

#014 // APR 2021  
FREE

# POD BIBLE

## THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO PODCASTS

FEATURING **MY DAD WROTE A PORNO**, EDDIE  
IZZARD, SANGEETA PILLAI AND ALL YOUR PODCAST  
TIPS, REVIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS!







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WELCOME TO ISSUE #014 //

# NOTE FROM THE EDITORS



Welcome to another issue of Pod Bible! Can you believe it's April already? What a strange old time to be alive. Thankfully we're here to distract you from all the normal life stuff and switch your focus to podcasts, and boy do we have a cracker of a magazine lined up for you.

First off, our cover stars are **My Dad Wrote A Porno!** One of the best known and most successful podcasts out there, Jamie, James and Alice have been entertaining listeners around the world since 2015.

We've had our sights on the Porno team since day one here at Pod Bible so it's a real joy to welcome them to the magazine and hear their plans for the new series.

Elsewhere in issue #014 we have an interview with **Sangeeta Pillai** from **Masala Podcast**, author **Niklesh Shukla** picks out his top 5 podcasts and we also take a closer look at some of the best guest appearances from **Eddie Izzard**.

In our regular columns our friends at **Acast** speak to the man behind horror fiction pod **The Magnus Archives**, Audible highlight more of their brilliant shows and the team at **Stakhanov** highlight new show **My Seven Wonders with Clive Anderson**, and what it was like producing a new show during lockdown.

Away from the magazine and it's been a very busy period over at **podbiblemag.com** - March not only saw International Women's

Day but also Women's History Month, leading to a number of articles popping up on the site focusing on brilliant podcasts by and for women.

We had an interview with **Hana Walker-Brown** from **Broccoli Productions** discussing the fantastic new series of Anthems, **Rosie Wilby** from **The Breakup Monologues** spoke to some podcasting mums and our Digital Editor Fran picked out some of the best Women's History podcasts available. We've stuck that article at the back of this issue so go have a read!



As well as reading our articles the website is also the best place to order back issues of the mag, listen to the Pod Bible podcast and subscribe to our weekly newsletter.

Phew! There was a lot to get through! We hope you love the mag and as always, please feel free to get in touch with any comments...

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# WHAT'S A PODCAST AND HOW DO I LISTEN?

## WHAT IS IT?!

A podcast is a digital audio file made available on the internet for downloading or streaming to a computer or an alternative device such as a phone. To be a little less clinical, it's essentially a radio show that you can listen to wherever and whenever you choose without being interrupted by regular weather bulletins or travel updates.

podcasts will feature adverts and some offer access to extra content for a small fee but 99% of podcasts are available for you to listen to on demand for nothing at all.

There are literally millions of hours of top quality content out there for you to explore - so what's stopping you?!

## SO HOW DO I LISTEN?

The Spotify and Acast apps are available on all smart phones and other devices and cover a wide variety of podcasts. If you're an iPhone user then the Apple Podcasts app should already be on your phone. The same applies for the Google Podcasts app on Android phones. Within these apps you can search for and subscribe to shows so that the latest episodes will be downloaded to your phone without you having to seek them out.

The Spotify app also allows you to scan codes which take you directly to the relevant podcast. The Audible app can be used to listen to Audible original podcasts.

If you're on a desktop computer then you can use the Spotify desktop application (which is also available in your browser) the Acast website or the Audible Cloud Player. Alternatively you can use iTunes or go direct to the website of the podcast you want to listen to.

Finally, you can use your home smart speakers as a way to listen too. Just ask them to play you a podcast and go from there!



Right now there are over 1,750,000 different podcasts with over 43 million episodes in 100 different languages available to listen to. These range from highly produced shows recorded in professional studios by major broadcasters to rough and ready homemade shows recorded on a laptop in someone's bedroom. If you have a computer and an internet connection, you can make a podcast, making it one of the most democratic mediums around. Is it time to see what all the fuss is about?

## HOW MUCH DO THEY COST?

Nothing! They're absolutely free which makes them one of the most accessible forms of entertainment around. Many of the larger

# “OUR AIM WAS ALWAYS TO MAKE THE LISTENER FEEL LIKE THE FOURTH FRIEND AROUND THE TABLE”

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RUDE, CRUDE AND INCREDIBLY LEWD, **MY DAD WROTE A PORNO** IS BACK WITH A BRAND NEW SERIES OF FABULOUS FILTH. WE CAUGHT UP WITH **JAMIE MORTON, JAMES COOPER & ALICE LEVINE** TO DISCUSS WHY THEY CHOSE PODCASTING, THE SECRET TO THEIR INFECTIOUS CHEMISTRY AND WHAT WE CAN EXPECT FROM THE NEW SEASON OUT IN MAY!

**PB: FOR THE FEW THAT MAY NOT BE AWARE, TELL US ABOUT YOUR SHOW! WHAT'S YOUR PODCAST ELEVATOR PITCH?**

**James Cooper:** In 2015, Jamie's dad wrote a series of extremely graphic, poorly erotic novels out of the blue called *Belinda Blinked* under the nom-de-porn, Rocky Flintstone. Jamie read them to us and we all found them so brilliantly bonkers that they needed to be shared far and wide. It's proved so popular, we're about to open the sixth book in Rocky's magnum opus. In each episode, Jamie reads a chapter of his father's smut and myself and Alice critique / tear it to shreds - affectionately, of course. The elevator pitch would be: Do you like porn? Do you like laughing? Then you'll love *My Dad Wrote A Porno*.

