

## Still Buffering 174: How to Nickelodeon

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[theme music plays]

**Raleigh:** Hello and welcome to Still Buffering, a sisters' guide to teens through the ages! I am Raleigh Smirl.

**Sydnee:** I'm Sydnee McElroy.

**Taylor:** And I'm Taylor Smirl.

**Sydnee:** It's been a wild week, sisters.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Two weeks, three week—I don't know. It's wild—

**Raleigh:** It's been wild—

**Sydnee:** Wild times.

**Raleigh:** It's—yeah.

**Taylor:** Crazy times.

**Sydnee:** Yep. Uh, we don't—

**Raleigh:** It's been a time.

**Sydnee:** We don't really wanna talk about it, 'cause this is a comedy podcast, um, and it's not funny, but in case you were wondering, the President is racist.

**Taylor:** Yeah, uh—

**Raleigh:** In case you didn't already know. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** We should've all known this collectively, but we didn't, somehow. I mean, we did. We here, and many of you probably already did. But somehow the collective consciousness refused to acknowledge it.

**Taylor:** Well, I mean, I don't know. I agree with people that go back to the point that like, when he mocked that reporter. Like, that's—anything that you accepted beyond that, it's like, is anybody surprised? When he said those statements about like, harass—uh, assaulting women, and like—I don't know! Like, yeah, the new stuff is bad! The past stuff was bad! It's all been really bad! I—like—it should've stopped forever ago, when it—

**Sydnee:** Right? I mean, that's the problem. Like, it should—I don't know why it took him being this blatant for some—and not even everybody—to recognize it, but, I mean, here we are, and hopefully we can all agree, now.

**Taylor:** Well, and they had this—like, a saw a news report where they had this like, panel of... I can only call them—and I'm gonna say this, because I think it's—people will get what I'm gonna say. A panel of Karens, um, but that's not against anybody that's named Karen out there. It's just like, white women that had opinions.

Um, and I'm so sorry, as a white woman that also has opinions, but I'm not... like, it's just like, "No, he's not racist! I think those women are racist!" And that's...

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Yeah. No, I mean, that's it. Like, they are, and it's just such a shame... white women. I mean, we are.

**Taylor:** We are! And, I mean, we have to own that. Like, it's—can't distance ourselves from the fact. Like, I get it! Like, if you're treated as a prized object—still an object, not a person—that's a better position than being completely dehumanized, so I guess you're like, bucking your odds and going with the better situation? It still all sucks, and it's... yeah. Woof!

**Sydnee:** So... we just wanted to make it clear where we stood on that issue.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Um, so that was very nice that the House censured him for that, or said that they condemned it, or passed a resolution, or whatever the heck they did. I

don't know. That's very nice. So if they could move forward with an impeachment now, that would be great.

**Taylor:** Yeah! Like, I don't—like, okay. So you like, made a banner that said, "Trump's a racist," and then you all signed it, like a high school, like, pep rally. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** That's good.

**Taylor:** Like, okay?

**Sydnee:** No, I'm a—I applaud it as a good first move, but let it be a first and not an only.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Um... but in happier news, I, along with the rest of the country, watched Stranger Things.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** As did I.

**Sydnee:** Uh, we will not spoil Stranger Things.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Because we understand that there are still five or six people who haven't watched it.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. Probably—there's like, a good chance that maybe one person listening to this podcast hasn't seen it yet, that plans on watching it, I guess.

**Sydnee:** So we'll be very careful, um, other than to say—I do think it's worth commenting on on this show, just simply because of the prominence of the mall.

**Raleigh:** Yes..

**Sydnee:** It was very mall-centric.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Justin loved that.

**Rileigh:** It was very weirdly accurate.

**Taylor:** Like—

**Sydnee:** The—like—wait. Which p—[laughs]

**Rileigh:** The mall?

**Sydnee:** Oh, okay! Now the whole—not the upside down, and the—[laughs]

**Rileigh:** No, the mall. I'm talking about just the mall.

**Taylor:** Wait, I mean, what—to be fair, the whole like, Russians are interfering with our lives—[laughs]

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Well, that's true. That's a fair point, but yeah. But the mall was quite accurate for the time. It was—really, it was like, for people who love the mall like that. It was sort of like mall porn, you know?

