

Episode 4.8 I Wish I Had A Mustache with Max Collins

NOVEMBER 22, 2019

- Hannah McGregor: [00:00:10](#) Hi, I'm Hannah McGregor and this is Secret Feminist Agenda. And I am in full on late-November dragging my way to the end of the semester by the tips of my fingernails mode at this point. In fact, so totally late-November am I that I used up 100% of the energy I had available for this episode on the editing of this episode. So here's the introduction that you're getting. Welcome to the episode that is all. Now let's meet max Max. Max Collins is an award-winning Calgary-born producer and podcaster are based out of Vancouver. She started her radio career at the university of Victoria radio station, CFUV 101.9 FM and moved on to working for a handful of other campus stations. She remains an outspoken advocate for campus radio to this day. Earlier this year, Max independently produced, dragged out an investigative podcast focusing on Vancouver's drag scene and the effect of gentrification on queer expression. The series explores different aspects of Vancouver's drag history and present, and it aims to shine a light on the resilience of performers despite multiple venue closures.
- Hannah McGregor: Campus radio. I have no personal experience in it, but that's how you got into podcasting, yes?
- Max Collins: [00:01:46](#) Yes, yes it is. Oh boy, let's see, four years ago now I was living in Victoria I didn't really have that many friends. No, here's the thing though, okay, I guess I'm going to,
- Hannah McGregor: [00:01:58](#) No, I started this podcast cause I moved here and didn't have any friends.
- Max Collins: [00:02:01](#) Oh my goodness.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:02:01](#) Yeah, absolutely.
- Max Collins: [00:02:03](#) Okay, well radio is definitely for loners, like radio is for people who like sit in their house and drum their thumbs and are like I don't know what I'm doing with my life. That was me. Oh my God. Okay. Long story short, I moved to Victoria after hitchhiking for awhile in my life. I ran out of money very quickly and my parents were living in Victoria and they called me and I said I'm homeless. And they said, no, no you're not. We'll give you a plane ticket. Like, come live with us. You can like stay here until you get back on your feet. I stayed in Victoria for a little bit, I didn't really have many friends because I started dating really like right when I got there and I had boyfriends, like I had a boyfriend for a while who is in the music scene. And so I hung out with him a lot. And then when we broke up, I was kind of like terrified to go out cause I didn't want to see him and I was still very heartbroken. But I finally, one night, went out for my birthday, didn't see the ex, thank God, and I

made a friend who a few days later posted a Facebook status and said, who wants to come on my radio show? So I was invited to CFUV, the UVIC radio station, and my friend sat me down beside him and he was doing his radio show and he said, okay, you're ready to go on air. And I was like, okay. He just played a Punch song and I was like, Oh, Punch, they're so good. They're this like hardcore band. There's a woman who is the vocalist. And I was like, Oh, I'm so excited to go see Punch someday, and he was like, yeah, Punch is done. Like Punch has been broken up for a good few years. First time on the radio I said something, I said something that was not right. And uh, yeah.

- Hannah McGregor: [00:03:46](#) My instinct was to be like, this person sounds rude and you should have set the room on fire.
- Max Collins: [00:03:52](#) No he's lovely. He's actually a, he's the music director over at CFPV now. His name is Troy Lemberg. Hi Troy.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:03:57](#) Hey Troy, give people a break when it's their first time on the radio, would you?
- Max Collins: [00:04:02](#) Oh, he's, yeah, he's fine. But I said that the silliest thing I thought in my brain and I told myself like next time I go on the radio I know I'm going to know what I talk about. So I just, I didn't have very many friends, I was working at a body jewellery kiosk and I like had no life whatsoever. Right?
- Hannah McGregor: [00:04:22](#) The story is so sad. I love it.
- Max Collins: [00:04:24](#) It's so young adult emo as well, like don't know what you're doing with your life. Yeah, so I was working at a body jewellery kiosk, I didn't have much to do with my life, so I just started volunteering at CFUV like all the time. I also had a radio show where I would interview band members and like musicians from Victoria. Yeah, and after that I was offered a job making a podcast. I had no idea what a podcast was.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:04:48](#) Okay, when would this have been?
- Max Collins: [00:04:51](#) Oh jeez, um, 2016.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:04:53](#) Okay.
- Max Collins: [00:04:53](#) So June, 2016. So I've been,
- Hannah McGregor: [00:04:56](#) So you weren't an early adopter.
- Max Collins: [00:04:57](#) No, I definitely was not, I wasn't like 2004. Oh boy. I was 10 in 2004. So, uh, definitely not an early,

Hannah McGregor: [00:05:05](#) Oh no!

Max Collins: [00:05:06](#) The first ever podcast that I listened to,

Hannah McGregor: [00:05:09](#) You're so young!

Max Collins: [00:05:09](#) I was very young.

Hannah McGregor: [00:05:11](#) No you still are!

Max Collins: [00:05:11](#) Oh yes. I still am very young. Yes. The first podcast that I listened to I think was an academic podcast. I don't even remember what it was, it was just like some dude giving a lecture. That was the first time I'd ever listened to a podcast and obviously it didn't really catch on with me because I was like, well, snore. I feel like podcasts from like 2004 to 2010, 2011 were very academic and kind of a snooze-fest.

Hannah McGregor: [00:05:37](#) I mean, the academic ones certainly were, but there was like a lot of underground and indie podcasts happening in those days. I think a lot of early podcasts were fan podcasts, and a lot of sort of underground comedy podcasts, like I think some classic comedy podcasts are having their ten year anniversaries right now. So you know, started up a little bit before that. So like I think there was, there was a lot of weird stuff going on, and like a lot of comedy, I think if you we're really into comedy, you are an early adopter, but certainly the kind of high quality narrative nonfiction storytelling that we're used to associating with podcasts weren't anywhere near as thick on the ground then as they are now. And I think also like Mark Maron kind of birthed the like in-depth interview podcast as a genre. So like that is also kind of post that era.

Max Collins: [00:06:34](#) How long ha Nightvale been around?

Hannah McGregor: [00:06:37](#) Oh, Nightvale was a breakout hit of like 2013 maybe?

Max Collins: [00:06:44](#) Okay.

Hannah McGregor: [00:06:44](#) Yeah, I've had this conversation with Martin Austwick of The Allusionist about sort of the narrative, like the story that we tell of podcasting's heyday and how when people point at sort of breakout podcasts that redefined the field, everybody points out Cereal. Like that's the one that people are like obviously Cereal. And Cereal certainly popularized the medium in a particular way, but Nightvale reinvented what podcasting could be in a way that Cereal didn't. Like Nightvale really returned to the bones of like radio-based drama and was like okay, like what can we do that is interesting with sound-based storytelling and they are still doing like that studio and those folks are still doing the most interesting stuff. I'm midway through, I have to look this up cause I always get the name wrong Within The Wires.

Max Collins: [00:07:38](#) Within The Wires, okay.

Hannah McGregor: [00:07:38](#) Yeah, i'm midway through that right now. And that's, it's three seasons. And in each season they are telling a story using some other audio-based form. So the first season is self-help tapes that you are listening to as though you're listening to a self-help tape, including that. Like it tells you when to turn the side, turn it over, like and it's got the buzzing and sort of the like texture of listening to a cassette. But what becomes clear as you're listening to the story is that like you, the person, the story is being told to have been imprisoned an institution of some sort and the tapes are slowly giving you clues on how to escape.