**Jamie Morton:** The minute I read my dad's dodgy porn, *Belinda Blinked* with James and Alice we knew we wanted to do something with it, the question was what. The material was too salacious for a web series and too risky for a broadcaster. But a podcast seemed the perfect fit. Much like how the 50 Shades phenomenon benefited from the anonymity of ebooks, we figured people could 'enjoy' *Belinda's* adventures in the privacy of their own headphones. There is a unique quality to podcasting that creates an incredibly intimate bond between host and audience. Our aim was always to make the listener feel like the

**WHY PODCASTING? WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE FORMAT THAT INTERESTED YOU INITIALLY?**

fourth friend around the table with us and I think podcasts are the only medium that can truly achieve that.

## WHAT'S THE SECRET TO GOOD CHEMISTRY BETWEEN MULTIPLE PODCAST HOSTS?

**Alice Levine:** I'd love to say we had some big secret but we've been friends for nearly 20 years and that shared history is very hard to imitate. There is a certain shorthand that comes with that. We know when someone is teetering on the edge of corpsing just what to say to make them lose it. We know how to build on a joke with each other rather than step on each other's toes. A big part of the dynamic with the three of us is an understanding that there's no competition, we all just want it to be the best it can be and we are working as a team to get there - so who lands a punchline is really not a concern.

## WHICH PODCASTS OR PODCAST HOSTS HAVE YOU TAKEN INSPIRATION FROM?

**James Cooper:** A comparison that we get occasionally is *The Ricky Gervais Show* podcast - they find joy in the absurdity of Karl Pilkington and we find joy in the absurdity of Rocky Flintstone's erotica. But we've found the success of the show has come from just being true to ourselves, really.

**“WE ALL JUST WANT IT TO BE THE BEST IT CAN BE AND WE ARE WORKING AS A TEAM TO GET THERE”**

## WE'RE VERY EXCITED ABOUT THE NEW SERIES, WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?!

**Jamie Morton:** We left Belinda and co on quite the cliff hanger last series so I feel we can expect some pretty dramatic twists and revelations in book 6. What's been incredible about the 'Belinda Blinked' journey is how

Dad has evolved in his writing. What started as a pretty basic 'story' about boring business deals has developed into a rather compelling spy novel. I mean, it's as slight as an episode of *Loose Women* but he has a way of creating a really gripping read with brilliant characters. Will Belinda escape from the clutches of her evil pots and pans competitor Herr Bisch? Will the blueprints of the Tri-Oxy-Brillo range ever be recovered safely? What does the three B's tattoo on her thigh mean? I can't believe I care, but I am honestly counting down the days until we find out!

## HOW HAVE YOU FOUND WORKING ON THE PODCAST DURING A PANDEMIC?

**Alice Levine:** We've spent A LOT of time having frustrating bad wifi chats on zoom like everyone else! But we did make the most of it by hosting a night in with us at the beginning of all of this which was really fun. We decided that a big part of the energy and atmosphere of our show is the three of us being in the same room. Luckily it works that our season is starting in the middle of 2021, so hopefully we won't be too disrupted.

## WHICH EPISODES OF YOUR SHOW MEAN THE MOST TO YOU?

**James Cooper:** Some of the guests on our 'Footnotes' episodes - Dame Emma Thompson, Lin-Manuel Miranda - have been pretty special. They're people we've always admired so when they want to come on our stupid little show, it's so exciting. I also love any episode where the three of us just can't hold it together from laughing - the first Christmas special we did is a prime example of that. But if you're a newbie, you really have to start at series 1 episode 1 - it's how it all began and sets up the rest of the show.

## IF YOU COULD GIVE ONE PIECE OF ADVICE TO AN ASPIRING PODCASTER, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

**Jamie Morton:** My top tip for anyone starting a podcast is to really embrace the edit. In my opinion, editing is the most important part of the creative process. You need to have objectivity and be prepared to kill your darlings for the greater good of the show. Concise, tight podcasts are what audiences expect and deserve. Remember, if you're asking strangers to invest 40 minutes of their day to you, you owe them the best 40 minutes you can produce.

## FINALLY, WHAT PODCASTS ARE YOU ENJOYING AT THE MOMENT?

**Jamie Morton:** *How It Happened* by AXIOS - An in-depth look at how Trump dealt with his election loss, from the night the polls closed to the insurrection at the Capitol. Amazingly sourced, for the first time you get a glimpse of events from the Oval Office's perspective and it's truly damning and utterly shocking.

**James Cooper:** I really enjoy occasionally dipping into *Beautiful Anonymous* with Chris Gethard - the host calls an anonymous person and has an hour long conversation with them about whatever they want to talk about. It's got some fascinating stories and perspectives - really worth a listen.

**Alice Devine:** *Nice White Parents* - A five-part series about building a better public school system, and what gets in the way. Made by the team behind smash hit *Serial*. Such a compelling listen and a masterclass in story telling.