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Like, good 'ol... good 'ol solid mall days. Like, that packed food court and all the cool teens hangin' out, just like, bein' seen and seein' people.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** [laughs quietly] The Gap featured prominently.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** It's an important part of everyone's childhood, I assume.

**Rileigh:** The Gap.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** [laughs quietly] Uh, I appreciated the Sam Goody.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** I was like, "Yes." And the Walden Books? Oh man, that took me back.

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** And I do—I hope this is not a spoiler, but I do think that all of Elle's fashion choices from the mall were, um, really...

**Rileigh:** Very good.

**Taylor:** Really good. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** So good. So many—

**Rileigh:** You can find that exact romper at Target, by the way.

**Sydnee:** Really?

**Taylor:** I heard!

**Rileigh:** Yes. It's sold out in all Targets, but it's there!

**Sydnee:** So many—

**Taylor:** That is gonna be the Halloween costume of the year.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Well, that's what I was gonna say is so many Halloween costumes from that series. So many.

**Rileigh:** I want to wear that Scoops costume for Halloween. [laughing] I wanna be Robin, and I wanna wear that Scoops costume.

**Taylor:** Is it weird that I wanna be Ashley O. from Black Mirror?

**Raleigh:** No. [laughs]

**Taylor:** Good, so that's where I'm at.

**Sydnee:** Uh, Justin and I know where we are. We're considering a Hopper and Joyce look. [laughs]

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** You know yourselves. You're aware.

**Taylor:** Ohh, that'd be—that'd be so good!

**Sydnee:** We're kickin' it around. We're thinkin' about it.

**Raleigh:** I suggested Dustin and Susie.

**Sydnee:** That would be good, too! I mean, it could be very good. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** I think they both would be very good.

**Sydnee:** Uh, but it—we won't say anything else so we don't ruin it for the—like I said, like, the five people—it had like, the biggest... right? Like, the biggest opening—

**Raleigh:** Week or whatever.

**Sydnee:** Week of—

**Raleigh:** Most people that have seen it.

**Sydnee:** And the most people who like, watched it all—

**Raleigh:** Have finished, it, yeah.

**Sydnee:** —as quickly as they did, ever, so. So I think that there'll probably be another season. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Yeah!

**Taylor:** Uh, there—also without spoilers, there frickin' better be.

**Sydnee:** Yeah, really. Yes, there better.

**Taylor:** Right?

**Rileigh:** Yeah. There better be.

**Sydnee:** But, um—so I guess it looks like Netflix is in its heyday. Speaking of television shows in their heyday—[snorts]

**Rileigh:** That's a good one, Sydnee.

**Sydnee:** —television networks in their heyday, guess what I got in the mail?

**Rileigh:** What'd you get?

[pauses]

**Sydnee:** I got a Nick Box.

**Rileigh:** What's... that? I'm gonna pretend like I don't know so you'll explain it.

**Taylor:** Even though it's Sydnee – Okay.

**Sydnee:** So, the Nick box is a sub—[laughs]

**Rileigh:** Shh, they can't see!

**Sydnee:** The Nick Box is a subscription service where they send you a box of old school Nickelodeon stuff. Justin got it for me. Actually in part 'cause he knew I'd like it, and then the other thing he said was, "Also, it'd probably be a fun thing for you to talk about on your podcast." [laughs]

**Rileigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** And, uh—so I have one sitting next to me, and I thought it would be a useful tool to spur a conversation about Nickelodeon, past and present. The changing face of Nick. [snorts]

**Rileigh:** And all of its many iterations.

**Sydnee:** That's right, uh, because it really—it brought back the fact that—some of these shows that used to be on Nickelodeon I think were watched as readily by adults as kids!

