#) "What the fuck are you doing? Stop."
- Hannah (Host): [42:34](#) And he's like, "you were so obsessed with whether or not you could, you didn't stop to ask whether or not you should." And that, and when we finished watching the movie, Megan was like, this movie is about the consequences of the, of the phrase 'move fast and break things.'" Like this is exactly the ethos with which these guys entered into this project. And then like a ton of people died. She was like, "yeah, you know, like when we think about the tech world and like how they were like 'move fast and break things.'" And she was like, "great job. You moved fast and you broke democracy." It sure feels like that in 2018

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

that like, platforms like Facebook moved fast and like broke some things.

- Tara: [43:12](#) Yeah.
- Hannah (Host): [43:13](#) Whoops. So like thinking about taking that step back and being like, maybe breaking, maybe there's higher stakes here. Maybe you don't want to break everything. Like break your prototype. Great. Maybe don't break culture.
- Tara: [43:24](#) Don't break democracy.
- Hannah (Host): [43:26](#) Please don't break democracy. Not until we're ready to overthrow it completely. So let's circle back. So we've talked about all of these like big ideas. How does an open source internet browser articulate these ideas in a material way? Like why is that one of the ways that Mozilla is trying to do this work?
- Tara: [43:45](#) I don't know that history.
- Hannah (Host): [43:47](#) It's really interesting to me to be like, oh, here's like a physical thing that we can do to keep the internet open.
- Tara: [43:53](#) And just remembering from our cultural onboarding, there's a four day cultural onboarding that everyone goes through.
- Hannah (Host): [43:57](#) Oh my god.
- Tara: [43:57](#) And it's not about like, how to submit an expense claim.
- Hannah (Host): [44:02](#) [Laughs].
- Tara: [44:02](#) It's not procedural. It's about our shared history and like, the big ideas that the company. And I'm remembering something that are one of the marketing leaders set around product, and the Firefox browser allows developers to do different things.
- Hannah (Host): [44:18](#) Mm. Yeah.
- Tara: [44:19](#) And it also allows end users to make do different things. So it gives agency and allows decision making to happen and allows those people to decide how they want to interact with the internet, either as people who build or people consume information on the end.
- Hannah (Host): [44:36](#) Yeah.

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

Tara: [44:36](#) And I think some of that work is around open standards.

Hannah (Host): [44:39](#) Yeah.

Tara: [44:39](#) One of the people in my office here works on the mixed reality team, so like virtual reality--

Hannah (Host): [44:44](#) Ooh!

Tara: [44:44](#) And all of those different platforms and it's an, it's a new space. So ensuring that the standards are open allows different people to play in that space.

Hannah (Host): [44:55](#) Yeah.

New Speaker: [44:55](#) Rather than one big proprietary company to kind of set the stakes and lock everyone in.

Hannah (Host): [45:01](#) Yeah.

Tara: [45:02](#) We also see that with the Internet of Things, where our emerging technology group has kind of staked out a claim on...

Hannah (Host): [45:11](#) [Laughs] Sorry this is an audio medium, but your physical gesture for "staked out" was really great.

Tara: [45:13](#) Stake, stake, stake!

Hannah (Host): [45:13](#) Just sticking, just sticking sticks in it.

Tara: [45:18](#) The Internet of things and stuff like your connected fridge or--

Hannah (Host): [45:23](#) Yeah.

Tara: [45:23](#) --all of that, those technologies that we're starting to see, but will I think be really big in our lives soon.

Hannah (Host): [45:30](#) Yeah, yeah. And that I so, so want. Like, I will never ever get a Google thing or an Amazon thing--

Tara: [45:38](#) I don't want Alexa in my home! No!

Hannah (Host): [45:40](#) I don't want fucking--

Tara: [45:41](#) Because they're creeping on us!

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

Hannah (Host): [45:42](#) They're already me when I'm on the internet, I don't also want the monitoring me when I'm on the toilet. Like, I'm not interested in it. But like if there were one that was created by a like tech company with an open source and honest ethos, like I can see that being technology that was appealing. It's just you can't get it without the price tag of your freedom. [Laughs]

Tara: [46:04](#) Yes. I think our values are around privacy.

Hannah (Host): [46:08](#) Yeah.

Tara: [46:08](#) And data.

Hannah (Host): [46:09](#) Yeah.

Tara: [46:09](#) I think data's really important now. It just sounds like such a tech thing to say: DATA!

Hannah (Host): [46:16](#) Data's super important. But like, this is again like, when I teach my students about Amazon for example. Teach publishing courses, we have to have at least one session on Amazon. And I'm like, "okay, let's talk about Amazon. How did Amazon managed to break the book retailing industry?" And it was like, "okay cause they can sell everything for cheaper." "Okay, well how does Amazon managed to survive if they're selling everything at a loss, what does Amazon actually want?" I know that's the question. Like, if you Google the phrase, "what does Amazon really want?" You get like a billion hits because everybody wants to know what Amazon really wants. It's like, we know what Amazon really wants, wants your data. It loves your data and you are just pouring it into Amazon. When people stick those fucking, those Amazon buttons--

Tara: [46:55](#) Yeah!

Hannah (Host): [46:55](#) --in their homes that you press just to order one particular thing.

Tara: [46:59](#) After you poop and you're out of toilet paper, you press the--

Hannah (Host): [47:01](#) And eventually, it will just know how often you need to repurchase that thing and start sending it to you automatically without you needing to order it.

Tara: [47:09](#) A huge convenience, but at what cost?

Hannah (Host): [47:10](#) Yes, exactly!

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

Tara: [47:10](#) And who pays? Like putting that intersectional feminist lens back on, the cost is different for different people.

Hannah (Host): [47:18](#) Yeah.

