



Season One Wrap Episode

Nerdin' About Podcast Transcript, Season 1 Episode 16

Michael

Hey everyone, welcome to Nerdin' About! I'm Space Michael, and with me as always is someone who has joined me on stage every month for the past seven years, and this year, we've only joined virtually, but I still love her dearly, and that is Dr. Kaylee Byers. How's it going Kaylee?

Kaylee

I'm well, thanks, that's so sweet. I really miss those stage events.

Michael

Well, it's certainly been an interesting, and weird year. So, this episode, we don't have a guest, we're just going to nerd out, me and you for a bit, and sort of wrap up our season, our first podcast! This is something that we've always wanted to do, and it took a pandemic to make us do it.

Kaylee

Opportunities, how they present themselves. Yeah, it's something that we had talked about, but we also originally had a different idea of what a podcast might be when it was running in tandem with actually having events. This allowed us to think about, "what would this event look like, if it became a podcast? What things do we want to talk about? What's the format we want to do?" That's been a huge learning experience, I learned how to edit audio, which is something I never thought that I would do. Is there anything about making this that's been surprising to you?

Michael

Well, you know, I think certainly, I've learned to listen better. When I'm up on stage, and we would do like those quick Q and A's my brain is in event mode. I'm feeling the audience, I'm feeling the vibe, I've just heard them give their talk for about 20 minutes, and now the energy is shifting to dive in with some questions. So, if the talk was heavy on science, I would try to get something personal from them. Then I'm thinking about moving on, because we have to get out of there on time. During the podcast, I'm certainly listening to the speaker more, and then trying to find a question that dives deeper and deeper into some really interesting stuff. I find that when we do our recordings, usually, like 10-15 minutes in is just when things get rolling and we're finally getting some good stuff.

Kaylee

Well, I think the other difference is at Nerd Nite, people came prepared with a story that they were ready to tell. Whereas this format is really that story, but in a different way, where we're asking questions to get at it, and that's a very different format, and it does require close listening. Although I must say that as I go through and edit sometimes I'm like, "was I paying attention at all? Like I don't remember this part." That's actually for me, one of the joys of doing



this is that going through the audio, I actually get to spend an intimate second, third, fourth, tenth round with it really listening. We go through, and we transcribe the episodes, which is layer upon layer upon layer, it sort of made me realize that I actually need to read, and listen to things about one million times before it actually sinks in.

Michael

That's certainly how I learn. If I'm reading a textbook or something, I'm reading the paragraphs, like four times. So, you do a lot of the editing, so for everyone listening or reading, Kaylee is the one that does a lot of the work, and I have to shout you out Kaylee, you have really done so much work into this podcast. While still completing your PhD, and full-time job, and life, and pandemic and stuff.

Kaylee

Oh, thanks.

Michael

When I'm doing the transcription, what I find really interesting, and I found this particularly interesting in the Kim Senklip Harvey episode. I would read out aloud, and I'm hearing the words, and I'm making sure that all the punctuation is correct. I'm reading her words out in my voice, and that really helps me sink in deeper to what they're actually saying. I think in that particular episode, when she was really talking about patriarchy, and Indigenous knowledge, that really hit home to me when I read her words out in my voice.

Kaylee

Oh, really interesting. This has been fun. I think we've had a lot of fun trying this new thing. It is a lot of work. I think we both agree that it's more work than running an event, but a different kind of work. We're so grateful for everybody who spent time with us over the past however many months, I don't know, it feels like ten thousand years at this point, but holy smokes are we ever lucky to have this incredible community of people to work with.

Michael

Yeah, well, let's keep doing this. We've already got some interviews in the can for Season Two. We're going to take some time, but should we get to some nerd herd questions?

Kaylee

Yeah! Let's get to some nerd herd questions.

Michael

So, if you want to get in on the nerd herd questions, we post questions on our socials @NerdNiteYVR. Of course, we don't have a guest, so we just opened it up to you to ask us questions. Everyone seems to want to know about the two basic worlds that we live in, which is



rats and space, and combining those two. Kaylee, what's the first thing that comes to comes to your mind when you think of rats in space?

Kaylee

The first thing that comes to mind is this photo, our friend Armin and artist who has done art for Nerd Nite for the last few years, had done for us for one of our events where I was riding around in space, and you were beside me in a little space mobile. So that is actually the first thing. Space mobile, I don't even know how to say spaceship. [laughing] That's embarrassing.



Art by: @armin.scientoonist

Michael

No space mobile is way better.