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Uh... that's—I mean, I think that we all... like, creators understand that adults watch cartoons, now. We have plenty of cartoons that are made just for adults, but in the 90s, like, we were still trying to figure that out, I feel like? Like, "Oh, wait. Like, I can sneak some adult jokes in, but it's still getting under the radar of like, being a kids' cartoon."

Like, there was a weird sort of like creative cap on it. Like, it has to be for kids, but I think some really good stuff was made because it had to pass the kid test, but then you could still, like, reach adults. You just had to be really smart about it.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. I think setting those kind of boundaries for yourself sometimes to be, like, in a creative space within this... like, this specific set of limitations I think can... while it sounds limiting, can be freeing.

**Taylor:** Absolutely.

**Sydnee:** And you can see that. Like, some really amazing, funny stuff that comes out of that need to like, "Okay. It's for kids. I'm gonna put jokes in for adults." They have to be something adults would get, and funny, and like, adult funny, but kids can't get them, because they're a little bit... I don't wanna say "racy" 'cause like, they're never... they're never that racy.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** But you know what I mean? Like, they have to be a little bit edgy, but not too edgy, and then if a kid accidentally does get it, you don't want the kid to be like, scandalized and then get angry letters from parents. I mean, like, that's such a fine line you're walking.



**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** But I think that fine line—I mean, like you said, like, yeah, that led to some really, really great stuff! Like, I don't know. I mean, the stuff that I loved when I was a kid on Nickelodeon I think was the stuff that, even as a kid, I was aware that something more was going on, even if I didn't get it.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Like, as scary as Ren and Stimpy was to as benign as like, Hey Arnold! was, they both—and all shows in between, they had content that operated on a deeper level.

**Raleigh:** Well, because there was always that joke where you were like, watching with mom or dad sitting on the couch behind you while you're on the floor watching the TV and like, they would say something on the TV and you don't get it, but then you'd hear mom or dad chuckle behind you and you're like, "Wh—what? What?"

**Sydnee:** "Hey! Hey! What was that?"

**Raleigh:** "Explain!"

**Sydnee:** "What's funny?" Um, speaking of—you mentioned Ren and Stimpy. I have a Ren and Stimpy—I have a Stimpy vinyl figure.

**Taylor:** Oh!

**Raleigh:** Vacation Stimpy!

**Sydnee:** Vacation Stimpy.

**Taylor:** Nice.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Um, Ren and Stimpy for me was—he's holding a camera and he's wearing a Hawaiian shirt.

**Raleigh:** Ren and Stimpy scared me.

**Sydnee:** Ren and Stimpny didn't scare me, it grossed. Me. Out.

**Raleigh:** That, too.

**Taylor:** Yeah...

**Sydnee:** And it—that's a weird statement for me to make, by the way.

**Raleigh:** 'Cause you're a doctor.

**Sydnee:** 'Cause almost nothing grosses me out. I mean, like, nothing on real humans, no gross thing you could show me on your body or in your body or around your body. Nothing would gross me out, but Ren and Stimpny did.

**Raleigh:** Hey, what are Ren and Stimpny? Are they dogs?

**Taylor:** No, it's a dog and a cat!

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** Oh, he's a cat?

**Sydnee:** He's a cat.

**Raleigh:** Oh.

**Sydnee:** And Ren's a dog.

**Raleigh:** I knew him.

**Sydnee:** Okay, okay.

**Taylor:** Ren's a Chihuahua, I think.

**Raleigh:** Yeah, I knew that one.

**Sydnee:** Um, they just had some of those, like, hyper realistic closeup—and I mean, I know it's a cartoon, it's not really a closeup, but you know what I mean?

**Taylor:** Yeah!

**Sydnee:** Like, close in sh—like—

**Rileigh:** I can think of one exactly that I feel like has haunted my memory of like, Ren's face really close up and he's like... I don't know. Like, drooling, or—

**Sydnee:** And like, bloodshot eyes—

**Rileigh:** —mucus-y, or bloodshot eyes or something.

**Sydnee:** Yeah. Or anytime there would be something with snot or boogers. That was a lot for me.

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah...