Max Collins: [00:08:17](#) Oh wow.

Hannah McGregor: [00:08:18](#) So it's like immersive audio fiction told using the conventions of different audio genres. It's like, we can do amazing stuff using audio. We're just barely scratching the surface in terms of the variety of stuff that's out there.

Max Collins: [00:08:33](#) God, I love radio.

Hannah McGregor: [00:08:35](#) Yeah, me too.

Max Collins: [00:08:36](#) Yeah, it's just such an interesting medium. I feel as though, I don't know, I tell people this all the time. I know that like video and like, you know, TV and movies and YouTube and Netflix and whatever are kind of like what people go to for their binge or whatever, what do you do on your weekend. But I find that audio without visual can sometimes be even more immersive.

Hannah McGregor: [00:08:57](#) I agree. I agree. I think Marshall McLuhan's got some sort of theory about why that's the case, it has something to do with like hot and cold media and like hot media is media that primarily engages a single sense, something like that. This is like woo, like super, super long time since I've read my McLuhan. But that's certainly my experience of it is that I find unless I am in a theater setting, I find it very difficult to pay attention to TV or movies, I have a really hard time. But by virtue of the fact that with sort of audio-based storytelling, so podcasts, audio books, I'm always doing something else while I'm listening. But by virtue of doing something else, I almost feel like I can listen better. Like I can pay closer attention because my hands are busy. Like I never have more immersive listening experiences than when I'm listening to a podcast while doing the dishes. Like I'm fully inside that podcast.

Max Collins: [00:09:54](#) Yeah. I feel like maybe it has to do with dissociation as well. You know, like when you're driving or walking to work or when you're doing the dishes or mowing, maybe not mowing the lawn cause it's loud.

Hannah McGregor: [00:10:06](#) Loud, yeah, vacuuming.

Max Collins: [00:10:07](#) Yeah.

Hannah McGregor: [00:10:07](#) Just turn your headphones up.

Max Collins: [00:10:08](#) Yeah. Well yeah, exactly. But like those things where you're dissociating and you're not really like, you're in your own brain anyway or you're kind of like not paying attention to what you're actually doing. That is a time when like listening to a podcast is the absolute best thing. My personal opinion.

Hannah McGregor: [00:10:24](#) Yeah. I've, I've often thought of podcasts as a kind of like a version of augmented reality technology because you listen to them while going about your day to day life and they layer this other version of reality. It's like Pokemon Go, right? Like they layer the sort of AR experience over the surface of the world that you're moving through. So you know that thing where like you go back to relisten to a podcast episode you've already listened to and you can perfectly recall exactly where you were the first time you listened to it? And I have that now. I went on a five day bike trip with some friends in the middle of my PhD. We biked from Toronto to Montreal and I listened to podcasts. We all listened to podcasts the whole way cause I was like, what the fuck are you going to do? You're biking eight hours a day.

Max Collins: [00:11:10](#) Of course.

Hannah McGregor: [00:11:10](#) And I can still go back and listen to some of the podcasts I listened to on that bike trip and remember exactly where we were.

Max Collins: [00:11:18](#) That's wild.

Hannah McGregor: [00:11:19](#) Yeah.

Max Collins: [00:11:19](#) Right, back to, I was doing an interview show, I was offered a job and they said, can you make us a podcast? And I was like, what's a podcast? Because that's always your first question about podcasting.

Hannah McGregor: [00:11:31](#) Yeah, what's a podcast?

Max Collins: [00:11:32](#) And that's how I kind of learned that I really like interviewing. I went to school for psychology and dropped out twice.

Hannah McGregor: [00:11:39](#) Okay.

Max Collins: [00:11:40](#) Yup. Third time's the charm. I went back to school for broadcasting and I did well.

Hannah McGregor: [00:11:45](#) Great!

Max Collins: [00:11:45](#) But yeah, I just found that like radio and interviewing and podcasting is like this really cool way to kind of apply interpersonal communication or to like, I dunno, active listening is something that's like taught a lot in psychology and honestly, like when I'm therapy-ing my friends or when they're asking for advice, I do less active listening than I do when I'm interviewing somebody.

Hannah McGregor: [00:12:10](#) Yeah. Yeah. I mean that makes sense, right? Because like in this moment, in this interaction, you have to be really carefully listening because you're going to have to follow up in a second.

Max Collins: [00:12:21](#) Totally.

Hannah McGregor: [00:12:21](#) Right? So you can't just do that thing where you check out and think about what you're going to say next cause you have to be actually engaged.

Max Collins: [00:12:28](#) Absolutely. Yeah. Especially in investigative podcasting, like I found that sometimes maybe in more so if it's like what's your history? And you can check out a little bit more, or at least...guilty, I definitely have like, Oh, so tell me how you got, well – my first podcast was interviewing the radio DJs at to CFUV at the UVIC radio station – and yeah, sometimes it'd be like, how did you learn about CFUV? Yup, yup. Exactly that. Yeah. Elevator music. But the more I got into investigative podcasting and learning about, you know, my surroundings or a specific story where you had to solve a puzzle, then it gets more difficult.

Hannah McGregor: [00:13:12](#) Yeah.

Max Collins: [00:13:13](#) Do you ever feel like for when you're doing Secrets Feminist Agenda that you're solving a puzzle?

Hannah McGregor: [00:13:17](#) I don't cause I don't think of humans as puzzles. But I do usually go into those interviews not having learned a ton about what the person is up to in advance because I want to, as best I can, recreate the actual experience of having a conversation.

Max Collins: [00:13:38](#) Right.

Hannah McGregor: [00:13:38](#) You know, mind that we have these like pieces of technology in front of us, but what's it like to sit down with somebody who's doing something interesting and just find out what they're up to? And in those kinds of conversations, where you're talking to somebody interesting and finding out what they're up to, you don't phase out because the exchange isn't functional. It's sort of genuine and engaged.

Max Collins: [00:13:57](#) Yeah.

Hannah McGregor: [00:13:57](#) And that's I did not come into podcasting via interviews. This was, my first podcast was a sort of conversation with a friend kind of podcast, but in a lot of ways, Witch Please was also kind of a remediation of like the best version of a grad seminar. Like if you're just getting to talk about a book with somebody else who is smart and interesting and bounce ideas off them and build, you know, arrive at new ideas collaboratively via building this conversation.

Max Collins: [00:14:30](#) Right.

Hannah McGregor: [00:14:30](#) And Secret Feminist Agenda, for me, felt like an attempt to recreate the sort of best version of the conversation you have, like at a conference with somebody after a really great panel where you're like, Oh, you seem so interesting, tell me more like, what are you up to? Tell me more about this thing I want to find out. And so I do think that so many different versions, podcasting, like it really hinges on being interested in people. Like you've got to find people interesting. Otherwise, what are you doing?

Max Collins: [00:14:58](#) Absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. I mean, well that's what podcasting and like interview, podcasting, investigative podcasting is, like storytelling and hearing about other people's lives.