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 [dadwroteaporno](#)  [mydadwrotea](#)

*The new season of My Dad Wrote A Porno starts Monday 24 May 2021! Seasons 1 - 5 are available to listen to now wherever you get your podcasts. The World Tour continues in 2022 - full details available at [mydadwroteaporno.com](http://mydadwroteaporno.com)*



THE NEW TESTAMENT //

# EPISODE HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST SIX MONTHS











**LET THERE BE POD //**  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH **Acast**

# TALKING PODCASTS WITH PODCASTERS



IN EACH ISSUE, ACAST — HOME OF THE UK'S BEST PODCASTERS — SITS DOWN FOR CHAT WITH ONE OF ITS CREATORS TO HEAR WHAT THEY LOVE ABOUT MAKING PODCASTS.

THIS EDITION OF **LET THERE BE POD**, ACAST SPEAKS TO **ALEXANDER J. NEWALL**, ONE OF THE MINDS BEHIND THE CULT HIT HORROR FICTION PODCAST **THE MAGNUS ARCHIVES**, EXAMINING WHAT GOES INTO MAKING AUDIO FICTION, AND HIS ADVICE FOR BUDDING PODCASTERS.

## LET'S KICK THINGS OFF - HOW DID YOUR PODCAST COME ABOUT?

I started Rusty Quill, the production company that makes *The Magnus Archives*, in 2015 — but Magnus didn't really begin until 2016, by which time I was already running our first podcast (Rusty Quill Gaming).

With one show up and running, I was looking to find some creative allies to work with on a new show, while simultaneously working on a number of freelance gigs in addition to full-time night work. So, as you can expect, it was tricky to find the time.

At the night job I met Jonathan Sims, the writer and lead performer of Magnus. We spent a few unprofessionally long coffee

breaks discussing fiction, and he eventually invited me to attend a gig he was running that year at the Edinburgh Festival.

I was already going to work on other projects, so while I was there I decided to take him up on his invite. That's how I found myself watching a bunch of elaborately clad space-pirates singing about drunken sailors and dying mega-cities. The group was called The Mechanisms and it was a Sci-Fi Musical Cabaret led by Jonny that was exactly as elaborate as you're imagining.

I hadn't seen anything like it, and the nuances of the storytelling really piqued my interest — so I made a point of contacting Jonny to discuss whether we could collaborate on something. We met in a quiet



coffee shop basement off The Royal Mile, and that was when he first pitched me *The Magnus Archives*.

The original pitch was significantly different from the finished project we now know and fear. For one thing, it was first conceived as a pure anthology of original Creepypasta written and narrated by Jonny. I pushed for a broader overarching narrative with an ensemble cast that would run throughout the podcast, connecting all the stories, and that was when Jonny suggested The Fears as a concept (I can't say any more on them without spoilers).

We talked for way longer than either of us had planned, and by the end of that first meeting we already had the shape of the show. Looking back, that's pretty much the ideal pitch scenario, isn't it?

## WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT MAKING A PODCAST?

The fact that the sky's the limit. Anyone can make anything of any scale.

Right now, podcasting is at that interesting pivot point between the passion projects of pure innovation that characterises a new artistic medium, and accelerating external interest from major players — which means there are lots of resources flying around for weird

and wonderful projects that could never be realised at any other time.

Speaking to audio fiction specifically, you can make an enormous epic from the ground up with a relatively modest budget compared to Film or TV, meaning there's space for smaller independent organisations such as ours. That in turn means there's more competition, so projects don't end up as homogenised as in other media. Projects get to be weirder. In a good way.

Of course, I wouldn't go so far as to say there's no price of entry. It still requires technical expertise, equipment and hard work, but the barrier on the first two is dropping ever lower, as new technology allows people to use their phones as a one-stop-shop for near-professional-grade audio recording, editing and distribution. So, if you're an over ambitious creative like me, there isn't really a better medium to get stuck into and let your imagination run wild.

## WHAT'S THE PROCESS FOR CREATING AN AUDIO DRAMA PODCAST? HOW DO YOU WRITE AND PLAN AN EPISODE?

First we'll have an initial story workshop where the showrunner, lead writer and the rest of the writing team will hash out the main story points for the season: what happens, when, and why. All these juicy story secrets are then added to a 'series



bible'. Once this overarching structure is in place the writers go away and each write a few episodes with the lead writer overseeing things and ensuring everything holds together.

While all that is going on, the showrunner (the creative lead on the project) will be consulting with the writers and the producers to build the direction and style of the show. That again is added to the series bible, along with work from our sensitivity team and marketing, so everyone's on the same page.

The showrunner will then work with the producer on a casting call, which is where we allocate performers for roles. As you'd expect, this has been particularly difficult during a pandemic because we don't just need to make sure everyone's a good actor and available for recordings — we also need to provide every single performer with their own remote recording kit and schedule video calls so they can perform scenes together. It's been a huge logistical challenge which has taken massive amounts of coordination, and I'm immensely proud of our team for doing such a good job.

Once all that's done, and everyone is equipped and scheduled, and you have your finished scripts and Series Bible, you can finally start recording.

## **ONCE IT'S RECORDED, WHAT'S THE PROCESS FOR GETTING IT OUT TO YOUR LISTENERS?**

First we back up all of our recordings to an encrypted, remote computer server, because there's nothing as frustrating as losing original recordings.