**Sydnee:** Um, hairballs? Oof.

**Rileigh:** Oof.

**Sydnee:** Oof. We always had to rush to make sure we didn't accidentally watch Ren and Stimpy while we were eating dinner.

**Taylor:** Yeah. There was also, like—there was like, a... I mean, there was the gross out stuff in Ren and Stimpy, but there was also just like, a level of like, uncomfortable mania? Like, with the two chara—I mean, with the whole show. Like, it's like—it wasn't... like, the psychosis of Ren and Stimpy was not just like, "Ha ha, they're cartoon characters that do gross stuff!" It's like, no. There was a level of like, they're kind of treated like, as adults, and they have like, adult concerns, and like, adult arguments. Like, they were—

**Sydnee:** That's true. There felt like there were stakes on Ren and Stimpy.

**Taylor:** Yeah! There was like a weird, like, sort of marital balance between them, which was like—like, I don't know. As a kid it's like, "Oh, it's gross!" And like, "Did you see the—" like, you know. "They ate cat litter!" or whatever. But like, it was operating on a really messed up deeper level. [laughs]

**Rileigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** No, it was definitely something that like... it's funny, because as a parent, now, I can recognize pretty quickly a cartoon that like... "Oh, that's a little bit beyond where Charlie is right now. Like, that's not—" you know, either one, like, "Well, it's not bad or something that's—" I'm not saying it's dangerous for her or bad for her but like, the jokes are a little bit above her developmental level, and so like, she won't particularly enjoy it.

She's not gonna find it funny. And then some cartoons that I'm like, "She's just not ready for that yet. [laughs] You know, that's a little much. We're not ready to get into those issues yet. She'll have to be older—"

**Raleigh:** Where do you fall on Ren and Stimpy?

**Sydnee:** Well, I think, like, now I would look at Ren and Stimpy and say, "Well, I'm not gonna have my four-year-old watching Ren and Stimpy."

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** You know? This is just beyond what she would wanna watch or get. It would gross her out, it would freak her out. But when it was presented to us as kids, I don't feel like there was any differentiation in these cartoons. It was just like, "It's a cartoon."

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Which is funny, because I remember being like, adamantly told as a child that we couldn't watch something like Liquid Television, which was not any more or less obscene, I feel like, than Ren and Stimpy.

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Taylor:** Like, they very much were similar things. Maybe they said bad words on Liquid Television? Maybe that was the difference, but—

**Sydnee:** Well, also Aeon Flux.

**Taylor:** Yeah. So there were almost boobs.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** You still never saw 'em. There were never full boobs, but there were almost boobs. I actually—but you know what? Like, I got Aeon Flux on DVD and re-watched it not too long ago, and it's a lot less scary and a lot more artful than I remember. Um, but I would still say that between the two of them Ren and Stimpy is far more disturbing. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah, there are scenes that people have like, put on Twitter, from Ren and Stimpy. Like, "Hey, did y'all remember Ren and Stimpy being like this when we watched it as kids?" And there are just things in that where I'm like, "This is... why did I watch this? Did I get enjoyment outta this? 'Cause I don't think I did." [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I mean, there—I think that there was an intensity to cartoons—and it was like—we didn't have a language for cartoons that weren't for all kids, or weren't just for kids. Like, we just didn't—that concept wasn't really—at least in this country, I mean—wasn't hugely recognized.

Now it seems absurd, because we have... I mean, how many different networks aimed at children, and not just at children but at each level of childhood. I mean, like, I know for instance that I get excited if I find a TV show that will hold both Charlie and Cooper's interest for five minutes so I can like, pee or something. Because they're both at different developmental levels, and I know the shows that are slam dunks for Cooper and I know the ones that are slam dunks for Charlie, and I have that wide range of programming to choose from, and I also know the stuff where like, she keeps begging me to see that new Descendants movie.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** She's not gonna like it! [laughs]

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I know this! It will scare her! There are villains in it and it's live action and I know she'll get freaked out!