Hannah McGregor: [00:15:08](#) Yeah, yeah.

Max Collins: [00:15:08](#) So you absolutely have to be invested in other people.

Max Collins: [00:15:11](#) Yeah. So tell me about your forays into investigative podcasting. How did you make that jump from interviews into trying to solve puzzles?

Max Collins: [00:15:18](#) Oh, geez. My first foray, I suppose, into investigative podcasting, it was when, I went from being a producer at CFUV to being the news director. I was put in charge of like five different podcast series that we had, but specifically I had to executive produce and produce one of them.

Hannah McGregor: [00:15:38](#) What's the difference between executive production and production?

Max Collins: [00:15:41](#) Oh boy. In regards to CFUV, being the executive producer of a podcast means that you have a producer who is in charge of, you know, getting everything done and you basically say this is good or like, hmm, this is bad.

Hannah McGregor: [00:15:58](#) Gotcha!

Max Collins: [00:15:58](#) So the one that I produced, it was called Full Circle and the main topic was stories of Victoria. And there was specifically one episode that we did that was about tourism. And it was very like this American life, sort of the layout, where we had a host and then you had kind of like three segments or stories or what have you. And one of our stories for the tourism episode was about this thing called the Buskers Festival. And apparently what had happened that year was that the Buskers Festival used to be put on by this one guy, and he worked with the Downtown Victoria Business Association, and then the next year they started putting on their own festival and this, yeah.

Hannah McGregor: [00:16:44](#) Whoa, scandal.

Max Collins: [00:16:45](#) And yeah, knowing this guy, like he was like, screw it, I'm going to put on my own festival as well.

Hannah McGregor: [00:16:52](#) Competing buskers festivals?

Max Collins: [00:16:52](#) Absolutely. Yeah. Buskers versus buskers.

Hannah McGregor: [00:16:55](#) Love it!

Max Collins: [00:16:55](#) And yeah, you know, we were trying to figure out what happened and yeah, it was just very interesting to kind of solve that puzzle I suppose. And it was dramatic as well, you know, cause we talked to the Downtown Victoria Association and they were like, we don't want to talk about Vickers. His name was like John Vickers or something like that. And they were like, we will not talk about him. And like, I think RK got like a question or two but yeah, we had to kind of work around that. And it was,

Hannah McGregor: [00:17:25](#) I can see how that would give you a taste.

Max Collins: [00:17:27](#) Absolutely, absolutely. Yeah. I've always been one to like ask a lot of questions as well and yeah, the taste of like, why won't you talk about them, or like why is there such a feud that's going on?

Hannah McGregor: [00:17:37](#) Yeah.

Max Collins: [00:17:38](#) That's what really got me interested in asking those questions and solving puzzles within podcasting.

Hannah McGregor: [00:17:43](#) Yeah. So you made the move from Victoria to Vancouver,

Max Collins: [00:17:46](#) I did, yes.

Hannah McGregor: [00:17:47](#) To do your broadcasting degree?

Max Collins: [00:17:49](#) Yes. Yeah, I moved for school and when I was in school I kind of, I knew I wanted to do a podcast. I went to a school that basically for a final project it was a year long program and for a final project you got to do kind of whatever you wanted. You were supposed to work on it for three months. And I was a keener and I just started working on it, like basically right away, as soon as I got into school, I started off my diploma, I suppose, thinking that I would just do something very similar to Full Circle where it was like, you know, one episode has like specific themes. So I was going to do one about the nine o'clock gun and like colonialism around Stanley Park and I was going to do an episode about the duck lady and I do one about Canuck the Crow and you know, like those Vancouver things.

Hannah McGregor: [00:18:37](#) Wacky Vancouver stories.

Max Collins: [00:18:38](#) Exactly. Like things that were interesting to me as somebody who wasn't from Vancouver. But then in, I think it was November, I heard that the first club that I ever went to in Vancouver – it was called XY on Davie street in Davie Village – that, along with another club, was closing down.

Hannah McGregor: [00:18:58](#) Yeah.

Max Collins: [00:18:59](#) And I distinctly remember that both of those clubs were very drag-focused.

Hannah McGregor: [00:19:03](#) Yeah.

Max Collins: [00:19:03](#) And I was kind of like, that's interesting that you know, within the gayborhood that these two clubs that you know, seem to be very nicely set up.

Hannah McGregor: [00:19:14](#) And full, like you go to drag nights there and they'd be full.

Max Collins: [00:19:19](#) Absolutely. And so it was very strange and like wanted to learn more. And so yeah, I thought that it would be an episode. And what ended up happening, those two clubs were owned by someone named Jenn Mickey, who I talk about in Dragged Out, my podcast. You can listen to it at draggedoutpodcast.com.

Hannah McGregor: [00:19:43](#) We're gonna link to it in the show notes.

Max Collins: [00:19:43](#) Right, so, Jenn Mickey was the person that owned those places. I had mutual friends with her on Facebook, so I messaged her there, I called XY, I left messages on their Facebook business pages. She brick walls me. So I recognized one of the people who was doing the drag show cause that person had come over to Victoria for a pride night. And so I messaged them and they said, yeah, absolutely, I'll talk to you over the phone. They were also a part of a place called Vancouver Art and Leisure, also known as VAL, but

when I was talking to them they gave me some information about Jenn Mickey and about XY and how, you know, it's very sad for the queer, specifically the drag community to lose XY and 1181 because they were very drag-centric and I had a phone...

- Hannah McGregor: [00:20:34](#) You fucker.
- Max Collins: [00:20:35](#) Hell raiser. Shit disturber. But right, this person that I talked to, their name is Continental Breakfast.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:20:41](#) Amazing.
- Max Collins: [00:20:42](#) Yup. We talked over the phone and they, they gave me some information about XY and 1181 and about VAL as well. And I did the interview and then, once we were done the interview, I stopped my recorder and I said, thank you very much Continental Breakfast, that was great. Their name is also Chris Reed. Thanks Chris, that was an amazing interview and they said, Thank you, oh by the way, VAL's closing in a few months too. And I was kind of like, Whoa, what? And that's when I realized like it's interesting that there's so many drag venues that are closing down and maybe there's a story to this and yeah, that's kind of how Dragged Out happened, I was curious to know why, even though drag is coming up, you know, well not coming up, it's been around for a very, very long time, but now drag is having a moment, I suppose.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:21:37](#) It's gone main stream.
- Max Collins: [00:21:39](#) Yes.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:21:39](#) Right? RuPaul's Drag Race has mainstreamed drag in a way that it just wasn't prior to this.
- Max Collins: [00:21:43](#) Yes, absolutely. And so there's, yeah, there's so much buzz going around for drag. Why are drag performers having trouble finding venues to perform at?
- Hannah McGregor: [00:21:54](#) In a city like Vancouver.
- Max Collins: [00:21:55](#) In a city like Vancouver where, you know, it's supposed to be one of the three big queer spaces in Canada, I guess there's like the Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. Why are drag performers having such a hard time doing their art here and expressing themselves?
- Hannah McGregor: [00:22:14](#) Does it, ah, I don't want to spoil it for people. I want them to go and listen to the actual podcast.
- Max Collins: [00:22:22](#) Yes yes yes.