Once that's done, our vocal editor goes through the raw audio and cuts it into shape according to the notes provided by

the showrunner, before the vocal cuts are passed to a soundscape editor who adds all of the background ambience and sound effects — passing traffic; opening drawers; massive, fire-breathing dragons. It then passes to the music editor who, depending on the project, will either compose original music to accompany the episode or insert pre-made tracks from an original collection we keep for each series.

The last stage of the editing process is through an audio master, who assembles the project and makes sure all the different elements are working together as intended, under the direction of the showrunner.

After that we do a final set of checks for sensitivity then pass it to distribution, who make sure it's made available on everybody's podcatcher of choice.

## **HOW DO YOU CONNECT WITH AND ENGAGE WITH YOUR LISTENERS?**

We use a broad range of ways to engage, and it's always evolving. When we first set up Rusty Quill in 2015, I personally set up the most retro forum you could possibly imagine — but we moved on from that pretty quickly.

Now we maintain the standard social medias you'd expect, like Twitter (@TheRustyQuill) and Facebook, which people use to contact us. We also maintain an official Discord server with more than 11,000 members, which allows fans a space to discuss our content with the creators and each other in more depth. Beyond that, our fandom has been terrifyingly organised in setting up Reddit communities such as R/TheMagnusArchives and R/RustyQuill.

We also stream video content via Twitch (twitch.tv/rusty\_quill), which often features

performers and employees from the company, and that allows fans to directly engage via live chat.

Weirdly enough, I think one of the biggest forms of engagement we see from fans is thanks to our licensing. We use a type of Creative Commons licence that allows people to generate fan-made content and, although that stuff can't be sold or anything, it's allowed a massive community of fan artists to grow in spaces such as Tumblr — which happened entirely organically.

## WHAT'S ONE HOT TIP FOR THE BUDDING PODCASTER OUT THERE?

There's no "secret sauce." Sorry that's a bit blunt — I should probably explain.

I often encounter people looking to start podcasting, who feel that they can't succeed without some secret industry knowledge — some technical wizardry or business flair that will guarantee a hit — but truthfully there isn't one. As I said before, podcasting is a younger creative medium that is still defining itself, and that means diligent work is still the magic ingredient. All the tips and tricks in the world won't make up for focused creativity, professionalism and perseverance.

That said, I would say most people underestimate the conception part of the process. If you get that aspect right, instead of just diving in with no real plan, you'll have a much easier project. You want to take some time before you start creating your masterpiece and really try to pick out the core reasons you want to make it. What is it you're trying to achieve? Who does it serve? What does success look like? What does failure look like?

Ideally, you'll want a clear answer to all these questions before you even start work. If you do, you can use that knowledge to guide you to a finished product you can be happy with. Trust me, it's much easier to make a decision on some complicated production problem if you already have that roadmap to refer to, especially if you're aiming high.

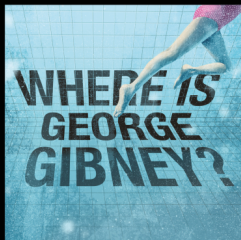
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 TheRustyQuill  RustyQuillUK

*The Magnus Archives is a weekly horror fiction podcast examining what lurks in the archives of the Magnus Institute, an organisation dedicated to researching the esoteric and the weird. Join Jonathan Sims as he explores the archive, but be warned, as he looks into its depths something starts to look back... New episodes every Thursday produced by Rusty Quill, featuring guest actors, short stories, serial plots and more.*

# GET YOUR PODCAST FIX ON BBC SOUNDS

From gripping investigations to psychological intrigue, discover your next true crime obsession with our favourite listens to binge now.



## Where is George Gibney?

*"Undoubtedly the podcast event of the year"*  
The Observer

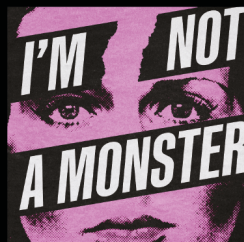
A famous Olympic coach charged with child sexual abuse never stood trial. Instead, he vanished. Join reporter Mark Horgan as he travels across Ireland, the UK and the US on his trail.

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NOW ON BBC SOUNDS**

## Bad People

Why do humans commit unspeakably cruel acts? Criminal psychologist Dr Julia Shaw and comedian Sofie Hagen return to take a closer look at the science behind the crimes that shock, intrigue and scare us the most.

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## I'm Not a Monster

*"The story worthy of a dark Hollywood thriller"*  
Financial Times

An American mother living in the heart of the ISIS caliphate. She claims she was tricked into taking her young children, but where does her account end and the truth begin?

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NOW ON BBC SOUNDS**

**FIND MORE TRUE CRIME PODCASTS ON THE BBC SOUNDS APP**







THE OLD TESTAMENT //

# CLASSIC EPISODES FROM THE PODCAST ARCHIVES





THE HOLY GRAIL //

IN ASSOCIATION WITH **audible** 

# DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT...

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EACH ISSUE WE BRING YOU A ROUND-UP OF THE **AUDIBLE ORIGINAL PODCASTS** OUR MEMBERS ARE LOVING AND PRESS ARE BUZZING ABOUT TOO. WITHOUT FURTHER ADO HERE'S OUR MEMBERS ON THEIR FAVOURITE LISTENS...