Kaylee

So that's actually the first thing that comes to mind is flying on a giant rat in space.

Michael

Well, of course, we haven't found any form of life in space yet. But you know, a lot of science fiction tends to mimic Earth. One of the things that I think it gets wrong a lot, and it's hard to show, is just how animals would develop in a different gravitational environment on a different planet. One thing they tend to do is just make everything big. Which I find kind of funny, but maybe that's not how things would go, we really don't know,

Kaylee

When I was thinking about rats going into space, they are able to get into everything, they've literally traveled with us all over the world. So, I guess why couldn't they come with us into space? But I don't know what would happen to them once they got there. I mean, no, I do know, if they got off the ship, they would die. Unless it had already been terraformed or whatever, and they were living in a nice little Matt Damon bubble. Yeah, I don't think it would end super well for them.



Michael

Well we do actually have a little bit of data, I did do some research. So, in the early days of spaceflight, before they put humans on, of course, we know that they put some animals on rockets, and rats were some of the first animals that they tried out. It's not a surprise to anyone that most of those animals that they sent out did not survive, unfortunately. The very first rat to go to space was actually named Hector. That's a little bit of trivia for you Kaylee.

Kaylee

I was just looking that up, and I found that particularly charming because the first rat that I ever caught, immediately escaped into the rat van, and I named that rat, Harold. So, Hector, Harold, very close, very cute. That looks like that was in 1961.

Michael

There you go. There was a lot of animals. There was a cat named Félicette. It was a French cat that they sent up there, which is one of the very few contributions to early spaceflights that France had, because they weren't really a major player back then.

Kaylee

I'll have you know that the rat was also French.

Michael

Oh, there you go. Ratatouille [laughs]. This does lead to another point that somebody made on Twitter. Chad wanted to reminisce about a show called Biker Mice from Mars, which I also did some research into. So, this cartoon that came out in the early 90s, and these mice which are from Mars, they don't like rats. They were very proud to be mice, and when they go to Earth, people mistake them for rats. And they are like "no no no we are not rats."

Kaylee

Rats are quite aggressive and actually even in Vancouver, we've got two different species of rats. We've got black rats and Norway rats, and Norway rats are even more aggressive than black rats. and have actually pushed these black rats, *Rattus rattus*, sort of out of their range. So, I don't think they like Norway rats either. So, there's levels.

Michael

The other bits of trivia that I've found in my research was of course these anamorphic animals are talking, and acting cool, and seems to be a lot like Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, like a lot of our other cartoons that came out around the same time. Maybe they were making a reference to Splinter. I watched an episode last night, and it was not that great.



Kaylee

I actually watched it in my youth. I did remember it, and something I always found really troubling about that show was how the mice had six packs. They're really buff and I even when I looked at another clip last night, they're like always talking about how ripped their bods are. Very weird.

Michael

The final weird fact that I found was apparently the show had an environmental spin, it was very anti-capitalist, which is also kind of strange. But Ian Ziering of Beverly Hills 90210, was one of the main cast, as well as basically every other major cast member of that show. They made appearances on Biker Mice from Mars.

Kaylee

Do you think that was part of their contract like when they got on to 90210, the fine print was you had to be on Biker Mice from Mars?

Michael

So that's pretty much everything you need to know about Biker Mice from Mars, and rats in space. There's not a lot of history to it, but that was the best we could come up with folks.

Kaylee

It all comes back to Hector. Now if only Arcade Fire would release a song about Hector the Rat.

Michael

Should we nerd out?

Kaylee

Let's nerd out.

Keisha

(singing) Whatcha nerding about, whatcha nerding about, ooooh. What am I nerding about? I'm nerding about Nerdin' About.

Michael

Shout out to my lovely friend Keisha, who you just heard, who sent me a voice message. So, Keisha is nerding out about Nerdin' About, she had just listened to the sharks' episode, and was nerding out about shark sperm, and sent me that lovely message. We really love hearing from you the Nerd Herd, we really miss hanging out with you in person. If you want to send us a voice mail memo, you can email us vancouver@nerdnite.com, and maybe we'll play it.

Kaylee

But you also have to be nerding out about shark sperm.



Michael

Yes. So, if you want to get on the nerd outs, even in our downtime as we transition from Season One to Season Two, still send us your nerd outs on our socials @NerdNiteYVR. First nerd out was from Lorenda on the history of silent reading. I have no idea what this one's about. What do you think, Kaylee?

Kaylee

Was I supposed to look this up in advance or something?

Michael

No, I didn't look it up. I'm just I'm just going off the top of my head.