Hannah McGregor: [00:22:22](#) You gotta follow on the journey of the investigation.

Max Collins: [00:22:26](#) It's, Dragged Out is great for people who don't know about drag, but at the same time it's good for people who do know about drag and perform drag as well because there's just so much information in regards to like the history of drag and maybe some stories that you haven't heard before.

Hannah McGregor: [00:22:44](#) Yeah.

Max Collins: [00:22:44](#) And it really goes into like the community of it all. So absolutely, we can ruin it and spoil it because there's so much more than just the end result of like, what is the answer to this question?

Hannah McGregor: [00:22:55](#) Yeah!

Max Collins: [00:22:55](#) Can you guess why so many drag places are shut down? What's the problem here in Vancouver?

Hannah McGregor: [00:23:02](#) I was gonna say, is it a Vancouver real estate story?

Max Collins: [00:23:05](#) Yes.

Hannah McGregor: [00:23:06](#) At its base.

Max Collins: [00:23:07](#) Absolutely.

Hannah McGregor: [00:23:07](#) Because that's what feels like.

Max Collins: [00:23:09](#) It does have to do with that, but it also has to do with gentrification and the, I guess the censorship of marginalized communities. I do want to take note of the fact that many of the folks that I talked to in Dragged Out were white or settlers. I mean, I didn't count how many racialized folks there were, but there are a few, and there are people who are non-binary and they're people who practice like 'drag thing' drag. But at the same time, you know, the queer community is marginalized.

Hannah McGregor: [00:23:43](#) Well, yeah. Homophobia despite the feeling that like homophobia towards like a white cis gay man, it's like surely that's a 10 years ago prejudice, but like 'tisn't

Max Collins: [00:23:54](#) Yeah. And a lot of the folks that I talked to are like non-binary and are kind of playing with a lot of different types of gender in their drag. And it's really difficult to be a drag performer all the time. Like making money off of just being a drag performer when you are practicing drag in a way that hasn't really been seen on TV, you know? I feel like there is absolutely an appetite for drag things, but I mean, I can't say this for sure because I'm not a drag-thing

performer, but I would assume that it's a little bit more difficult to make your way if you are a drag-thing.

Hannah McGregor: [00:24:29](#) There's certainly like, insofar as drag has been mainstream by RuPaul's drag race and RuPaul has shown that he has like an extremely binary understanding of gender and a very sort of a narrow sense that drag is something that is performed by cis gay men.

Max Collins: [00:24:47](#) Yup.

Hannah McGregor: [00:24:47](#) That, you know, he's been pushed on and will have moments of sort of being like, yeah, it's more complex than that. And then at the end of the day is exercising a lot of money and cultural power to tell a story about drag that is one very specific story. So I can understand how that would not make things easier for people whose drag doesn't look like that.

Max Collins: [00:25:06](#) Exactly, yeah. And there are, there are some stories of folks who are really making it as drag-things who are just like changing the way that drag is put on, you know? There's performers like P.M. Who have brought drag into really hetero spaces, like Save On Meats. Yeah, yhey do a show, it's P.M. And Continental Breakfast, who I mentioned, they do a show called Late Night Snack. It very often sells out. It's a show that starts at 8:00 PM, I believe P.M. said that they want to go to bed early because they are old or something similar. They're not old at all.

Hannah McGregor: [00:25:47](#) Okay, but also I love going to bed early.

Max Collins: [00:25:49](#) Yeah, absolutely.

Hannah McGregor: [00:25:50](#) Totally identify.

Max Collins: [00:25:50](#) Yeah. I'm an early to sleep kind of person.

Hannah McGregor: [00:25:53](#) Early to sleep. Late to rise. Ideally would like to sleep 12 hours a night, so tired.

Max Collins: [00:25:59](#) Wouldn't that be nice? It'd be nice if we only had to work four hours a day with just sleep for the rest of the time?

Hannah McGregor: [00:26:05](#) I mean, what's actually stopping us? Capitalism is the answer.

Max Collins: [00:26:08](#) Living in Vancouver. Going back to talking about drag things. You know, there's Alma Bitches who has her stomp as she calls it and she emotes. So she's not a dancer at all. She just like stands there and she has her, you know she's beautiful. She has amazing makeup and her beard is just so, like so full. And I wish I had a beard like that. I wish I had a mustache actually.

Hannah McGregor: [00:26:36](#) I would love to be able to grow proper facial hair.

Max Collins: [00:26:39](#) Yeah.

Hannah McGregor: [00:26:39](#) Facial hair is so sexy.

Max Collins: [00:26:41](#) Absolutely.

Hannah McGregor: [00:26:42](#) And I am so jealous of the degree to which it can transform your...like I would absolutely rock a handlebar mustache so hard.

Max Collins: [00:26:50](#) I would rock an Italian moustache, you know, where you like kind of wax it to the sides, not like a Dali where it goes up, just like to the sides. That would be my moustache.

Hannah McGregor: [00:27:00](#) Yeah. God damn.

Max Collins: [00:27:01](#) Big, big fan of moustaches. Oh my goodness. We've gone so far into drag, but I forget where this even started.

Hannah McGregor: [00:27:08](#) It started with what drew you to investigative podcasting, right?

Max Collins: [00:27:11](#) Yes.

Hannah McGregor: [00:27:12](#) So Dragged Out was, in a lot of ways, your first foray into doing that.

Max Collins: [00:27:16](#) Yeah. Yeah.

Hannah McGregor: [00:27:17](#) Like actually sort of finding a story and following it through on your own and really doing this sort of multi-episode dive into solving a puzzle.

Max Collins: [00:27:24](#) Yeah, yeah. And it was, it was a lot for sure. I was very lucky that I was doing it for school and so it was kind of an excuse to spend all of my time on it.

Hannah McGregor: [00:27:34](#) Yeah.

Max Collins: [00:27:35](#) I had some funds put away for school and so I was able to, you know, work 14 hours a day on just interviewing people and editing and that sort of thing and really getting it done. And it was, yeah, it was a lot, but it was just so, it was rewarding to capture the spirit of a bunch of different parts of the drag scene, you know We started by explaining what drag was. I really wanted to focus a lot on drag things and I spoke to a trans man, his name is Samuel and he does drag as Tommy who is a woman I believe. And he talks about how, you know, his entire life, he knew he was a man. He wanted to transition but he also, you know, liked as he calls it quote unquote "the girl stuff." He loves RuPaul and Boulay Brothers and he loved

sewing and he loved putting together costumes, but for a long time he wasn't able to do that I suppose because his mom who again, he says love my mom, but she saw him struggling and wanting to transition and the mom said to Samuel, you can't do all this girl stuff because people won't believe you when you say that you're a trans man, you know? I talked to a nonbinary person who said if I didn't have drag I probably wouldn't be alive because they found their gender through drag. Yeah, I dunno, it's very powerful.

Hannah McGregor: [00:29:04](#) It sounds really powerful. Did you have a lot of connections in the drag community before you started following the story or were you meeting people and learning about it as you went?

