

AT Banter Podcast Episode 318 - Reid My Mind Radio

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SPEAKERS

Rob Mineault, Steve Barclay, Thomas Reid, Lis Malone, Ryan Fleury

R Rob Mineault 00:00
Hey, and welcome to another episode of AT Banter.

S Steve Barclay 01:49
Banter banter.

R Rob Mineault 01:53
Wow, okay. Wow, man, we are out of practice. What happened?

S Steve Barclay 02:00
There was no cowbell.

R Ryan Fleury 02:03
I hit it.

R Rob Mineault 02:04
Did you really?



S Steve Barclay 02:04
Do you have your original sound on?

R Ryan Fleury 02:06
I do.

R Rob Mineault 02:07
Wow. Okay, what happened? What hit just hit it again? Just give it give us a hit.

R Ryan Fleury 02:11
I just hit three times.

R Rob Mineault 02:13
No way. You broke the cowbell dude,

R Ryan Fleury 02:16
I guess. Wow. We'll have to reschedule. Sorry about that.

R Rob Mineault 02:30
Yeah, that is weird. Okay. Yeah, wow. The cowbell has never failed us in years of having the show and all of a sudden the podcast or the cowbell is not performing.

L Lis Malone 02:46
I don't think I could do this now.

R Rob Mineault 02:48
It's okay. Well, we'll, we'll soldier through because we're professionals.

L Lis Malone 02:52
I don't know. Are we okay?

R Rob Mineault 02:56
Hey, this is of course the podcast where we talk with advocates and members of the disability community to educate and inspire better conversation about disability. Hey, my name is Rob Mineault. And joining me today are a cowbell trainer himself. Mr. Ryan Fleury.

R Ryan Fleury 03:18
My cowbell is broken.

R Rob Mineault 03:22
And, and hey, look who else is here? It's Mr. Steve Barclay.

S Steve Barclay 03:27
His cowbell is broken!

R Rob Mineault 03:31
And last, but certainly never least, the lovely the talented, Mr. Lis Malone.

L Lis Malone 03:38
Well not a good way to start 2023

R Rob Mineault 03:47
You know, we're gonna have to have a mock funeral for the cowbell. It's not dead. I don't know. It's never happened before.

R Ryan Fleury 03:50
Rest in peace, Barbara Walters and cowbell.

R Rob Mineault 03:55
Yeah. Oh, geez. Yeah. Oh, sure. Bring the show down. Well, I mean, okay, well, let's just say how is everybody other than, you know, the tragedy that has just befallen us?

R Ryan Fleury 04:20
I'm great. Thanks. How are you Rob?

L Lis Malone 04:22
We're ready to get 2023 started.

R Rob Mineault 04:26
Yeah, I am too. So I wanted to talk to you sports people a little bit real quick. Did you hear about this guy that had a heart attack at the football game?

R Ryan Fleury 04:35
On TV yesterday? Yep.

R Rob Mineault 04:37
Yeah. Is that crazy?

L Lis Malone 04:38
Yeah. Buffalo Bills. Well, that was yeah, very scary.

S Steve Barclay 04:43
Yeah, for a guy that young, crazy. Although I do have to say there's like a freakin war going on in Ukraine, there's people dying all over the planet. And it was nothing but wall to wall news about that guy on every damn station. is Like holy smokes guys get some perspective.

R Ryan Fleury 05:03
The Ukraine war's been going for six months now. It's kind of old news.

R Rob Mineault 05:10
I don't think it is the first time that that's something like that's happened because I thought I heard that there's like a basketball player that that happened to at some point in the past.

L Lis Malone 05:20
He had a heart attack or cardiac arrest.

R Rob Mineault 05:24
Yeah. Honestly, like I feel like that's the time to do it. The best time to have a heart attack is like on the field during a game you got you know, people around you. I think the worst time is like in a like a gas station bathroom. You're not getting found for a while.

R Ryan Fleury 05:43
Surrounded by Slim Jims and Slurpees.

L Lis Malone 05:47
Isn't there a ridiculous percentage of people that when they when they pass they they pass away on the toilet?

R Rob Mineault 05:53
That's what I've heard. I mean, it happened to Elvis so it could happen to anyone.

R Ryan Fleury 05:56
Steve is looking up statistics.

S Steve Barclay 06:00
I am not. Some things I don't need to know.

L Lis Malone 06:08
I just felt bad for when Barbara Walters passed away. And it was the same day that the former Pope Benedict also passed away. And Barbara Walters must have been up in heaven saying Mother F'er, the day i i kick it the frickin Pope has to also go and take away all my spotlight and take away my headlines. Was it the old Pope? Yes the previous Pope.

R Rob Mineault 06:52
Right, right.

L Lis Malone 06:57
And he was not free from scandal. Just by the way.

R Rob Mineault 07:04
Yeah, I mean, everybody has a little bit of scandal in their in their closet. Listen Lis, I'm already working on your obituary. Wait till your scandals.

L Lis Malone 07:21
I hope someone finds me on my toilet. I can only hope.

R Rob Mineault 07:25
Okay. All right. Well, enough of the death pool for this week. Hey, Ryan. Yeah, Rob? What the heck are we doing today?

R Ryan Fleury 07:37
Well, besides mourning the cowbell, we have a guest with us today who is a passionate advocate of audio description. He is also the creator and host of Reid My Mind Radio. I'd like to welcome to the show Thomas Reid. So welcome, Thomas.

T Thomas Reid 07:53
Thank you very much. Thank you, and rest in peace. cowbell. I was looking around for a tambourine or morocca.

R Ryan Fleury 08:02
Appreciate that.

R Rob Mineault 08:05
That's not a bad idea. Okay. I'm not even gonna go there.

T Thomas Reid 08:09
I want to know, yeah, like, maybe different percussive instruments.

R

Rob Mineault 08:16

Yeah, too soon.

T

Thomas Reid 08:23

Already checking for something new.