Tara: [47:18](#) And that's not okay. That's not the kind of society I want to be in.

Hannah (Host): [47:22](#) No, me neither.

Tara: [47:24](#) So I think the open standards stuff is also around like, standards around privacy.

Hannah (Host): [47:29](#) Yeah.

Tara: [47:29](#) And data privacy. And I don't know what we're doing around that.

Hannah (Host): [47:32](#) Yeah.

Tara: [47:32](#) I mean...

Hannah (Host): [47:33](#) Just caring. Let's just start with caring. [Laughs] Starting, just start with the--

Tara: [47:37](#) Caring and sharing.

Hannah (Host): [47:37](#) [Laughs].

Tara: [47:37](#) No! Not sharing! No sharing the data.

Hannah (Host): [47:41](#) Caring and not sharing. Make a sticker "caring and not sharing your data."

Tara: [47:47](#) Did you hear about, there's a coffee shop by some university campus where the coffee is free. You just pay by giving them your social media accounts.

Hannah (Host): [47:58](#) Whoa.

Tara: [47:59](#) I'll find the link for you. I think it was on CBC Spark.

Hannah (Host): [48:03](#) I bet young people are really on board.

Tara: [48:05](#) Well it's free coffee.

Hannah (Host): [48:06](#) Yeah, and--

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

- Tara: [48:06](#) But at what cost?
- Hannah (Host): [48:08](#) And people like, the sense of there being a cost to giving up your data is something that like, I think I don't see a lot in my students. I'm not convinced by a lot of the like, "internet native" language, but I do think we generationally develop different relationships to technology and that sense of I deserve to keep my privacy. I don't want companies to have my information is something that I am seeing less and less of.
- Tara: [48:32](#) This is sort of a half-baked idea, so maybe not the smartest of me to say, but just thinking about public education and the erosion of public education and the increase of corporate interests there. So lots of, Chromebooks are really cheap and lots of school districts are using Chromebooks, great! And what, what's the cost there? Like, what information is getting sucked up? And growing up and being educated in that environment and then having university and be like, "yeah, sure I'll pay with, pay for," "pay" in air quotes for my coffee with data.
- Hannah (Host): [49:05](#) Like I'll consent to my institution's submitting all of my papers automatically to Turn It In.
- Tara: [49:11](#) That's such garbage!
- Hannah (Host): [49:12](#) For profit corporation that stores your ideas and keeps them in perpetuity to data mine.
- Tara: [49:19](#) Yeah, like that's not okay.
- Hannah (Host): [49:22](#) No. I have found out so often recently that that institutions have just policies that all papers go automatically into Turn It In. And I'm like horrified by it.
- Tara: [49:33](#) But I think I'm sure someone has thought about the whole ecosystem and you know, drawn some of those lines and make those connections.
- Hannah (Host): [49:40](#) Yeah, yeah, yeah. I'm sure you're right. And it starts early. It starts early and via, and this brings us back to the library and its importance. It starts early via the, the erosion of the public good of public resources, free education, public spaces, access to public knowledge. When you strip those things back, corporations become the new public. So Starbucks is the new public sphere, and so if Starbucks, you know, has like, anti-Black policies, then we have an anti-Black public sphere, right? Like, the need for openness is the same as the need for public

Secret Feminist Agenda Transcript

resources, that it creates space in which, I don't know in which real access can happen.

- Tara: [50:16](#) Oh God, this is so depressing.
- Hannah (Host): [50:18](#) [Laughs] No, it's great.
- Tara: [50:19](#) [Cringe noises]
- Hannah (Host): [50:24](#) [Cringe noises] OOOOOOokay. What's the most exciting thing you've done in your year here?
- Tara: [50:28](#) I'm just thinking like there, there's not one event, but--
- Hannah (Host): [50:31](#) Yeah.
- Tara: [50:31](#) --I've learned something new every single day.
- Hannah (Host): [50:34](#) Woah, that's awesome.
- Tara: [50:34](#) It's super awesome and really exhausting. I would like to learn new things three of the five days of the week next year. And also I've met a ton of amazing people who are really good at what they do, who have very unlikely backgrounds.
- Hannah (Host): [50:48](#) Oh, that's, that's really cool too.
- Tara: [50:50](#) Yeah, it's been amazing.
- Hannah (Host): [50:51](#) See? Things are good.
- Tara: [50:53](#) Things are good.
- Hannah (Host): [50:54](#) Great.
- Tara: [50:54](#) Because people.
- Hannah (Host): [50:55](#) Great. Thank you.
- Tara: [50:56](#) Don't break people.
- Hannah (Host): [50:56](#) Don't break people. Please don't break people. [Music: "Good as Hell" by Lizzo]
- Hannah (Host): [51:12](#) If you'd like to hear more about Tara, you can find her @TaraRobertson, T A R A R O B E R T S O N, on Twitter or TaraRobertson.ca. You can find show notes and all the episodes of

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Secret Feminist Agenda on secretfeministagenda.com. You can follow me on Twitter @hkpcgregor, and you can tweet about the podcast using the hashtag #secretfeministagenda. And of course it's supremely helpful to rate and review the podcast, especially on platforms like Apple Podcasts. There's a new review of this week from Steph of the Ocean. Thank you so much, Steph of the Ocean. I don't trust the ocean, but I trust you. The podcast's theme song is "Mesh Shirt" by Mom Jeans off their album Chub Rub. You can download the entire album on free music, archive.org or follow them on Facebook. Terrorists theme song was "Good as Hell" by Lizzo. *Secret Feminist Agenda* is recorded on the traditional and unceded territory of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh first nations where I'm grateful to live and work. This has been *Secret Feminist Agenda*. Pass it on. [Music: "Mesh Shirt" by Mom Jeans]