Every month, Audible members get one credit to use on any audiobook regardless of price or length, plus unlimited access to Audible Original Podcasts at no extra cost.

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# MY SEVEN WONDERS

## LAUNCHING AND PRODUCING A PODCAST REMOTELY

On the 17th of February, Stakhanov launched its newest show *My Seven Wonders with Clive Anderson*, co-produced with Alaska TV and hosted by legendary presenter and award-winning comedian, Clive Anderson. Each week, Clive welcomes a new guest and asks them the same big question: which seven wonders of the world would make it onto your personal list? From tomato soup to Irish hurling, every guest gives Clive a unique window into their lives with each one of their wonders. The debut series features 10 episodes with such guests as Dara Ó Briain, Shappi Khorsandi and Griff Rhys Jones OBE. The show was planned, recorded and launched entirely remotely by Stakhanov. As the show's lead producer, Beth Madden helped Clive through the tricky process of creating and publishing a bespoke podcast.

### WHAT WAS THE INSPIRATION BEHIND THE MY SEVEN WONDERS PODCAST?

**Clive:** A few years ago on a particularly enjoyable working trip to America, I was sitting in a bar overlooking the magnificent concourse of Grand Central Station in New York. America no longer has a particularly extensive railway system, so nowadays Grand Central is essentially a terminus for a number of suburban lines. But it was built to a fantastically high standard of design in 1913 and still preserves the grandeur of a golden age of rail. I thought this really is a wonder of the world, and started to assemble in my mind a list of the wonders of the world I had seen. Any wonder can be interesting in and of itself. But taken together, they provide an excellent basis for lengthy conversation as well as some insight into the character of each guest.

### WHAT WAS THE PROCESS BEHIND PREPPING AND LAUNCHING A NEW SHOW REMOTELY?

**C:** Our original plan was to record these podcasts in Stakhanov's production studio, which is conveniently located a gentle stroll away from my home in Highbury. But once Covid-19 kicked in, the recording had to be done remotely. For me, this meant sitting in a stationery cupboard with only room for me,





my laptop and a high-quality microphone amongst the shelves of printer paper, old files, notebooks, and other such assorted junk. Not a particularly elegant set-up. But from my cupboard-studio, I am linked to the guest sitting in their home. Luckily there was my producer, Beth, to bring us together via Zoom or Zencast - so my technical skills weren't tested too much!

**Beth:** It's been a bit weird not being able to meet everyone that I'm working with face to face! I like to have a bit of a chat when I'm in the studio and get to know the team – have a coffee with them, hear some stories. So that has been slowed down a bit over Zoom, but Clive still managed to get a few funny stories in while we've been prepping to record so I'm happy with that for now.

**C:** Although this is not as intimate as everybody getting together in the same place, it is sometimes easier to persuade guests to talk into the microphone in their homes, rather than coming to Highbury - which, oddly enough, is not the centre of everyone's universe. So in some ways, I rather like doing things this way. Funny how quickly you get used to things.

**WITHOUT GIVING TOO MUCH AWAY, WHAT'S BEEN THE MOST SURPRISING WONDER A GUEST HAS BROUGHT TO THE SHOW SO FAR?**

**C:** Almost all of the wonders have been a bit surprising. Most guests have kept away from monumental structures and selected much more personal items. But, I think the most surprising wonders are Muswell Hill and goose pimples - each chosen by a different guest.

**WHAT WOULD BE ONE OF YOUR SEVEN WONDERS?**

**C:** I would have to stick to my original inspiration of Grand Central Station, but I might stray into other areas if I ever get to picking the other six wonders!

**B:** "Now this one may be slightly lockdown induced" has been a favourite line of our last few guests, but I'm going to have to use it as one of my wonders would have to be gigs! Ah, I miss those times.

stakhanov stakhanov.studio

**Stakhanov** produces podcasts that entertain and inform, including some of the UK's biggest and most popular shows - boasting a combined 4 million monthly listens and over 45 years of podcasting experience. Whether recording remotely or in our broadcast-grade London studio, we specialise in every stage of the podcasting process. To find out more or get in touch, visit our website at [stakhanov.studio](http://stakhanov.studio)!







THE SCRIPTURES //

# PODCASTS WITH BACK CATALOGUES THAT ARE ALL KILLER, NO FILLER

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SOME PODS YOU DIP IN AND OUT OF, OTHERS YOU LISTEN TO RELIGIOUSLY. HERE'S OUR LATEST SELECTION OF PODCASTS THAT ARE WELL WORTH YOUR SUBSCRIPTION.



# PODCASTS WITH A SOCIAL CONSCIENCE



**JASON REED** FROM LEAP UK & THE **STOP AND SEARCH** PODCAST SPEAKS TO THE PEOPLE BEHIND PODCASTS FROM THE CHARITY AND CAUSES SECTOR

Chris Atkins has held many titles and accolades, from acclaimed filmmaker to author, many people are fascinated to know that he's also been a prisoner. In his book *A Bit of a Stretch*, Chris details his time spent in the notorious Wandsworth prison and he's gone on to launch a companion podcast by the same title.