R

Rob Mineault 08:27

Listen, Thomas, we are thrilled to have you. You've been kind of on our radar for a while. And we've we've wanted to certainly talk or talk to you about the show. And about you in general. So why don't we just start there? And maybe you can just give us a little bit of a little background about yourself. And then we'll get into talking a little bit about the show.

T

Thomas Reid 08:46

Sure. Yeah. So I'm Thomas Reid. And I guess my, my story as it relates to the podcast, it's a direct correlation with blindness. So in 2000, officially in 2004, but I guess my vision loss journey sort of started. Well, it actually started when I was a child because I was born with retinal blastoma in both eyes, so that's a childhood eye cancer, and I had tumors in both eyes, but my left eye was removed as an infant. My right eye was saved with lots of radiation. And years later, about 35 years later, just about that radiation was the cause of another tumor behind my right eye. And so in 2003, I started experiencing some problems with vision. And that ended up being like I said, the diagnosis there was a tumor behind the right eye and that was diagnosed I think, in the beginning of December. So by January, I was scheduled for surgery to remove that tumor and probably the eye and so it definitely it was both and so I was as of January 2020 I was blind. And yeah, adjusting to blindness. Meeting people, I became active in a organization in the Pennsylvania Council of the Blind, which is an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind, I became active with that in about 2006, because we started a chapter of that organization in my county, because I met a bunch of other people. It was about eight of us, who I met who in the county, here, which was, by the way, a new place for me to be living in a whole new states. And so I lost my, my eyesight, moving to a whole new place. But anyway, that's a whole other story. And, yeah, so we started an organization. And I started, you know, because I needed to sort of use audio at the time because like, you know, when you're adjusting to, to blindness, you don't automatically know how to use your computer, you don't automatically have access to certain things, especially at that time to take notes, and things of that nature. So I used a digital recorder. And using that digital recorder, for more than just taking notes eventually became recording my children, it became oh, wait, I can I can tell stories with this thing. Especially when I got back on a computer and was able to edit these audio files. And I started doing that for the Pennsylvania Council of the Blind as well, as a way not only to hone my skills, but also to disseminate information within the organization. So basically almost like doing a podcast at the time, but it wasn't a podcast. And that that later on, ended up, you know, I just got better at the craft. And a couple of things opened up where I had an opportunity to create some new content for a radio reading service in New York City. And that led to my podcasts directly, because you know, the radio reading service, you only can

hear it if you have one of the, you know, the radios for that service. And so I wanted like, hey, let me let me let other people listen to this. And so I put it on my blog at the time, and later, then turned it into a podcast,

R

Rob Mineault 12:13

I find it so interesting to talk to people who have gone through that, that vision loss journey, because for everyone is it's very different. And I'm always I'm always interested to hear about what people sort of latch on to in terms of whether whether that's a particular community that they joined, that that really helps them work through that journey. Or if it's it's pieces of technology, or just putting their their their energies into things like blogs and podcasts, which especially in the blindness community, it seems to be those are really ideal platforms for people to sort of latch on to to help them not only share their story with with other people in the community, but just work through some of the emotions that they themselves are going through. Is that kind of how how it was for you?

T

Thomas Reid 13:09

No. I mean, there is some of that in that because for me, I think it was really the in terms of adjusting it was really the idea of meeting other people. And so when I became involved in advocacy, and at first started, like I said, with the local group that I met up, and then we started the, the local chapter of the Pennsylvania Council of the Blind, but when I met other people around the state, and then other people around the country that was really, really big for me. And so the podcast is sort of an extension of that, because it enables me to meet other people. But it also enables me to introduce these people to other people who don't have that opportunity. Because you know, depending on where you lose your sight, where you are at the time, you may not have a Chapter, you may not even be able to get to a Chapter. And so the internet is so fantastic for that. And that was that's really the reason. That's a big reason behind the podcast. So it's really giving people what I think was really helpful for me. And I will always say that it was it was the ability to meet other people, cool people doing really, you know, different things, people from a variety of different lifestyles, and that I really, I'm really thankful for that. I'm very thankful for that.

R

Rob Mineault 14:24

Yeah, I mean, we say that all the time here on the show, too, is that one of the real benefits of doing the show is just being able to meet so many people and to learn so much. You know, every every guest that you have on is is an incredible learning experience. And so it is it's a really valuable sort of asset, even just personally doing something like that, despite the amount of work that it can take to produce a podcast. So on that topic, what's that like for you? How often do you release podcast episodes and what kind of footprint does the does producing and hosting and planning the show kind of have on your weekly schedule?

T

Thomas Reid 15:07

Oh boy. So it's it started off. I think I started off like, every, every other week for the most part. And finally, you know, I it's funny because I met some other people when I was on their

and finally, you know, it's funny because I met some other people when I was on their podcast, and I watched how they did it. And actually the person is Alice Wong, I'm not sure if you're familiar with Alice Walker and Disability Visibility Project. So when I first met Alice, and she invited me on the podcast, one of the things I think we had our interview in like December, and she was like, yeah, this is probably going to come out in the spring of the next year. And I was like, what? Wow, oh, my goodness. And then all the, the materials and just the way, she sent me things, and just it was so planned out. And me, I was like, oh, I want to talk to this person. And I would just, you know, contact them and just make it happen. And so I started to implement more structure as the years went went on. And now I'm in. Now I do seasons, I do the seasonal approach. And so I'm basically every two weeks when I'm doing the seasons now. And that's because I like the structure of it, I like to really put some effort into it. And I also like, the theme approach to my seasons, because it kind of gives me that opportunity to really sort of either dive into a full subject matter, like when I'm doing the flipping the script on audio description, it's all about audio description. And so it really allows me to focus in that area. But yeah, and then and then sort of come out and then you know, really do these things without the it's supposed to be without the pressure. But you know, life being life, sometimes there still is pressure of time, because you know, maybe I waited a little bit too long. But yeah, so now I'm pretty much doing three seasons a year with some additional bonus episodes that don't necessarily fall into the theme. So we're talking about about 16 to 18 episodes a year.