Kaylee

Silent reading. I mean, for me, almost all of my reading is indeed silent. Yeah, but did we not always read silently?

Michael

That's really interesting. Yeah, that's something for both of us to look into. Maybe we'll contact Lorenda and see where she's getting her information. Our second nerd out is from Pramodh, who's nerding out about Benford's Law. Do you know anything about Benford's Law Kaylee?

Kaylee

I literally was listening to a Radiolab podcast about this yesterday, when he sent that in. Let me just read you a little description here. From the old Wikipedia, "it's the law of anomalous numbers, or the First Digit Law, the law states that in many naturally occurring collections of numbers, the leading digit is likely to be small." So, you're more likely to have numbers with small digits at the front, like a 1 or a 2 than like a 9. "So that the number 1 appears is the leading significant digit about 30% of the time while 9 appears is the leading significant digit less than 5% of the time."

Michael

So, weird. I mean, it makes sense when you think about it, because you know, in our base 10 system, we just go back to 1 again. So, it's really interesting, and very geeky too.

Kaylee

Uh, yeah.

Michael

Just seems very nerdy, which I appreciate.

Kaylee

What about you? What have you been nerding about?



Michael

Oh, well, you know, mostly just this entire year, and how things have changed. My interests seem to have changed. I've gotten back into baseball cards. I'm playing video games again. I haven't played video games in years.

Kaylee

What are you playing?

Michael

Oh, so I got back into the original NES. So, Zelda 2.

Kaylee

What's an NES?

Michael

Nintendo Entertainment System?

Kaylee

Okay, I do have a Nintendo Switch. But I did not know that it was called NES.

Michael

Oh yeah, the original one was just called NES the one with little door you had to put the giant cartridge in, and then when it didn't work, you had to blow on it for some reason. Yeah, and I also have a new podcast as well it's called "Let's Innovate!" I dive deep into kid's innovations, and I'm using those interview skills that I've been learning through this podcast. It's been really fun. We've got two episodes out already. So, you can find that on all of your podcast platforms. There may even be a third podcast that I may put out sometime soon. I've been working on another project, where I've been taking my cosmic perspectives, I've been recording them, they have actually been released on public radio here in Vancouver, even though I haven't heard it yet. But there is a friend of mine, John McGie, who asked me to record three minute somethings, and he put some space sound effects on them for his variety show. But you know, when I get enough of them, I may release them on their own as well. So, check that out, maybe in 2021.



Source: sciencefairs.ca



Kaylee

Very cool.

Michael

What about you? What are you nerding about?

Kaylee

I'm nerding about silent reading, because I'm looking at a website on silent reading, and it's talking about how the movement to reading silently in our heads as a solo activity is relatively recent. Lorenda what are you doing to me? This looks so interesting. Anyway, after this episode, I'll be nerding out about that. I've actually sort of been nerding out about getting out of 2020, and but like backwards. I mean, I'm definitely nerding about getting out of 2020 moving forwards, but also backwards. So recently, I was going through my CD collection. I was going through some, and I was making sure that I added them to my Spotify library or whatever. In my undergrad, I lived in Sweden for a year, and I had a bunch of CDs from Sweden. So today I went for a run, and I was like, "Oh, maybe I'll relisten to some of these things." Yeah, it was just like listening to one out for a jog, and it reminded me of my 21st birthday, and this party that I had, and some of the music that I was playing I could feel like I was in the room, and I was just thinking about the power that music has to transport you to the past. So that was nice. It was a nice little escape from 2020.

Michael

Absolutely, well, Kaylee, we're going to take a break on Season One going into Season Two. So, you certainly should take a break as well, and enjoy the last few months that we have here. Let's do a zoom call before Christmas, because I'm going to miss talking to you for these podcasts. I really appreciate everything you've done. I love you very much.

Kaylee

Love you too.

Michael

I can't wait till we can finally be in person again. Ah, maybe on stage doing something, you know.

Kaylee

My gosh, me too. That's going to be a messy first night back.

Kaylee

Well, thank you, everybody so much for listening, and thank you for tuning into Season One. We really appreciate it. This has definitely been a new endeavor for us, and we've done a lot of learning, and we have appreciated that you've been on that journey with us. If you want to continue hanging out with us. You can follow us on our socials @NerdNiteYVR, go back listen

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to the podcasts from Season One. We've got 15 episodes with some truly amazing folks. We won't be back for a couple weeks. We'll be back sometime in mid-January, but until we meet again, I have no idea how to end this.

Michael

I think you just did.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>