Max Collins: [00:29:15](#) I did not have a single connection. While I was making this podcast. My friend over in Victoria, her name is Sophia. Hi Sophia. She was doing drag at the time. Her drag name is Ada Rawl. But other than that I didn't know anybody at all who did drag. I knew of Continental Breakfast because I had seen them through their drag performances. But yeah, I didn't know anyone and I kinda just had to reach out over Facebook to a bunch of people and say like, Hey, I'm sorry, I know you don't know me, but do you know this place called The Cobalt? Can you tell me about it?

Hannah McGregor: [00:29:50](#) Yeah. Was it hard getting people to the point where they trusted you enough to talk to you?

Max Collins: [00:29:55](#) Uh, no, not at all. Uh, actually well, yes and no. I think I started my conversations with a lot of younger drag performers and everyone was really open to talking to me, which was super cool. The older population, I suppose, like the older Dames as Dams, as people have said to me before. I didn't really know that much about them until I hired a consultant to work with me. I worked with a consultant, a drag performer named Isolde N. Barren And when I was doing the podcast, I realized at a certain point like, you know, I'm a queer woman, I think baby-gay I suppose, but like I don't do drag and you know, my executive producers are, the people who are like watching me do this and kind of helping me along the way, are a bunch of like old white dudes, old straight white dudes. And I just needed someone from the community who really knew what they were talking about, so I ended up asking around and hiring Isolde N. Barren who is also a part of ZZ Theater. And you know, as soon as I sat down with them they said, well the first thing they said was you got to talk to some, some of the older Dams and you have to talk about the history of drag because like

Hannah McGregor: [00:31:17](#) You're not going to understand this without that history.

Max Collins: [00:31:19](#) Absolutely. And the kids who are doing drag today wouldn't be able to do that if it weren't for the people who stood in drag on the steps of the courthouse, the Vancouver courthouse and held up signs that said, I am a human.

- Hannah McGregor: [00:31:36](#) Yeah. I was just listening to the most recent episode of Sandy and Nora's podcast. Are you familiar with it? It's wonderful. It is two women who are freelance journalists, political organizers, it's a politics podcast. They're both Canadian. So really good Canadian politics podcast hosted by a couple of women in their thirties. So like works for me particularly, it's so extremely my demographic that in the most recent episode they were referring to their generational differences because Nora is a little older than Sandy, so Nora was like, yeah, I'm older than you and Sandy's like, yeah, as in like you were the older half of the double cohort and I was like, Jesus fucking Christ. I've never heard a more specific representation of my particular identity because I am also part of the older half of the double cohort which is incomprehensible unless you were an Ontario-born millennial. Anyway, the Sandy and Nora podcast is great and the most recent episode they were talking about 'okay boomer' and intergenerational struggle. And they were talking, towards the end, Sandy was talking about examples of activist communities that do a really good job of including different generations and Sandy herself does a lot of work with Black Lives Matter Toronto and she was talking about how Black Lives Matter. Toronto has really modeled what it looks like to do intergenerational activism and make sure elders are part of the conversation and make sure children are part of the conversation. And then she also pointed to indigenous activist communities as also being really good at keeping conversations going across generations and how we have a lot to learn about making sure when we're doing this kind of community work that we don't, you know, isolate ourselves generationally, but keep talking to our elders, bring kids into it and make sure that those conversations are happening sort of back and forth.
- Max Collins: [00:33:28](#) Right. What I experienced when doing Dragged Out, the one thing that I heard a lot, especially from people who have been doing drag for a longer time, it's important to teach younger generations to make space for them. And I feel as though maybe I'm wrong about this, but in Vancouver at least, there are a lot of like older Dams who have shows, especially in the gay village. Oh my goodness, uh, Carlotta Gurl is one of them and Legends with, I need...
- Hannah McGregor: [00:34:03](#) You're really, you're pulling a lot of names. I'm very impressed by your recall.
- Max Collins: [00:34:06](#) I interviewed what, 16? 17? Drag performers for this series. And there's a lot of names to remember. Legends by Jaylene Tyme. Those are some of the older Dems who, yeah, who have been doing it for a while. I believe Jaylene came from Alberta, Carlotta's been here for a while. Isolde and Peach Cobblah are also kind of like old, older I suppose. Not old and none of you are old if any of you are listening. You're all lovely, beautiful.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:34:41](#) Max did not call you old.

Max Collins: [00:34:44](#) Yeah, they, a lot of those lovely drag performers have shows and a lot of them invite some a lot of the younger folks to perform with them. And I find that, maybe I'm wrong, I am a person from the outside looking in because I'm not a performer, but it seems as though there is a lot of teaching and learning and space held for both, like younger generations and older generations. It's very inspiring for sure.

Hannah McGregor: [00:35:11](#) Yeah. Yeah. That's beautiful.

Max Collins: [00:35:13](#) Yeah. Even even within, maybe it is because I'm a baby gay, but I feel as though in a lot of queer spaces, the older generations or older queer generations are not thought of very much.

Hannah McGregor: [00:35:23](#) I agree entirely. I think a lot of, particularly when I was younger, a lot of the queer spaces I moved through felt like they were very much just other people my age.

Max Collins: [00:35:32](#) Yeah.

Hannah McGregor: [00:35:32](#) And it feels very exciting and powerful for me to be in a space with queer elders.

Max Collins: [00:35:38](#) Yeah, okay. Yeah.

Hannah McGregor: [00:35:40](#) Like in those, in those moments or those when people have done organizing and have made sure that that is possible, in a similar way to, I'm increasingly drawn to forms of queer organizing where people make space for parents so that children can be there too. Because that also feels like part of what it looks like to really build out robust community.

Max Collins: [00:35:59](#) Yeah. I feel like maybe that will change with our, I guess your and my generation. I'm a Zoomer. I mean I'm, I'm the oldest of the Zoomers.

Hannah McGregor: [00:36:06](#) What's a Zoomer?

Max Collins: [00:36:07](#) A generation Z.

Hannah McGregor: [00:36:08](#) Oh.

Max Collins: [00:36:09](#) Yeah. I'm a,

Hannah McGregor: [00:36:10](#) Oh, we're calling them Zoomers now!

Max Collins: [00:36:12](#) Apparently.

Hannah McGregor: [00:36:13](#) Oh that's fun!

Max Collins: [00:36:13](#) Yeah. Yeah, no, I, okay. Side note but whatever, I talk about this because it gives me so much anxiety. I one Statistics Canada things says that it's '93 and after that is generation Z and one of them says '95 and after. Born in 94, I have horrible, horrible, like anxiety about this. I've decided like I am a gen-Z because like, I don't really recall a time without technology, but whatever. Anyway.

Hannah McGregor: [00:36:43](#) It's helpful when you are thinking about demographics to remind yourself that demographics are an invention of late capitalism and a function of mass media. And they exist because demographics are used to target people and sell them things.

Max Collins: [00:36:59](#) Right.

Hannah McGregor: [00:36:59](#) Essentially. So while I do think that there are helpful ways of thinking about generational differences, to think about how we grow up in different relationships to technology and different relationships to economic boom and bust different relationships to political events, you know? You probably don't remember much before 9/11.