R

Ryan Fleury 17:11

you know, I've looked at your website, I've listened to a couple episodes, and you are very thoughtful, and your conversations are very intelligent. But yeah, you're very structured, you're very thoughtful. Alt's very well produced, it's very well done. So you can tell you put a lot of work and effort into your episodes.

T

Thomas Reid 18:02

Absolutely. I appreciate that. I'm glad you I'm glad to see that. Yeah, I definitely put a lot of time into it. And I enjoy it. I enjoy the I enjoy all the process. Every single part of that process is really cool.

R

Rob Mineault 18:13

So and So tell me talk to me a little bit then about this switch to seasons? How has that been? How long have you been doing implementing that? And what, how does it really impact the difference between sort of doing freeform shows and doing it that sort of a themed season?

T

Thomas Reid 18:32

Well, I mean, so I've been doing it for about three years, I think, I think it's about three years. But the last two years, I have had three different seasons. I think the first time I did it, it was probably one season. And so you know, but really, for the last two years, for the most part, it's just a it's a really cool way for me personally to sort of focus and plan. And, you know, I didn't like sort of chasing the news, because I was like, I'm not a news guy. And so when certain things would happen, you know, within, within the world of disability, it would be like, oh, you

should talk about this. And I kind of don't want to do it. But it might not be something that I'm all that interested in, and I don't want to talk about it. And so I just wanted to be thoughtful about everything that I do. And there's so many different topics and I said, you know, I want to do more, more in the way of topics and I think it all boils down to you know, I'm someone who wants to at some point in their life and I feel like I need to do a documentary. And I think I'm trying to figure out how to use podcasting in a way to give me the maybe the inner courage maybe the the feeling of saying yeah, I think I could do this, you know, I mean, and the organizing, the risk, searching ... like I'm doing things within that for for season for an episode, the preparation, the things that go behind sort of the editing process, all of that I'm trying to really be more organized. Because when it comes down to doing something like a doc, you really have to be you have to be organized if you want to do that right. And so they're still you know, so this is probably a bunch of things, but it's just really helpful for me to to focus, it really is a hell for me to focus and to therefore produce and produce early. So the idea is that, okay, I can take two months. And during that two months, really go ahead and create four to five, six episodes or something like that. And like, that's the dream is to at the end of those months, to have all my episodes produced, and just, you know, just be ready to load them, and publish them when I'm ready to publish them. That would be fantastic when it hasn't happened yet, necessarily. But that's still the goal. And then it's also is giving me a way to really figure out where I want to take the podcast, what do I want to do with the podcast? What can I say? It's like all these things that I'm thinking about, at the same time as producing. So it's just, it's been helpful for me, you know? And yeah, and it gives me some more control about about who, who I want to bring on the podcast. You know, I want it to fit a theme I just don't want it to be, like oh, somebody, you know, because people start to contact you, hey, I have a new book or whatever. It's like, cool, I want to support your new book. But I may not want to talk to you about that. It has nothing to do with your book. It has nothing to do with you. It's just it may not be that interesting to me at this particular time. And so the theme approach is sort of there now. It's like, you know, but at some point, it's like, hey, well, I can maybe I'll talk about your book. So send me some information. Maybe I'll just put it in there. Because I want to be supportive to the community.

R

Ryan Fleury 22:01

Well, I think we tried that with a couple, you know, topic, theme shows last year. And that came off fairly well. And we decided we wanted to do more of those this year. Because there are discussions that need to be have need to be had that aren't being talked about. Our topics won't ableism. And we did a four part series on that. There's many more topics to discuss. But that's kind of the nice thing about podcasting. You know, you've got your style of show, there are assistive technology shows, there are new shows, and there's more and more all the time to choose from. So, you know, it's just such a great platform for for that for whatever topic you're looking for.

T

Thomas Reid 22:44

Absolutely, absolutely. I'm somebody who thinks that I'm, you know, I want to see more disability related podcasts out there, per se. You know, I'm actually working on a project with someone to make that podcast and just the idea of getting into podcasting, more accessible for the disability community. And so you know, we're doing things for that. And for both for the

those who want to podcast and those who want to listen, right, you know, because sometimes it's not that easy to find. You can put certain keywords in there, but it's not always easy to find disability related podcasts that you're interested in. You know what I mean?

R Ryan Fleury 23:23

I will ask you this Thomas, because I in my podcast app on my phone I tried looking for read my mind. And it didn't come up. I couldn't find it. So do you have an RSS feed that podcast your apps can find?

T Thomas Reid 23:37

I do. I absolutely do. Um, so the thing about you see, I was not obviously a good branding person from the beginning of my podcast...

R Ryan Fleury 23:48

We had that problem.

T Thomas Reid 23:49

Okay. Yeah. Reid My Mind doesn't say anything about blindness doesn't say anything about disabilities. Just nobody knows what the hell it means. And when you hear Reid My Mind, that's why I spell it in my every time. I add a block, and just so people would get it in there are e Id not the RDA D. Yeah. But yeah, I do. I do. I definitely have a podcast and I'm on most, I'm on most. What do you call it? Services?

R Rob Mineault 24:42

Yeah, it's, but it's true. Like, we kind of we kind of feel the same here. I mean, this is one of the mandates for the show here is just that we want to spread the word about as much as we can, you know, we want to get organizations individuals and you know, other podcasts out there and help spread the word about them. Because, you know, we completely agree, the more that we have, the better because one podcast, you know, may not be right for one person, but it's going to be perfect for the next person, depending on what their needs are and what they're interested in and, and, you know, how they clicked with, with the hosts? So, yeah, it's I think it's incredibly valuable to, you know, within sort of the disability podcast community to really get each other's backs and, and really share and get more information out there, because honestly, the podcast platform, I feel like these days is one of the most valuable resources for people who may be looking down the barrel of disability for the first time.