**Raleigh:** Yeah. Charlie still has problems with live action stuff, because it's just not as captivating.

**Sydnee:** Although that's live action, that's not a cartoon. That's outside the realm of this conversation. But the point is like, I can see the stuff that's for kids. Like, she wanted to watch Gravity Falls today, which, again, is not a Nick program, it's a Disney program. But we watched an old episode of Gravity Falls and she likes it, but she loses interest.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. Now, I can watch Gravity Falls. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I can watch Gravity Falls all day.

**Taylor:** I—yeah.

**Sydnee:** And I think when she's a little bit older she will probably wanna binge the whole series.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** But it—there's just stuff that's going over her head, and it's just—it's so fascinating to see, now we have this whole range of cartoons for every little childhood niche. Um, and adults. And back in the day it was just like, "Well, it's a cartoon. It's for kids. If it's not, it's not."

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah. There was still, though, that like, that push back. I mean, there was stuff being made that wasn't for kids, but it fit under the kid umbrella, so it got made. Like, what a weird time it must've been to be a creator where it's like—just like today, I mean, you know, you can be a creator. You can make stuff for adults. If your medium happens to be cartoons, that's okay. Like, we didn't have that idea. Like, the medium, the artistic medium of animation was by and large, unless you were The Simpsons, for children. Like, that's what it was.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** So to get around that, you just like—like, Rocko's Modern Life is a great show if you're like, a 20-something who works a crappy job, and deals—like, just trying to figure out who you are and what your life is and you're kind of a loser. Like, that's what Rocko's Modern Life is made for. It's made for like, late teens and 20-somethings who don't really know where to go with their life. It ran on a children's network, but I related to that so much more when I re-watched that

recently than I ever did as a kid. As a kid it was like, "Ha ha, they—they have funny toad people, and that guy has nipple head!" I don't know, like—[laughs]

**Sydnee:** It is true, 'cause like, now if you look at the plot of Rocko's Modern Life it's like, who is—how is this for a kid?

**Taylor:** No, totally! It's like—

**Sydnee:** Until you say that it's animated it's like, "So this is for young adults, or...?"

**Taylor:** No! It's like a stoner comedy, but it's just through the lens of—

**Sydnee:** But it's a wallaby.

**Taylor:** [laughing] Exactly!

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Uh, here—since you brought up Rocko's Modern Life, you may enjoy this picture frame that I have that I've received. This lovely picture frame... from Rocko's Modern Life. Uh, I don't know what pictures you'd wanna put in there, but it would look like you're on a TV screen with Rocko himself.

**Taylor:** Are you—are you gonna use that? Can you send that to me?

**Sydnee:** Ye—if you want it, I'll bring it to the beach.

**Taylor:** There are few cartoons I relate to stronger than Rocko, of Rocko's Modern Life.

**Sydnee:** As long as we're at it, do you also want this hand sanitizer caddy with Filbert on it? [snorts]

**Taylor:** Oh! He was a big fan of hand sanitizer. "Turn the page, wash your hands. Turn the page, wash your hands."

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Uh, Charlie was so upset—she got this out of the box and went, "Yes! Hand sanitizer!" And opened it and went, "It's empty." And I was like, "Well, I think it's just like, a holder. Like, you can put it in there." And she was like, "Oh, man..." She was so excited. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** I need to get my own hand sanitizer.

**Sydnee:** Uh, but both of those products are here for your Rocko's Modern Life enjoyment.

**Taylor:** No, I think Rocko's Modern Life is a perfect comedy for if you're in your 20s. That kids watched it amazes me. That we watched it as kids, like, why?