Max Collins: [00:37:20](#) Yeah, I remember it happening for sure. And I remember a little bit beforehand, but not very much.

Hannah McGregor: [00:37:24](#) Right? So like and there's a generation now who were born after 9/11 like that's a big difference, you know? Memory of the internet, different relationships to different technologies. Like I think those are meaningful, but I do think that sometimes we get a little like tangled up in this, well, but what am I? And it's like, just remember that this is mostly just like Google trying to sell you things. Like it's not that real. And I say this as somebody who is absolutely, I am solidly into the millennial demographic, but millennials defined as like some places start in '79 some places starting in '80 '81 '82 '83. I was born in 84 so like I'm definitely in it, but I know so many people who were born in like '79 '80 who are like, what am I? And it's like, well, none of us are anything, but at the end of the day, just look into your heart and you'll know what's true about you.

Max Collins: [00:38:17](#) Absolutely. Yeah. But your and my generation. I think that the inclusion of queer elders is going to change with your and my generation and we will be included by younger generations because a lot of our queer elders are no longer here because of the HIV AIDS crisis, you know? I don't think I'd ever talked to, before doing Dragged Out, I hadn't ever talked to, you know, one-on-one with a queer elder about the HIV crisis. And I got to do that with Dragged Out. One of the older Dams told me about the fact that every day you'd be losing somebody.

Hannah McGregor: [00:38:55](#) Yeah.

Max Collins: [00:38:55](#) You know, that's just the way that it was. And it's just so, yeah.

Hannah McGregor: [00:38:58](#) It's so recent too. Like it is so wild to think about how that was, I mean, within my lifetime, certainly. And yet is treated as though it is...

Max Collins: [00:39:10](#) Never happened.

Hannah McGregor: [00:39:10](#) Never happened. Absolutely. It's written out of our collective histories in so many ways. Yeah. I hope, I hope that we realize what a gift it is, like the queer elders that we still have in our communities.

Max Collins: [00:39:25](#) Totally. Yeah. It's been interesting moving from Alberta to Vancouver as well. I mean, you're from Alberta, right?

Hannah McGregor: [00:39:31](#) I am not. I'm from Ottawa.

Max Collins: [00:39:32](#) Oh, right. Okay. But you.

Hannah McGregor: [00:39:34](#) But he's from Alberta.

Max Collins: [00:39:36](#) Aww. You were in Alberta for a little while, Right?

Hannah McGregor: [00:39:38](#) I was, yeah.

Max Collins: [00:39:39](#) Edmonton. Were you just studying there or?

Hannah McGregor: [00:39:42](#) Yeah, I did my master's there and then moved back to Ontario for my PhD and then moved back to Edmonton for a postdoc.

Max Collins: [00:39:47](#) Okay. How did you find Edmonton as a queer city?

Hannah McGregor: [00:39:50](#) Um, I enjoyed the queer scene in Edmonton. It's a little tricky to date there because if you date somebody and it ends badly, you're going to see them at every event, every weekend forever. Cause there's only one event at any given time.

Max Collins: [00:40:05](#) Yep.

Hannah McGregor: [00:40:06](#) And that feeling of like, there's one venue, there's one event, there's one thing going on, can make it all feel very sort of entangled. But I also thought there were some really remarkable queer art making and community making happening in Edmonton. You know, there was the, what was the queer arts festival called?

Max Collins: [00:40:22](#) Oh, I just know the fringe festival, I'm from Calgary so.

Hannah McGregor: [00:40:26](#) There was a really great queer arts festival and I feel bad for not remembering this because my very dear friend Marshall was one of

the organizers of it. The...I think when I was there, yes, this was during my masters, he helped to organize, one of the shows at the festival was in the still functioning bath house in Edmonton. They took over the bath house for the night and put art installations in all of the rooms and it was absolutely incredible.

- Max Collins: [00:40:53](#) That sounds so cool.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:40:53](#) And like the opportunity to like be in a bath house and like experience that space. And a lot of the art was about, you know, the intimacy of that space and the politics of that space. So like I yeah, I got in Edmonton, I got to experience a lot of really interesting queer community building.
- Max Collins: [00:41:08](#) I never got to experience that in Calgary because,
- Hannah McGregor: [00:41:10](#) Doesn't surprise me.
- Max Collins: [00:41:12](#) You know it's, it's funny, I tell people, or at least I figured this out recently that Edmonton is kind of like the middle child of the terrible family where like it's not as terrible as the rest of the family. Like it's still..
- Hannah McGregor: [00:41:27](#) It's still a family with some problems.
- Max Collins: [00:41:30](#) Absolutely.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:41:30](#) For sure.
- Max Collins: [00:41:31](#) Whereas like, Calgary is like the little brat, like the youngest brat basically. And, I don't know, I loved growing up in Calgary for certain reasons. I just, I guess where I'm going with this is that I don't think Dragged Out...I've been thinking about doing Dragged Out in or having a second season where I move. Yeah, to uh.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:41:54](#) Are you moving?
- Max Collins: [00:41:54](#) I don't think so. I mean, as I was saying, I wanted to potentially go to another city and see what their drag scene was like. But I feel like I'm worried that Dragged Out couldn't happen in another city because Vancouver is so unique in that the queer scene is so large here and there's a lot happening. But at the same time everybody is being pushed out by an affordability. And when we talk about marginalization and when we talk about gentrification specifically, the people that get hit first and get hit hardest are those who are marginalized to begin with. So that's, you know, the queer community, different racialized communities, people with mental health issues. Those are the people that get hit first. I feel as though when I've talked to folks in Toronto – Toronto.

Hannah McGregor: [00:42:43](#) It's a bit of an exaggeration, nobody says Toronto.

Max Collins: [00:42:46](#) Yeah. When I talked to the folks in Toronto, it seems as though there's more of a, more of a net or there's a little bit more of like a, not subsidization, but there's more support for people who are suffering from gentrification. Whereas Vancouver, it's just this kind of, if you'll forgive the turn of phrase, this Wild West of unaffordability and people with a lot of money being able to buy something for really cheap and then force everybody out.

Hannah McGregor: [00:43:18](#) It's truly wild. I've lived in a lot of Canadian cities. I mean, not a lot, but I've lived in Ottawa and Guelph and had very dear friends who lived in Toronto and spent a lot of time there and lived in Edmonton and lived here. And Vancouver is, like, I think folks in Toronto, I think think it's more similar than it is. And I actually think it's more different than people outside of this part of the country realize. Like the degree of constant acute despair that people in Vancouver are experiencing, knowing that they are one renovation away from literally having to leave. Like that, not from like, Oh shit, I'm gonna have to move further into the suburbs and my commute is going to get longer. And that sucks, like that is really hard on people and that's happening to people in Toronto. And that is, I don't want to say that's not, like Toronto also has problems, but Vancouver has a different feeling to it.

Max Collins: [00:44:15](#) Absolutely.

Hannah McGregor: [00:44:15](#) Yeah.

Max Collins: [00:44:16](#) I've thought about maybe going to other places to see, to find triumphant stories as well. I'm a very, I'm a media crier. Like anything at all, like watching movies makes me cry. The other day I was walking to work, I'm listening to My Chemical Romance and crying. Not, because the song was particularly sad, but just because it had like a big swell in the song.