T Thomas Reid 25:46

I agree with you.

R

Rob Mineault 25:48

And it's incredibly comforting to be hearing other people's stories and, and to be learning about resources that are out there that they may not know about.

T

Thomas Reid 25:57

And it's private, right? It's just, that's, that's the whole thing that I think is so great about it. Like, you don't have to tell anybody that you're listening to whatever it is that you're listening to. And you can learn so much and just feel better. And I like to say that, and it's not anything bragging or anything like that. But I wish I had my podcasts not only to, you know, that I was doing, but I wish there was something available for me in early 2004. I would have loved to hear those stories.

R

Ryan Fleury 26:25

So well, that's, you know, kind of the benefits of podcasting and social media, right? It's kind of brought the community together, the podcasting platform allows you and I and others, to bring guests from the community in to talk about whatever they want to talk about, or whatever we want to discuss with them. And who knows who's listening to our shows, the world has become a much smaller place now because of podcast platforms and social media so we can reach out to more people.

R

Rob Mineault 26:54

Absolutely. So I want to talk a little bit about audio description, because I you know, it's I find it really interesting that that that is sort of what your your season is sort of focused on. Because you last year, I think we probably talked about audio description more than any other topic that I can think of in recent years, because it really is it's a very important field. And it's I feel like it's one that's really at the beginning of its evolution. What made you focus on that topic for your season?

T

Thomas Reid 27:28

Yes, I've been interested in been talking about audio description for years. So before the podcast, I had a blog. And so I, you know, I wrote about my first experience with AD in the theater. You know, and I've talked about it a bunch of times now, but it was, you know, my wife found and my wife and I were real movie goers back in the day, before we got married, and even after we got married. And so when I became blind, the fact that I couldn't really enjoy a movie, you know, that affected us. So it was 2003 / 2004. We didn't go back to the theater until 2007. Because she found the theater not too far, maybe about half an hour, 40 minutes away from our home. That was using AD. And it was new. So that was a it was such a cool experience. And so I was talking about it then. And then when when Netflix, actually before Netflix, when I started making some of the original content for Gateway Radio that introduced

my podcasts because those were the things that I was putting on it at first. Yeah, I did a piece about audio description, just kind of introducing that community to AD. And it was it wasn't on Netflix at the time, it was just really about the in theater experience. And then when Daredevil came out, and that whole, that whole thing happened. And we started to get more, I covered that I talked about that. So I was always interested in an ad from that standpoint. And then I think it was in 2018, when I published a piece about Black Panther and my feelings around Black Panther and the the Narrator The choice of narrator. And that got a lot of attention. And so I was thinking about ad for all that time, and even even some of that time I contacted and I don't name any names, but I've contacted folks in that time and asking, you know, how could somebody get involved in an AD? How can I get involved in AD, I was thinking about narration. And I was dissuaded from thinking about it because I was told oh, you kind of have to have sight. And I didn't like that response. I didn't like it at all. And I asked this person multiple times. And that was always the response. And it was like, you know, maybe this maybe QC, you know, maybe at the time it was maybe QC I could see it as audio editing. And I was like okay, yeah, I could do that. But I'm talking about narration. And it was it was always a no. So I really wanted to know, so I was talking about it on the podcast, all of these things, and kind of questioning and had a discussion around. It was after that first Black Panther episode, I had a second episode with with this young lady who contacted me, and felt very similar to and we were sort of, I like to say that that was the episode where we sort of, you know, put it into the universe, the idea of me doing audio description, because she was like, you know, yeah, I could hear you doing audio description. And so, you know, so I kept, I kept kind of, you know, just thinking about the subject and talking about it. And that's, that's what happened later on, I actually ended up doing audio description.

R

Rob Mineault 31:05

So during during the season, then, was there any, was there any episode that really surprised you, or that really drove the conversation about audio description in a direction that you weren't expecting? Where are we kind of at in the general realm of audio description, because I feel like after doing a whole season of it, you must have a real sort of a unique perspective on just kind of where we are at.

T

Thomas Reid 31:31

So in this last one, I mean, we, we kind of ran the gamut, in a sense, you know, we talked about a lot of different things, and I think some good things were raised so from, you know, the first one, I think, was AD In The Making. And this is just the subject of looking at audio description, from the creative point of view. You know, the, unfortunately, sometimes it's posed, like creative versus compliant. And, you know, the idea of checking off the checkbox that you okay, we did audio description, we can say, okay, we did what we're supposed to do, you know, we don't usually get good AD, when it comes to that. I know, a lot of the community has always been talking about more and more and more, but I don't want more if it sucks. I don't want more if it's just going to be synthetic speech, and it's not even going to join, you know, I'm not gonna, I'm probably not going to watch it because I don't, I'm not going for it. It's not something that I enjoy. So I wouldn't necessarily talk about more, what I would talk about is better is the quality thing, and we'd like to talk about that. And I think the idea of going beyond this idea that audio description is just access. I'm not saying take away the access. But I'm also saying that, you know, if you look at it as a creative process and a creative tool, well, what