CA: I had the idea for the *A Bit of a Stretch* podcast while I was still inside - out of necessity really. I'm a TV/Film documentary maker by trade, and I had all these great contacts of prisoners I'd met in various prisons. However none of these guys wanted to go on camera as they didn't want to increase the stigma against former offenders. So I suggested recording just the audio and changing their names.

**Keen to convey what prisons are really like, Chris felt compelled to challenge social perceptions...**

Prisons are frequently misrepresented in the media and one of the reasons for that is most journalism usually excludes the voice of prisoners. I think this is a bit like reporting on the NHS but not talking to any patients. The problem is that the prison authorities get to paint the system in a very favourable light and exclude anything that makes them look bad. My podcast interviewed over 20 former prisoners who can shed real light on what's actually going on inside British jails, bypassing the official gatekeepers - what they have to say paints a very grim picture indeed. I also think it helps portray prisoners as real people who've often just made bad choices.

**The podcast has had an array of different ears listening and taking note.**

The reaction has been fantastic, we've had over 100,000 downloads and lots of positive press. Interestingly I've been contacted by

several departments within the Ministry of Justice who've asked for my help in trying to bring prisons into the 21st Century.

As with the book, the purpose is to tell some fascinating stories, hopefully make people laugh, but also to reveal the terrible state of British prisons. Crucially it should tackle the usual reticence that people have about this issue – why should the law abiding public care what happens to a bunch of prisoners? Well, Britain's prisons are supposed to rehabilitate offenders and make them less likely to commit crime, but actually do the exact opposite. We have some of the highest reoffending rates in Europe, which is partially down to our collapsing prison system. If prisons did their job properly there would be less crime and fewer victims, so this is an issue that affects everyone.

*Chris has nominated Storybook Dads as his chosen charity, an organisation that helps over 5,000 prisoners record bedtime stories for their children. Each year over 200,000 children experience the imprisonment of a parent which will often lead to loneliness, shame, isolation, guilt, and an increased chance of mental health difficulties - we need to understand that a child of a prisoner has done nothing wrong but still receives a harsh punishment. Storybook Dads builds a link from a parent to their child.*

ukleap.org @JasonTron



With a mix of live panel discussions, celebrity guests, policy experts and general inquisitiveness, **STOP AND SEARCH** discusses drugs, addiction, mental health and the media. Available on Spotify, Acast and all other platforms.

**We record prisoners, on CD or DVD, reading a story for their children.**

**Our work helps to maintain family ties and show children that they are loved and missed.**

**Storybook Dads**  
www.storybookdads.org.uk







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# SANGEETA PILLAI

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IN EVERY ISSUE WE ASK A PODCAST DISCIPLE FIVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR LOVE OF PODCASTS AND PODCASTING. THIS MONTH WE'RE JOINED BY **SANGEETA PILLAI** FROM **MASALA PODCAST!**

**PB: WHY DO YOU LOVE PODCASTS?**

**SP:** Podcasting is THE most intimate medium, in my opinion. You're literally talking into someone's ear. I love how podcasts allow space for difficult and delicate conversations. With *Masala Podcast*, I've been able to connect with other South Asian womxn, discussing taboo topics like sex, sexuality, periods and even nipple hair! These are topics that would otherwise have been really tough to talk about.

As a creator, I also love how democratic podcasts are. You don't need to have an Oxbridge accent to be a presenter. You don't need millions to create a podcast. All you need is a strong concept and hard work – and your audio masterpiece can be out in the world right alongside content created by big-name media houses.

**WHAT WAS THE FIRST PODCAST YOU EVER LISTENED TO?**

I think the first podcast I ever heard was *The Guilty Feminist*. I remember seeing it somewhere and thinking, "What is a podcast?" Yup, I was that much of a podcast-virgin!

I also remember listening to *My Dad Wrote A Porno*. What a genius name! And a brilliantly funny and original podcast.

**WHICH PODCASTER MAKES YOU LAUGH THE MOST?**

The podcast that makes me road with laughter is *Dear Joan And Jericha*. It's so wrong that it's right. If that makes sense.

I love everything about it. The filthy bits, which make me gasp out loud laughing. The downright unusable advice, always unsympathetic & totally judgemental. The patriarchal bullshit that they present in this funny, ironic fashion. (It's always the women who are in the wrong in the "advice" given.)

**WHICH PODCAST HAS EDUCATED YOU THE MOST?**



I'd have to say *Where Should We Begin?* by Esther Perel. It's all about therapist Esther Perel counselling couples who're having difficulties. So as a listener, you can unashamedly hear all about other people's problems.

But here's the surprising thing, as I hear someone delve deep into their childhood or behaviour patterns, I find myself looking at my own behaviours and psychology. So it's been hugely educational for me personally. Like having therapy without having therapy.

### **CAN YOU RECOMMEND A SHOW OUR READERS MAY NOT HAVE HEARD OF?**

I only heard about this brilliant podcast recently: *Why Won't You Date Me?* Another awesome

WOC Nicole Byer exploring why she is single, while discussing topics related to love, life, and sex. Really funny and at times, quite thought-provoking.

*Masala Podcast*, silver winner at the British Podcasts Awards, is a podcast about all those things South Asian womxn are 'not supposed to talk about'. Everything from sex, sexuality, periods, menopause, mental health, shame, sexual harassment to... nipple hair! Featuring interviews with fierce South Asian womxn about taboo topics and personal stories around what it means to be a South Asian feminist today. *Masala Podcast* was a winner at Spotify SoundUp 2018.