Hannah McGregor: [00:44:39](#) Sorry! Music. There was a, there was a stringed instrument. It swelled. I had to have a cry.

Max Collins: [00:44:42](#) That's exactly, and it was Welcome to the Black Parade. It was the point where the part that's like, I'm just a boy, I'm not a hero. And I was like, I'm not a hero.

Hannah McGregor: [00:44:50](#) I don't know the song all. I don't think I've ever listened to My Chemical Romance.

Max Collins: [00:44:54](#) Oh you should.

Hannah McGregor: [00:44:54](#) I trust you. Nah.

Max Collins: [00:44:55](#) Okay. No, that's fair.

Hannah McGregor: [00:44:57](#) No, I just have to listen to Ke\$ha on repeat. That's my jam.

Max Collins: [00:45:00](#) Hell yeah. Yes, yes. There's no- well, I mean there are songs better than Timber, but there's also no song better than Timber.

Hannah McGregor: [00:45:06](#) Except that she has this new song. It's not. Okay. So she's already released a single offer new album and it is very good. But there's a song that I somehow missed, that she released over the summer.

Max Collins: [00:45:17](#) Right. Is it,

Hannah McGregor: [00:45:19](#) It's called Rich White Straight Men.

Max Collins: [00:45:20](#) Yes.

Hannah McGregor: [00:45:20](#) And I have been listening to Rich White Straight Men like on repeat for days.

Max Collins: [00:45:24](#) I can't, like I love Ke\$ha but I can't get into it because it reminds me too much of like a like a Burton or a Danny Elfman song.

Hannah McGregor: [00:45:32](#) It's extremely manic circus music, does not sound like her other songs. I love it so much.

Max Collins: [00:45:39](#) I have a problem with melancholic songs, or not melancholic, but songs that are are stressful I guess.

Hannah McGregor: [00:45:46](#) Oh, I love stressful songs. I love melancholy just as an ethos. Also love Burton and Danny Elfman. Nightmare Before Christmas is extremely my jam. I would be that kind of Nightmare Before Christmas goth if I took myself less seriously. I have too much dignity. It's the only thing stopping me though.

Max Collins: [00:46:08](#) Yup. Yup. That's fair. Right. So I'm a media crier. I've definitely cried to episodes of Dragged Out, but there are a lot of triumphant parts of Dragged oOut. I know that it's like a very serious and sad topic, but there are a lot of stories of, you know, for example, commercial drag and making space for drag things. And you know, the DIY drag scene here is amazing as well. I wanted to potentially go to Victoria because I know that there is a drag troupe there called Haus of Occult. My friend, is in it, hi Sophia. But Haus of Occult has been bringing drag out to different parts of Victoria that normally wouldn't see that type of performance. There's this like punk bar basically called Logan's, the best karaoke night ever, but Haus of Occult has been bringing drag to Logan's and like Logan's sells out every night it's there. Logan's has welcomed this place with open arms.

Hannah McGregor: [00:47:10](#) Gotcha.

Max Collins: [00:47:10](#) And I would love to learn more about what Haus of Occult is doing. I also know someone who is transitioning at the moment and they found their voice through drag, and I would love to, you know, just like follow them around with a microphone and hear about how drag helped them and hear about their journey in running this drag house and transitioning at the same time.

Hannah McGregor: [00:47:36](#) Yeah.

Max Collins: [00:47:36](#) You know, I've heard them talk about how, as they become a more feminine person, drag is becoming more difficult for them because they feel misogyny more on a day to day basis. And yeah, I don't know, it's just, it's a very interesting topic and I would love to go back to Victoria and live there for a year and follow them around.

Hannah McGregor: [00:47:56](#) I love the idea of you just traveling across the country doing the drag beat. It's really good.

Max Collins: [00:48:04](#) Government of Canada gives me money so that I can document.

Hannah McGregor: [00:48:09](#) Canada council grant.

Max Collins: [00:48:10](#) Oh my goodness. Okay. Canada Arts Council, if that's what you're talking about. I have a bone to pick with them because I have applied for some grants with them and they told me I'm not an artist and podcasts...

Hannah McGregor: [00:48:22](#) Podcasts are not covered by the Canada Council for the Arts.

Max Collins: [00:48:25](#) Isn't that awful?

Hannah McGregor: [00:48:26](#) Currently we in fact have no frameworks for funding podcasts because they are still too new a medium to fund in any of those ways. So we know how to fund, we've got sort of the separate worlds of like media funding and arts funding and those tend to be sort of separated out, you know, for better or for worse. Media funding will fund film and television and arts funding will fund dance and theater and writing and podcasting doesn't fall comfortably into any of those worlds in any really clear ways.

Max Collins: [00:49:00](#) I feel like that's like one of the reasons why podcasting specifically in Canada as well has kind of run into this, you know, this world of like it's either you don't have any time to make it or it's just you and your friend who are like having a chat or whatever and then you have Podfade or what have you. Or it's made by a big company or something like that.

Hannah McGregor: [00:49:23](#) And we don't have much in the way of the big companies either. Like we've got CBC obviously making very CBC sounding podcasts for the most part. And then we've got Canadaland, which is probably the most interesting example we've got in the country of a network that is funding the making of stuff.

Max Collins: [00:49:43](#) And specifically nonfiction.

Hannah McGregor: [00:49:46](#) Yeah, exactly. And then we've got Kelly & Kelly who are not a network but a production studio who are doing sort of fiction-like podcast storytelling.

Max Collins: [00:49:54](#) And Pacific Content who do branded or I guess podcast with brands, as they say.

Hannah McGregor: [00:49:59](#) That's kind of like...

Max Collins: [00:50:00](#) That's it. There's no Gimlet, there's no Pineapple Street, there's no...

Hannah McGregor: [00:50:04](#) And there's also not a massive amount of innovation in podcasting coming out of CBC, and I think that's a really missed opportunity. I was talking to one of my current RAs, Stacey Copeland. Hi Stacey. I don't know if you listen, you're not required to as part of the terms of your employment. Anyway, so Stacey was telling me she just got back from Third Coast.

Max Collins: [00:50:27](#) Yes.

Hannah McGregor: [00:50:27](#) The big podcasting festival?

Max Collins: [00:50:29](#) Yeah, Chicago.

Hannah McGregor: [00:50:29](#) And met somebody from Australia there who's talking about how sort of the Australian version of the CBC, like the national broadcaster, has created this granting system where if people want to make innovative radio, they basically apply and can like come and make whatever weird stuff they want. And so a lot of really amazing innovative, nontraditional podcasting and radio storytelling is coming out of Australia because they have created funding to encourage innovative art making. And that's, like we so desperately need something like that in Canada. A space where we can say like, I'm so sick of our aspiration constantly being to create a slightly worse version of what is being made in the States. It's just so boring. And I think we've got really great examples in the history of Canadian media making that our best art happens when we stop trying to make some version of an American thing and make something that is really uniquely weirdly us.

Max Collins: [00:51:30](#) Yeah.