would that what would that tool do for the the writers of this project? What will that tool do for the creator, the director, you understand? I mean, like, if they know that they have this tool at their disposal, that they could use that would that would be fantastic. That might really result in some amazing things. Okay, so maybe that's down, maybe that's in the future. So some point in the future, more directors would know. And maybe AD will go from a post production to a pre production and a production phase thing that happens. What would that AD sound like? What would that movie experience be like for us? I have a feeling it would be better. I have a feeling it would be amazing. But we won't know until we get more people in those positions, sort of thinking about audio descriptions. So that's this, that's part of that conversation. A big part of the conversation. Where I like to take it is blind people involvement in AD and when I say the blind if I'm I'm saying every single part of audio description, whatever it is that you as a blind person wants to do. I'm for it. I'm for it. And I know not everyone is because film folks say Oh, well, how can a blind person write an audio description? And so we're all on the same page. I just want to make sure so we know that folks who write audio description and are blind make use of whether it be another person to get access to those visuals. So it's like, Hey, my friend, I'm going to buy you some beer, come and watch this movie with me. And I'm going to ask you some questions. And every time I and I'm going to record you, as I asked you these questions, so what's going on the screen right now? And that person puts down their beer and maybe you should leave the beer till later. But okay, they put down their beer. Right let's start with some hot chocolate or something like that. And they they pick up their hot chocolate and then they put it back down and take a sip whatever. And they explain what's happening during that that scene. And you who then you investigate, so the the person who's going to write that AD, they may ask him a few more questions and then making these notes. And then they get what they need from it. And then they later on, they formulate the right sentences for these moments, right for these parts, that's writing AD, that's an accommodation in my book. I don't see anything wrong with that. I see nothing wrong with that. But folks, we were talking about ableism. Somebody mentioned ableism. Before, it sounds very ableist to me, when folks say, well, they're not writing it, this other person is writing. Really? Well, you're using a computer? Are you writing it? Yes. Why don't you write it with your hand? Oh, you don't have a hand, whatever. They don't nobody uses that anymore, right? There's all these different things that go into it. But when it comes down to a person with a disability actually doing something, now we have to question it. Now we have to, we have to say whom is this really what we want? Is this really right? Well, why don't we just listen to the end result. And I've been involved with some projects. But one project specifically, where the writer was blind. And she did a fabulous job. And that was the way she did it. And so I'm saying that, yeah, if someone wants to do that me personally, no, I don't. I don't want to write like that. That's not my style. I don't want to write audio description. But if somebody does, I'm not going to dissuade them. Why? Because I told you, I've been dissuaded. And it doesn't feel good. So that's part of that conversation. So I think I want to see a lot more of a lot more blind people who want to be involved. Getting involved, I want to see more of the post production companies saying, hmm, okay, how can we how can we do this the same way IDC and I we got together, Eric Wickstrom, from IDC, and we started that. And that's the result in like, now, they have 20, blind, at least 20 blind people who work, you know, who do narration for them. And there's other ones who also, I want to see more of that more companies doing that. More companies saying, okay, wait, we might be moving to a new system. Is this system accessible? Because, you know, they use systems too. And that's some of the way that they keep us out. It's not accessible. Okay, well, let's do it differently. I don't need to use your system. This is audio. I know how to I don't know how to do this. We can we can do this around your system. Now. Oh, well, then you just trying to keep me out? Now I know. Now you're telling me something different. Right? So that's that's a part of it. There was an episode that I was really intrigued about. And it's not I'm I'm not a real fashion person. But it was, you know, the same way we talk about describing identity. I'm big on

describing identity, all sorts of identity and including that, in the AD process. The young lady Natalie Traxon was like, hey, we should be describing more fashion. And I heard other other women and other men who are interested in fashion like, yeah, why don't we this, this is part of the story, or maybe it's not part of the story, the person has it on if a sighted person can see it, why can't I know what what this is? And I'm okay with that. Yeah. So let's talk about that. But then she also brought up something about the Metaverse, which I don't know much about. But that's, that's a new thing coming down the road, you know, whether it be virtual reality, all of that, how are we going to have access today? That might be audio description, right? Let's start talking about it now. So that's coming down in the future. And then that that last episode, was the one with La Profesora is what I call her. And she is a professor who teaches audio description in a college in New Jersey. And it she teaches both in English and Spanish. And so, you know, I wanted to continue that conversation about AD in Spanish because, you know, there's a lot of people who are left out in this country who are blind because, you know, hey, everybody, blind people are a speak multiple, you know, can be Hispanic can be whatever, we're all from all over. And we should all have access. So the there was that in that episode, but then there's also she kind of touched on some of the other ways, and other things that are coming out of using audio description as a tool for teaching. And that's fantastic. Like, like these ideas and just introducing that to, to other teachers. And in other just, you know, other professions like like, what else can audio description help with? I heard a lot of things. You know, we often talk about, oh, you know, truck drivers can use audio description to but what about the creation of audio description, because we're talking about language, we're talking about really being perceptive and looking at things in a critical way. So I think there can be some real, you know, uses for that in the educational field. And that would be and there are folks who are working on it and actually thinking about that. So those are the types of things that I really get get interested in. So that's why I say we're flipping the script on audio description, we go beyond them. Mainstream conversation of audio description because yeah, we can talk about, hey, I liked this movie. I don't like this movie. I don't like the way they did that. I like the way they did it. That's cool. That's cool. But like I said, I just kind of get bored sometimes. So I want to talk about other things and see where else you can go. So again, there's a lot, there's a lot of other stuff that's happening within audio description that I feel it deserves its own its own season.

L Lis Malone 40:27

Thomas, you and I are both racial minorities, non Caucasian, however you want to define it.

T Thomas Reid 40:34

Not a minority, but that's okay. I know what you're saying.

L Lis Malone 40:37

That's why I use different words, because, yeah, so you know, non white person of color, but you know, so one of the things that you touched upon was the importance of identity and persons who are unsighted being more in touch with their identity and having that, that audio input about the identity. And so something that has come up even on this podcast, is, as you mentioned, about the importance of language and the use of language. What, what has been

your experience in you in being in the world of audio description, in terms of how adjustments are being made, and where the lines might be a little bit blurry in terms of what language is appropriate for describing people's identities and being sensitive to words and language that certain ethnic groups may find offensive?

T Thomas Reid 41:36

Yeah, definitely. That's a great question. And, and certain companies do a better job, in my experience. So there's my experience as a as a consumer. And then there's also my experience as a narrator. And so I do have the, I do have the opportunity to work with multiple companies now. And I can say, without naming them that they're not all equal in terms of handling that. And so I've been what I do, when I come across something, I've recently come across something I'm going to try to see if I can say it without I won't out the company.

