

Show Notes for BC Studies Episode One “What is a Scholarly Podcast?”

Full transcript coming soon!

Episode Outline

1. Introduction:
 - a. Introductory music is a piece called *Mist*, composed, performed and recorded by Devon Throness. Copyright 2021, ThronessMusic.
 - b. Territorial Acknowledgement: BC Studies is hosted on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam Nation. This episode was recorded and produced on the traditional, ancestral, unceded, and shared territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tseil-Waututh First Nations.
 - c. Introduction to the host, Isabelle Ava-Pointon, who is the Podcast Coordinator at *BC Studies*, and a UBC student.
 - d. Introduction to this mini-series on Scholarly Podcasting, including an overview of the four episodes.
2. What is a Podcast?
 - a. Origin of the word “podcast”: The term was coined by journalist Ben Hammersley in a 2004 article about the future of communication.¹ The word “Podcast” is a portmanteau of “broadcasting” and “iPod.”²
 - b. Examining the history and impact of three key podcasts:
 - i. *This American Life*: Started as a radio show in 1995, hosted by Ira Glass, now a podcast that has millions of weekly downloads.³
 - ii. *Serial*: Created by the makers of TAL, hosted by Sarah Koenig.⁴ This show was so popular, and listeners were so engaged that officials ended up re-opening the murder case analyzed in the podcast.⁵ *Serial* also introduced the true crime genre into the podcasting medium.⁶
 - iii. *Welcome to Night Vale*: A work of experimental fiction, this series became wildly popular in the summer of 2013, and spawned numerous scholarly studies.⁷
 - c. Podcasting today is very popular, in 2020, 27% of Canadian adults listened to podcasts on a monthly basis.⁸
3. What is a Scholarly Podcast?
 - a. ‘Scholarliness’ is a spectrum, with a very contested definition

¹ Ben Hammersley, “Audible Revolution,” *The Guardian*, Feb. 12, 2004.

<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2004/feb/12/broadcasting.digitalmedia>

² Hannah McGregor, “What’s a Podcast?” *Amplify Podcast Network*.

<https://amplifypodcastnetwork.ca/News/2020/What-s-a-Podcast>

³ <https://www.thisamericanlife.org/about>

⁴ <https://serialpodcast.org/about>

⁵ Jareen Imam, “Judge Reopens Case of ‘Serial’ Subject Adnan Syed,” *CNN*, November 7, 2015.

<https://www.cnn.com/2015/11/07/us/serial-adnan-syed-new-hearing>

⁶ Kelli S. Boling and Kevin Hull, “Undisclosed Information—Serial Is My Favorite Murder: Examining Motivations in the True Crime Podcast Audience,” *Journal of Radio & Audio Media* 25, no. 1 (2018): 92-108,

⁷ *Critical Approaches to Welcome to Night Vale: Podcasting Between Weather and the Void*, ed. Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock (Palgrave MacMillan, 2018); Andrew J. Bottomley, “Welcome to Night Vale, and the Revival of Radio Drama,” *Journal of Radio & Audio Media* 22, no. 2 (2015): 179-189.

⁸ CANADIAN PODCAST LISTENER - SUMMARY REPORT 2020. <https://ellipsoid-cranberry-r8rm.squarespace.com/downloads/summary-report>

- b. Some questions you can use to help determine how scholarly any given podcast is:
 - i. Who made it?
 - 1. Scholarly podcasts are often made by scholars talking about their field of expertise!
 - 2. Example of *Witch, Please*, created by Hannah McGregor and Marcelle Kosman, two English scholars.⁹
 - 3. However, not all podcasts made by people with PhDs are scholarly, and you do not need a PhD to make a scholarly podcast.
 - ii. Who funded it?
 - 1. Many podcasts are self-funded, leading us back to the question of who makes it.
 - 2. Some podcasts are funded by universities or other educational institutions. This can be a sign that those institutions believe that the podcast is scholarly.
 - 3. Some podcasts are funded by corporations, political parties, or other special interest groups.
 - iii. What is its purpose?
 - 1. The primary purpose of scholarly podcasts is to educate and to discuss research and ideas. But scholarly podcasts can also be entertaining!
 - iv. Does it engage with existing scholarship?
 - 1. Does it explain theories and concepts in the field?
 - 2. Does it mention other scholars in the field?
 - 3. Does it mention other books, articles etc. in the field?
- 4. Conclusion
 - a. Everyone has a different personal definition of scholarship, and scholarship will always be a contested concept.
 - b. Please consider submitting your own original scholarly podcast to BC Studies!
 - i. Submission guidelines can be found here: <https://bcstudies.com/submissions/submission-guidelines/>
 - ii. Information on the Scholarly Podcast Peer-Review process can be found here: <https://bcstudies.com/submissions/scholarly-podcast-submissions/>
 - c. Tune in next Wednesday for our next episode, called “Who Makes Scholarly Podcasts?”

Bibliography

Bottomley, Andrew J. “Welcome to *Night Vale*, and the Revival of Radio Drama,” *Journal of Radio & Audio Media* 22, no. 2 (2015): 179-189.

Boling, Kelli S. and Kevin Hull, “Undisclosed Information—Serial Is My Favorite Murder:

⁹ Gee, Dana. “Witch, Please podcast rides Harry Potter's robe tails into broader discussions.” *The Vancouver Sun*. December 11, 2020. <https://vancouversun.com/entertainment/local-arts/witch-please-podcast-rides-harry-potters-robe-tails-into-broader-discussions>

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Hammersley, Ben. "Audible Revolution." *The Guardian*, Feb. 12, 2004.

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Imam, Jareen. "Judge Reopens Case of 'Serial' Subject Adnan Syed." *CNN*. November 7, 2015. <https://www.cnn.com/2015/11/07/us/serial-adnan-syed-new-hearing>

McGregor, Hannah. "What's a Podcast?" *Amplify Podcast Network*.

<https://amplifypodcastnetwork.ca/News/2020/What-s-a-Podcast>

Podcasts Mentioned:

-*Witch, Please*: <http://ohwitchplease.ca/>

-*This American Life*: <https://www.thisamericanlife.org/>

-*Serial*: <https://serialpodcast.org/season-one>

-*Welcome to Night Vale*: <http://www.welcometonightvale.com/>

Further Reading

Berry, Richard. "A Golden Age of Podcasting? Evaluating Serial in the Context of Podcast Histories." *Journal of Radio & Audio Media*, 22, no. 2 (2015): 170-178.

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The Serial Podcast and Storytelling in the Digital Age. Edited by Ellen McCracken. Routledge, 2017.