Hannah McGregor: [00:51:31](#) And that's what, when you look at like Kids in the Hall, when you look at Schitt's Creek, like when you look at stuff that have been these sort of breakout international Canadian successes, it's not because we tried to make something look or feel American. And I would love to see us doing that. Like I would love to see space for that kind of stuff happening in Canada. And I think we've got a couple of really interesting examples. I feel like Missing and Murdered is a thing that could only have come out of Canada, like that really specific way that Connie Walker went about telling a true crime story in a really different orientation towards the story that she was telling. Like yeah.

Max Collins: [00:52:12](#) Thunder Bay, Thunder Bay one.

Hannah McGregor: [00:52:13](#) Absolutely. Absolutely. When Ryan was talking as part of, Oh it was when he was interviewing Christopher Goffard as part of the one of the evening shows at the Vancouver Podcast Festival, and he was asking Christopher about how long it takes him to make a show and how that gets funded. And Christopher turned it around on him and said, you know, Thunder Bay like how did you, you know, how long were you there? How did that get funded? And Ryan was like, yeah, I spent a year there and I didn't produce a single piece of tape for that first year because my job was to be in that community and to learn what was going on there. Right? And that is, I think, an ethos and an understanding of community based storytelling that comes out of a really specific indigenous perspective that I don't think could have been done by somebody who wasn't Ryan.

Max Collins: [00:53:00](#) Totally. Yeah. And I mean the same could be said for a Crackdown, Crackdown podcast.

Hannah McGregor: [00:53:05](#) Yes, absolutely.

Max Collins: [00:53:07](#) You really do have to like immerse yourself, you know?

Hannah McGregor: [00:53:10](#) Like if that is a thing that we could collectively agree to really value, is like deeply community-based work that is made in an accountable way where like, you know, I was chatted very briefly with Garth Mullins on the CBC when we were doing promo for the festival, and he was talking about Crackdown, what makes it unique, what makes it vital is that it is talking about drug use and drug users and his stories being made by drug users. And then like a couple of days later I was on Twitter and Amber Dawn was tweeting about Hustling Verse, which is a new anthology of poetry by sex workers that she co-edited, and she was like, you know, sex workers need to tell sex worker stories. And it's that same kind of like what does it look like when we tell stories and make art out of communities, not about communities, you know? That is accountable and embedded and responsible and responsive. And nobody can make us do that, nobody can force us to be

accountable to communities, you actually have to make that decision. And I think it just makes literally whatever you're doing better.

- Max Collins: [00:54:27](#) Totally. Yeah. It makes you care about what you're doing. Cause it's a malleable thing. I suppose within *Dragged Out* when I was interviewing people from the community, I went to shows I really became a part of the community. I actually, I wanted to kind of experience what it was like to do drag, so I went over to Victoria and my friend who puts on the shows at Logan's invited me to do drag and that was like, I realize how fucking difficult it is.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:55:01](#) Oh my god it seems so hard.
- Max Collins: [00:55:02](#) It totally, I mean my drag being a, I dunno what I identify as, sometimes I'm bisexual, sometimes I'm asexual, but being a somewhat asexual person, what really interests me is just human bodies in general and how, being an unsexual being, what that would look like. And so I performed as a drag monster as they call it. I painted myself entirely with white grease paint, which I didn't set cause I didn't realize that you have to set with setting powder. And so I was just like all...
- Hannah McGregor: [00:55:37](#) Sweating off!
- Max Collins: [00:55:37](#) This grease paint everywhere.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:55:38](#) Sticking to everything!
- Max Collins: [00:55:38](#) It's like flaking off and I had a bald cap on and it was just like, you could see it. It was, oh, there's a picture of me, it's just so bad. But yeah, that was probably one of the most difficult things I ever did and if I hadn't started talking to folks who had done drag, I wouldn't have considered it. And I don't think that if I had not done it, I wouldn't have such a high appreciation for drag performance. Yeah. You know, inserting yourself into what you do is very much like a way of presenting media that is community-based. Does that make sense?
- Hannah McGregor: [00:56:14](#) Yeah. Yeah. And we were talking about this a little bit before we started recording, but there is, with a medium like podcasting, there's so much constant sense of a slide towards the entrepreneurial and the corporate and the urge to monetize and the urge. And that's why people make things that all look and sound the same because you want to make something that's monetizable, you want to make something, you're trying to reproduce the same thing that somebody else made money off. Right? Like that's the logic of capitalism. Versus when you are doing work that is, I'm so leery of the language of authenticity because it's such a slippery concept and so often sort of fetishized and you know, associated mostly with marginalized people, but like when you are trying to let

the story, you tell shape the way that you tell it. When you start with concerns that are not, I want to make something that sounds like *This American Life*, but I want to understand this community and have conversations with people in this community and do this work in a way that feels good and right to me. Then that becomes the shaping principle and that, you know, I've talked before on this podcast about the need for us to keep podcasting weird and not let it just become this sort of cookie cutter corporate medium. But that's part of what's at the heart of it is like keeping it grounded in those sort of DIY community collective values.

- Max Collins: [00:57:49](#) Yeah, totally. I think that there are some, you know, podcasting syndicates and that sort of thing that are doing some very interesting stuff and are doing cutting edge things.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:57:59](#) Oh, absolutely. Like Radiotopia is making some of the best...
- Max Collins: [00:58:03](#) Yeah.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:58:04](#) Storytell– you know, like audio storytelling out there. The Nightvale folks, what's their network called?
- Max Collins: [00:58:09](#) Oh geez.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:58:10](#) Nightvale presents.
- Max Collins: [00:58:11](#) Yeah. Yeah. So there are a lot of like people who do have monetized podcasts who make some really interesting things, but I think that a lot of the time when you start a podcast in case I want to make money off of this, you're coming at it from the wrong perspective to begin with.
- Hannah McGregor: [00:58:30](#) Yeah.
- Max Collins: [00:58:31](#) I think that it's important to think, what am I making this for other than money, you know? What do I want to, what do I want to tell the world? Who do I want to give a platform to?
- Hannah McGregor: [00:58:41](#) If you want to learn more about Max's work you can check out her website mondayproductions.com that's M O N D A Y productions.com. And if you just want to skip straight to listening to *Dragged Out*, head to anchor.fm/draggedoutpod. Those links of course with some show notes of who knows what quality will be available secretfeministagenda.com. Of course you can follow me on Twitter [@HKPMcGregor](https://twitter.com/HKPMcGregor) and you can tweet about the podcast using the [#secretfeministagenda](https://twitter.com/secretfeministagenda). If you haven't already, perhaps you would consider leaving the show a rating and a review. It's the absolute best way to help people find it, which is more important than ever because it's November and I'm sad. Thanks to Sophia from Great Britain for your lovely review. You're the best you made my November better.

The podcast theme song is Mesh Shirt by Mom Jeans off their album Chub Rub. You can download the entire album on freemusicarchive.org or follow them on Facebook. And Max's theme song was Rainbow by Gender Confetti.

This episode was 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.

Hannah McGregor:

[01:00:33](#)

Is it weird how this cat's up on the counters just watching us? Hey, what are you up to? What are you doing? Yeah, I'm talking to you. You know I'm talking to you. Oh, you know, I'm talking to you. Hey Al, you're being weird.