L Lis Malone 42:11

But you can say their jingle. You can hum it.

T Thomas Reid 42:19

But there was a there was a situation where there was a show, and that show referenced so the show referenced Native Americans. Here in the states, in the States, and the way they use them, I think they were going for like a shorthand, right. And so it was one of those things where, okay, is time the reason they made this particular choice? And so, you know, I had the script and I have anything I'm like, well, they could fit this differently. And so they said, they said the 'natives'. And I was like, I don't think you should say the natives because that, to me sounds derogatory. And I know it has been used derogatory, what they wanted to say, was Native Americans. And I was like, you have the time to say Native Americans. So I recorded it as Native Americans. And then I explained to them, I said, look, guys, I think you would probably try to save some time, but I was able to fit it. So everywhere when you had natives referenced, I changed it to Native Americans. I hope that's okay. And then we're fine with it.

L Lis Malone 43:20

And then and then the tricky part is that some people don't want to be referred as Native American, but indigenous, for example. And so it, I guess, how does audio description keep up with the different different language paradigms that we're constantly encountering as we become more sensitive to diversity?

T Thomas Reid 43:44

Yeah, so that's why I mentioned here in the States, right, so that's because I know I know, folks in Canada, you are First Nations and Indigenous, and folks here use Indigenous as well. But I think the thing that I'm saying is that you don't want to choose the offensive way, right? And so Native Americans wouldn't be offended the same way if someone said, like you said, unsighted

-- I'm blind, right? So I would never be offended by someone saying blind know what I say a person who's who's who's visually impaired or something like that. But I might get offended or wouldn't use differently abled or something. I hate that.

L

Lis Malone 44:22

Me personally, I'm not a fan of that myself. But and that's that's the that's the crux of it is that we can't ever please everybody. Ryan and I are both in the blind community. And we always talk about like, we're like herding cats. We can't even get agreement and consensus consensus within our community. And but it's just very fascinating that as audio description is becoming much more popular and much more utilized then that next layer of question is becomes well is everybody using the right language? And I'm certainly not criticizing you, if anything, I'm just playing devil's advocate. And I, because I think it's really important that people understand that, yeah, that there is an art to trying to walk that line with audio description as best as we can. And it is, it's, it's a godsend when we have people like you who will be a voice and say, Listen, you guys are looking at it, like you said, based on just meeting the minimum standards or requirements, as opposed to creating something that is very immersive and experiential, for people who are actually relying on audio description.

T

Thomas Reid 45:40

Yeah, I think it's one of those things where, you know, I think most people like to know that you care, and you're trying, and you're, you're willing to not just brush things off. If you're doing the work, and you're working towards something, I'm happy with that. I don't expect perfection. I don't expect perfection from anyone. But there's a difference between when you hear folks who actually want to try when they actually want to, as as opposed to when they say, this is how we've done it all these years. That's never a good response. That's never a good response. So if someone's like, okay, how can we learn? How can we try, like I said, don't be offensive, that's your first thing. Don't be offensive. So you can learn what words are offensive, or what may be deemed offensive, you know what I mean? And then try to stay away from those things, and then continue to work continue to have an open conversation with the community. The biggest problem to me is the most defensive companies don't seem to talk to the community at all. So if we look at those who are doing well, again, shout out to IDC, shout out to DW. They talk to the community, they have relationships with the community. And and that's what I think all folks should be doing. You know, if that's your customer, you want to talk to your customer. So that's all I wanted. I want to see that dialogue, just just have an open dialogue, open conversation. And when we disagree, that's cool. We disagree. But let's keep the conversation going. It's not a fight. No one's saying you have to do it this way. No one's saying that. It's like, Hey, can we talk about this? This is what we would like, Oh, we're not gonna give you that? What the heck? I'm the customer. I'm the one who's watching this thing.

R

Ryan Fleury 47:27

So if we could all think and feel and believe the way Thomas does, we get so much more accomplished than all the community.



R

Rob Mineault 47:40

Well, you know, I'm excited. I think it's a great time, because I'm excited to see the conversation switching from, you know, 10 years ago was just oh god, like, can we please just have audio description? And now it's evolved to okay, well, we've got audio description. Now we need to make it better, we need to make it more impactful and more useful. So I think that that definitely, in and of itself, shows that it at least we're making progress for sure.

T

Thomas Reid 48:09

We need to continue with that right there. Because, you know, another problem is that I think a lot of people are still stuck in the, the oh, I'm just thankful I have it. And I get that, I get that. But that's that's not a good place to stay. That really isn't a good place. Because the fact of the matter is that we should have it all along. We shouldn't have always had only a description from the moment that that technology exists, right? Yeah, we should, we should have it and we should continue to have it and we should expect it. And again, you can be thankful. But you don't have to be all bent over on your knees and just to accepting anything that is thrown at you. No, that's right. Not at all. So expect it and expect the best.

R

Ryan Fleury 48:50

Yeah, and there is there is a place for synthesized audio description as well, whether it's teaching materials or old, archival, you know, film footage, whatever. You know, I know Star Trek, some of the Next Generation stuff has since synthesized audio. And some of that, you know, to me, doesn't bother me, right? I'm grateful and glad we have it. But it's it's older footage and to have somebody go back and write a script and get somebody into perform that audio description that all takes time. It all takes money. And there's hundreds of episodes right? So if they can get something out quick, something older like that, you know, I don't have an issue with major productions. Of course, you know, you want to feel immersed. You want to feel like it's pulling you into the into the film into the picture into the story. And I think that's where a lot of times having the right audio describer will make all the difference in the world.