FOR THE LOVE OF POD //

# NIKESH SHUKLA

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COULD YOU WHITTLE YOUR FAVOURITE PODCASTS DOWN TO A TOP 5? WE ASKED **NIKESH SHUKLA** - AUTHOR, SCREENWRITER AND HOST OF THE BROWN BABY PODCAST - TO DO JUST THAT. HERE'S HIS SELECTION...

# EDDIE IZZARD

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CELEBRATING PODCASTERS IS A COMMON OCCURRENCE, BUT IN THIS MODERN WORLD BEING A SOLID, GRADE-A GUEST IS SOMETHING THAT NEEDS CELEBRATING. OUR PODCAST PROPHET FOR ISSUE #014 IS **EDDIE IZZARD!**

Eddie doesn't think like other people... and that's what makes her such an amazing podcast guest! No matter what the subject matter, you're always guaranteed audio gold. Here are just a few of our favourite guest appearances from one of the nation's finest comedians.





OH MY POD //

# INDEPENDENT PODCASTS

WITH BIG BRANDS AND FAMOUS NAMES CONTINUING TO DOMINATE THE CHARTS, IT CAN BE TOUGH FOR INDEPENDENT SHOWS TO BREAK THROUGH. HERE AT POD BIBLE WE WANT TO ENSURE THAT WHILE CONTINUING TO CELEBRATE THE BIG GUNS, WE'RE ALSO CHAMPIONING THE INDIES. IN EACH ISSUE WE ASK AMATEUR OR INDEPENDENT PODCASTS TO GET IN TOUCH WITH A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THEIR SHOW. HERE ARE OUR CURRENT FAVES...



## ALL THE WAY THEROUX

@alltherouxpod

*All The Way Theroux* is the podcast revisiting every Louis Theroux documentary from the mid-90s to the present day. Journalists Matthew Dunne-Miles and Alex Watson break down each episode and also speak to experts to find out how things have changed in the time since.



## THE OLFACORY

@TheOlfactoryPod

A cosy fictional museum, complete with resident factory cat, where each week your friendly anonymous host welcomes you in to explore the magic elixir of smell and memory as we "unbottle" a new scent that effortlessly conjures treasured memories for our special guest.



## LAVENDER LANGUAGE

@adriann\_ramirez

A series of conversations with artist and host Adriann Ramirez, where they speak to queer artists working in various mediums discussing their creative process, inspirations and ideas of what success means to them. Guests include Travis Alabanza, Kate Wallich and Alan Wyffels.



## IN HOUSE

A podcast about creativity and confinement featuring interviews with artists about the role creativity played in helping them survive prison and transform their lives. Our aim is not to excuse - but to better understand the environments and challenges faced by those in prison.



## MIND THE GAP

@gl\_mindthegap

A monthly podcast that looks at cultural pressures first generations raised in the UK feel about trying to uphold cultural pressures and the impact it has on identity.



## THE COMEDY ARCADE

@comedy\_arcade

A panel show where interesting people compete to tell the best anecdote on a randomly drawn subject. Guests have included Seann Walsh, Josie Long, Shappi Khorsandi and Mark Watson but host Vix Leyton loves to blend in new talents and people you might not have heard of yet.



## SEARCH RESULTS

@searchresultspodcast

Whilst surfing the web, we are given an insight into what other people search, ask and query in their spare time. Join Connor, Liam and Patrick as they investigate these weird questions, explore the search results and discuss what they learn.



## THE COOKBOOK CIRCLE

@CookbookCircle

We've combed through every possible list of 'best cookbooks ever' online to create our own master list (because, data seems to be a thing). We take one book each episode, cook from it and discuss it, then rate it out of five.



## PROMOTE THE HELL OUT OF IT

@PromotePodcast

If you grew up skateboarding and listening to punk rock, but now have to worry about running a business and being productive ... then *Promote The Hell Out Of It* is for you.



## 90 MINUTES OR LESS FILM FEST

@90minfilmfest

A podcast that champions under 90 minute movies. We're joined by a guest on each episode and they share their favourite 'shorter' films. Past guests include Joe Cornish, Helen Zaltzman, Mae Martin & Nick Helm



## MEET THE STREET

@PlymptonDavid

Forget idle banter over the garden fence - David Plympton's *Meet the Street* introduces you to the record-breakers, sporting greats, and literary giants living just next door through a series of fascinating in-depth interviews.



## THE FRIENDSHIP FILE

@FriendshipFile

Two friends answer seventeen questions about each other, on their own and without conferring. Each episode combines those answers - a touching, funny, surprising picture of a unique relationship.



## ALICE IN WANDERLAND

@aliceoutthere1

Indiana Jones with a horny camel called Hamish. Join female explorer Alice Morrison as she crosses Morocco on foot with her six camels. She escapes death by quicksand, finds dinosaur footprints and witnesses the effect of corona on the nomads of the High Atlas.



## DAILY NOTES

@nathancassidy

A 10 min daily podcast here from Nathan Cassidy featuring comedy with piano with a different story every day, many of which flashed before his eyes at the end of last year when he came face to face with a burglar...