T

Thomas Reid 49:48

Yeah, well, I'm gonna disagree with you about the stuff in the past because I think a lot of those things in the past should they do deserve the attention and they do deserve real human narration. And I said this before in a live chat that we do I do with Nefertiti and Cheryl Green. But imagine, okay, so again, we want more blind people involved in that. Well, what if what if companies use the old stuff? Paid people to write people to, to voice it? And really came over to the community, and really use that as a training ground for blind narrators for blind, whether it be blind writers QC, whoever, whoever is new writers, whatever the case, but they should they have to meet a certain standard. I'm not saying that they shouldn't mean a standard. But what I'm saying is that those that old material could be like training ground. For new stuff.

L

Lis Malone 50:43

Absolutely. But that key word that you just said was someone has needs to pay for

T Thomas Reid 50:49
it. They should pay for it. Let's go get paid.

L Lis Malone 50:52
But it to the companies,

T Thomas Reid 50:54
the companies, the companies who made the film, whether it be the to be honest with you, I think it's the folks who make those.

L Lis Malone 51:01
They've already sold it. They've already sold it. owns the rights to it?

T Thomas Reid 51:09
Right. Yeah. And even that, I mean, because then we get into the other conversation about that is the the non stickiness of audio description, right? Because one company pays for it. And it doesn't ship with that when it goes to a new distribution. Right? Yeah, all of that stuff needs to change and the technology is out here to to make that easier. This technology available. I mean, yeah, I think I think I agree with you that there is a space for synthesized speech. Because, you know, I read nonfiction books, and I actually prefer them sometimes with with synthetic speech than I do to a human narrator. I would not want to read my daily newspaper with a human. I would prefer the thing, right. And here's one, like, you know, a lot of people want to hear the credits, and sometimes they won't, because, you know, sometimes those movies have a lot of credits. Yeah. Well put the synthesized synthesized speech on the credits. Sure. And that can that can make a lot of people because I know there are people who wouldn't mind that for the because it's just the the names right at the end of the movie. Okay. I want to know who the who the you know, line, whatever. Editor is for whatever, you know what I mean? Yeah, so that person will want to sit through it. I won't, but what someone else might.

L Lis Malone 52:22
Oh my god, I just had a flashback. Thomas do you remember Movie phone? Yeah, yeah, that voice! Can you imagine the credits being read in the phone voice?

T Thomas Reid 52:40
What's that guy doing? Is he?

- R** Ryan Fleury 52:45
Rob, you need to go on YouTube and find the voice for movie phone to insert into this episode.
- R** Rob Mineault 52:50
He can be the new cowbell.
- S** Steve Barclay 52:55
I never heard of this.
- T** Thomas Reid 52:57
Oh my god. You never heard a mobile phone? Are you the youngest of the group or something? You said he's just Canadian.
- L** Lis Malone 53:23
It's worth googling stuff. Trust me. Absolutely. No, but I just wanted to tell Thomas that the podcast is just so well constructed that it's it's very listenable. It is so well produced. It is very approachable to anyone coming in at any point, you could just you don't have to listen to the whole show. I mean, I'm not saying and I think people should. But you can just pop a random episode. And you just feel like I'm already into this. It's just beautifully done. I love the I love the intercuts of audio that you do. It's just yeah, it's just a really, it's a very nice production where I mean, because sometimes she goes to a podcast and you're like, Okay, where are they going in and you skip ahead a little bit to get to different parts. But it's it moves, it flows really well. It keeps you engaged. So I mean, I highly recommend this as a as a listen for everybody out there, not just in the in the disability community. It's just a very well done show. So I just want to explain to you on that, that it's really great when when we meet other podcasters that do something that's really awesome.
- T** Thomas Reid 54:32
Thank you so much for that. I appreciate it. Really. That's very nice. Now the only thing that I would like to touch on actually I'm gonna send you guys some information. I don't know if I don't know if you were if you ever received that with surveys. So I mentioned that I'm, I'm working on a project and I'm working on this project with my colleague, my friend and colleague, Cheryl Green. She's been on my podcast and this is a project that's been funded by the Disability Visibility Project. And this is what I was mentioning around creating space for disability podcasts, and really trying to figure out what is preventing more disabled folks who want to be in podcasting from from getting out there, and kind of helping them. And so that's, you know, we distributed a survey, to find out what folks would want, what they need, what's

preventing them, what stopped them from doing a podcast, or what is stopping them from doing a podcast, and answering these things and figuring out and so we're actually in the process of creating, of course, a podcast to a podcast for podcasters. To help, you know, to help answer these questions to help provide resources. And so that's talking to a lot of folks who, who are disabled, and who have these who are content creators, and they will be a part of that. And then it's going to be a website, and it's going to be a place for listeners to kind of come and be able to, you know, check off some boxes and filter through some things to find shows that meet what they're looking for around disability creators. And it doesn't necessarily mean that the end result is disability content, but it's specifically created by people with disabilities, and or disabled people if we're going to go on to naming conventions. So yeah, and so, um, I do want to mention that, and I'll probably send you guys a little survey thing, if you want to take it, it's not too late to take that survey. But also just to kind of keep you in informed and involved because one of the things that we want to do, and you know, I think would be helpful for a lot of folks, and I did it during my last episode is just promo shares. And so that's just the idea of, you know, I'll run a promo for your show, and you run a promo for my show that type of thing. And why not like, like, you know, why not do that type of thing around the whole community, just to sort of spread the love and let everybody know that, oh, this exists. And if you're interested in go check it out, you know. So there's a whole bunch of things that we want to do around that just to open up the community and see if we can skill share and, and do other things like that. So I'll send you guys some information if you're interested.

R

Rob Mineault 57:15

All right. Well, listen, we want to thank you so much for coming on. It's been an absolute delight. Before we let you go, though, where can people find the podcast?

T

Thomas Reid 57:28

You can find the podcast at Reid My Mind Radio. I'm sorry, you can find that. But that's the podcast name. Wherever you get podcast. As long as you spell it right.

R

Ryan Fleury 57:45

Yes, sir.

T

Thomas Reid 57:46

You can also come over to the website, which is reidmymind.com and find me there. I'm on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, And right now I'm on a bit of a hiatus. And but what you will find in the feed if you do go and follow the podcast or subscribe to the podcast show. We do these live chats, and we do them on Twitter, and sometimes on LinkedIn. And so we recorded them. And so we're putting them out. We're gonna start the live ones again relatively soon. But it's a it's cool that we're recording this so that all these conversations are on different aspects of audio description. And so for folks who are interested in AD and that whole conversation, I think you would like these, these chats and the live ones are cool. They're cool to come to. So if you ever been into a Twitter space, or a LinkedIn audio, maybe we'll take it to Clubhouse again.

I used to do Clubhouse years ago, but haven't been on there. But now they're cool conversations. And so I'm where I'm just going to drop all of those in the feed every first and third. Actually one comes out today.

R Ryan Fleury 59:07

And just one quick last question who does all the alt text on your graphics on your website because they're brilliant.

T Thomas Reid 59:13

Oh, so that's a combination of my wife and I so she'll usually she'll do it now tweak it a little bit.

R Ryan Fleury 59:21

Very well done very well.

T Thomas Reid 59:24

Cool. Cool. Appreciate it. I'll let her know.

L Lis Malone 59:27

Now are you what part of Pennsylvania are you in?

T Thomas Reid 59:30

I am in the East Stroudsburg. So it's 90 minutes in the Poconos. So it's 90 minutes from New York.

L Lis Malone 59:37

Let me tell you, I know that area. So you're kind of the Eagles?

T Thomas Reid 59:46

Oh no. So I'm closer to Philly than I am. So I'm about 90 minutes from Philly. Also so in North Philly, so that's where the Eagles are.

L Lis Malone 59:56



You're an Eagles fan?



Thomas Reid 59:58

I'm a New Yorker, so I'm not really much of a football fan. But I would probably say I would still roll with the Giants.



Lis Malone 1:00:05

You are totally not dead to me.



Rob Mineault 1:00:38

All right, well, thank you so much again. And best of luck with the podcast. Please come back anytime and stay in touch.



Ryan Fleury 1:00:51

Enjoy the rest your evening Thomas.



Steve Barclay 1:00:55

Bye bye.



Rob Mineault 1:01:10

You know, but I have to say doesn't have like he doesn't have like the perfect podcast voice.



Ryan Fleury 1:03:23

Broadcast voice. Absolutely.



Lis Malone 1:03:24

Yeah, he was born to do that.



Rob Mineault 1:03:26

Yeah, he really was. And especially if you listen to the show, and even the way that it's edited and produced like it's, it's absolutely. It's really amazing. He does an amazing job on it.

L Lis Malone 1:03:38

Yeah, he really and he really gets into it. Like he's got the right swagger in his voice. Not it's not over exaggerated. But it's just like, wow, so such a cool,

R Ryan Fleury 1:03:48

Yeah, professional, it's intelligent. It's just Yeah, it's very, very high quality.

R Rob Mineault 1:03:54

Right? Everything that we aren't. See Lis, you need to give us marketing lessons.

L Lis Malone 1:04:03

Because you guys don't listen, right? You're like the worst. You're like the client that doesn't listen. So I'm like, I just I'll just go with it. You know?

S Steve Barclay 1:04:11

Sorry, what were you saying something?

R Ryan Fleury 1:04:15

Checks in the mail?

R Rob Mineault 1:04:16

I mean, there's, we've said it before. I mean, there's there's space for everybody. And, you know, every every podcast has its own thing that it contributes to the community. And that's us included. So I find it fascinating that he was able to take audio description, a topic that yes, we've talked about it on on many shows in the past, but not really radically different takes on it. And I find that that's really interesting and sort of ballsy to do an entire season based just on audio description. Because my fear would be even doing like a series like even if we were to say, oh, let's do a three part series on audio description. I feel like it would be challenging to find enough different facets of it to really, to really flesh that out. And he's managed to do it like there's, you know, good 10 episodes or so they're all talking about different aspects of, of audio description and talking to different people in the field. And, you know, even though the one that was strictly about fashion, I mean, that was fascinating to listen to. So, yeah, I think that, you know, it's really, really a great show that I encourage everybody to go check out.

- R** Ryan Fleury 1:05:33
It definitely makes you think like, you know, the one I emailed you this afternoon, Rob, it's the one I'm going to listen to a second time and they're talking about self identify, self identifying, you know, whether in zoom calls, you're on stage or you're present during your presentation. It was just a fantastic show.
- R** Rob Mineault 1:05:51
There you go. Yeah, I mean, I'm sure if he had a cowbell, I'd actually f'ing work.
- R** Ryan Fleury 1:06:02
Well, if I can't if we can't do a test this week, and get it working by the show, then I have other instruments here.
- R** Rob Mineault 1:06:08
Hey, Lis.
- L** Lis Malone 1:06:10
Hey, Rob.
- R** Rob Mineault 1:06:16
We're all like we had this professional podcaster on and now we can can't even do our outro properly. Hey, Lis.
- L** Lis Malone 1:06:24
Hey, Rob.
- R** Rob Mineault 1:06:27
Where can people find us?
- L** Lis Malone 1:06:29
We can be found at www.atbanter.com

R Rob Mineault 1:06:33

I feel like she rushed back because she was afraid of screwing it up again. Hey, they can also drop us an email if they so desire at cowbell@atbanter.com.

R Ryan Fleury 1:06:55

It's so sad that the show's just empty without it.

S Steve Barclay 1:07:01

It all relies on the cowbell.

L Lis Malone 1:07:03

It's so pathetic. It carries the show.

S Steve Barclay 1:07:05

But hey, if you're if you want to find the home of the cowbell on social media, you can also find it at Facebook and Instagram and Twitter.

R Rob Mineault 1:07:16

Right. There you go. All right. There you go. Wait, is that it? Yeah, that's it. That's it. All right. Well, that is going to go do it for us this week. Big thanks, of course for Thomas for joining us, and we will see everybody next week.