## RUN FATBOY RUN

@regan\_alex

A comedy fitness podcast about what it's really like to complete the Couch to 5k, and start running from nothing. Light relief for anyone trying to shift those lockdown pounds, cataloguing how lifelong fat man Alex went from technically obese, to slightly overweight.

GOT A PODCAST YOU'D LOVE TO SEE FEATURED IN ISSUE #015?  
SEND US A ONE OR TWO SENTENCE DESCRIPTION ON TWITTER!

#OHMYPD // @PODBIBLE







FROM THE WEBSITE //

# WOMEN'S HISTORY PODCASTS



IN OUR NEW REGULAR COLUMN, OUR DIGITAL EDITOR **FRAN TURAUSKIS** PICKS OUT A RECENT ARTICLE FROM THE POD BIBLE WEBSITE, TO GIVE YOU A TASTE OF WHAT YOU MAY BE MISSING!

for some UK-based women's history podcasts, we've pulled together some shows that look at the history on our doorstep.

## HISTORY BECOMES HER

Who inspires the women making history right now? In *History Becomes Her*, Mashable journalist Rachel Thompson speaks to some of the women making change today about the women of the past who paved the way for them. Episodes include journalist Zing Tsjeng talking about pirate queens, and Ruth Hunt speaking about Virginia Woolfe and LGBTQ+ history. This is also a great one to listen to for the book recommendations to add to your reading list.

## HELL CATS

Speaking of pirate queens, a great Audible Original podcast to listen to this month is *Hell Cats*. It tells the little-known story of history's most progressive

As well as bringing us International Women's Day, March was also Women's History Month, so over at [podbiblemag.com](http://podbiblemag.com) we had a lot of fun focusing on podcasts by, for or about brilliant women. So much of the history we are taught focuses on the male perspective, and the same can be said of many history podcasts. Even when searching for the best women's history podcasts, quite often you will be recommended shows from the USA, with the focus on American history. So for those of you searching

pirates, Anne Bonny and Mary Read. This is a fictionalised version of a true story, so expect adventure on the high seas and an enduring love affair between the women. This has had great reviews on Audible, with one listener saying “The sound design is like watching a series with your eyes closed”.

## HISTORY CAFE

This podcast isn't exclusively for women's history, but it has some great episodes that delve into lesser-known parts of British women's history. In a short series running this month

'The Secret History of the Suffragettes', they “peel away the Pankhurst monopoly to reveal something much uglier”. Learn about the WSPU and the terrorist tactics they employed in the name of women's voting rights.

## OUTLIERS

Another podcast that looks at history from an interesting angle, *Outliers* is an historic fiction podcast that explores how big events filter down to the people left out of the history books. Made by Historic Royal Palaces, in association with Rusty Quill (who are most popular for making fiction podcast The Magnus Archives and Stellar Firma) each episode has a writer pick a lesser-known

person associated with a historical event, and write a monologue from their point of view. I really enjoyed Fresh Sweat and Cloves, where we hear from the widow of Walter Raleigh.

## IT'S A CONTINENT

This podcast is here to remind us that Africa is a continent, not a country. And as such, there is a lot of history for many of us to unpack. For Women's History Month, check out

some of the episodes devoted to women who have changed their countries. 'Queen Nzinga: Angola's Protector' was made famous by fighting against the slave trade and European influence, whilst 'Wangari, Kenya's mother' tells the story of Wangari Maathai, who was the first Black woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

## SAME SH!T, DIFFERENT CENTURY

In the Women's March in 2017, three women went viral for dressing as suffragettes and marching with a sign that said “Same Shit, Different Century”. They were Costume

Coordinators Amy Trend, Hannah Monkley and Amy Toll, and this is their podcast. Made back in 2018, and there are only eight episodes and the first couple are very homemade. But this is a great podcast diving deep into one aspect of history, and it often pops up this time of year.

FOR MORE ARTICLES, INTERVIEWS, REVIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS VISIT **PODBIBLEMAG.COM**

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**I AM NOT ALONE,  
FOR MY PODCASTS  
ARE WITH ME**

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**PODBIBLE**

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# THANKS FOR READING!

POD BIBLE WILL BE BACK WITH  
ISSUE #015 IN JUNE

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BECCY DILLON, JASON REED & FRAN TURAUSKIS

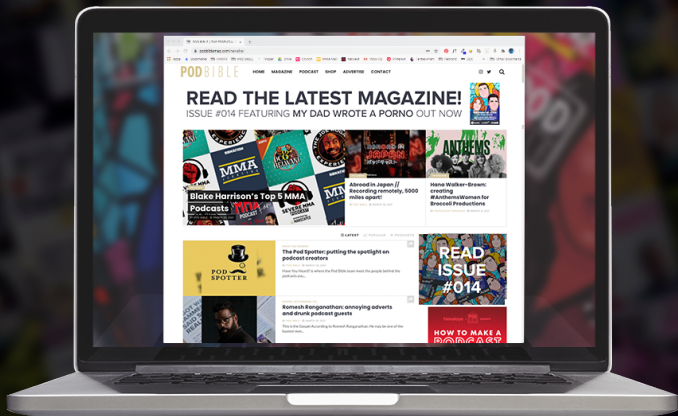
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