**Raleigh:** I watched it.

**Taylor:** Why did we like it?

**Sydnee:** I don't know—well, I mean it was... it's funny, because that is the one thing I'll say, and again, as a parent I have some idea of this that I didn't when I was the kid watching this stuff. Kids are always a little bit more aware and a little bit smarter than the adults around them give them credit for or realize.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Um, no matter how much you hear an adult bragging about, like, "My kid's so smart," you don't know what's going on in those brains, and there's stuff they're picking up on. There are little nuances, little things about humor that I think they're getting on a very like, almost like, primal level?

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** And so like—'cause I will see it echoed in the way that Charlie communicates with me later. Um, like little bits of like—either it's sarcasm or it's wackiness or it's—it's something, you know, that she is modeling. Like, a humor that she's modeling from cartoons. So I think there is a way that kids pick up on that stuff, even in like, a subconscious way.

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.



**Sydnee:** Um, even if they don't—they couldn't verbalize to you, like, "Why do you think that's funny?" And they'd be like, "Um... I don't know. Cartoon."

**Rileigh:** Yeah. Um... I don't know. It's just—thinking about all these cartoons, it's crazy to me that this is the one thing that seems to—we all three seem to have watched the same things. Did they just stay on TV for a long time?

**Taylor:** I guess so.

**Sydnee:** I think they did. And, I mean, it wasn't as crowded of a space back then.

**Rileigh:** That's true.

**Taylor:** 'Cause I know—

**Sydnee:** We didn't have 30 different Nicks and 30 different Disneys and...

**Rileigh:** Yeah. I remember watching almost all of these. I mean, Rugrats, Hey Arnold! Aaahh!!! Real Monsters, Rocko's Modern Life...

**Sydnee:** That's another one. Aaahh!!! Real Monsters would scare the crap outta Charlie, I think.

**Rileigh:** It scared me, but I still watched it! That one monster that has, um, its eyes in its hands—

**Sydnee:** That holds its eyes.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** [laughing] Oh, I hated that.

**Taylor:** Aw! He was the smiley one.

**Sydnee:** I can only assume that was the inspiration for Pan's Labyrinth. [laughs]

**Taylor:** I—ye—yes. Absolutely. I loved Aaahh!!! Real Monsters.

**Sydnee:** Oh, I did too. I'm not dissing it, it is a good show, but I think it would scare my four-year-old.

**Taylor:** I also just love like, the weird—like, this is like, even as a kid I remember liking the fact that kind of like the mean headmaster of the school sounded like Tim Curry and wore high heels, and some part of my brain got that. Like, "This makes sense." [laughing] Like, I like that! And that that was in a kid's show where it was a clearly male voice actor but he wore high heels.

Like, there was a bit of that, and it's like, it felt a little subversive. It felt a little bit like... maybe like—there was clearly somebody in the writers' room that's like, "We're gonna make him sound like Tim Curry and he's gonna reference Rocky Horror Picture Show." Like, you know. They were throwing stuff to the children like, "This'll matter someday. You'll appreciate this someday."

**Sydnee:** I'm gonna make my pitch for you to watch Mickey's Monster Musical now, um, but before I do that—

**Taylor:** Oh, right, right.

**Raleigh:** [laughing] Let's check the group message.

Um, this week Still Buffering is brought to you in part by Native Deodorant. I think we've talked to you all about Native before, but I wanna talk about them more, because they have fewer, simpler ingredients. You know everything that's in your deodorant, everything that's going in your pits. [snorts]

Um, they come in a wide variety of enticing scents for men and women, plus release new limited edition seasonal scents. There's no risk to try. There's free returns and exchanges in the USA, and you can subscribe and save! So you can save \$2 per stick of deodorant and have Native conveniently delivered to your door every one, two, three, or four months. So, you know, whatever your deodorant needs are, you can just have it on a subscription service. So in case you, you know, "Oh no, my stick just ran out and I didn't even know!" Well, there you go! A new one—

**Sydnee:** You could say axilla. Better than pits.

**Raleigh:** I said pits.

**Sydnee:** Well, I'm just saying—

**Raleigh:** And that's the word I went with. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** —it's an unpleasant name.

**Taylor:** What—what word did you use, Syd?

**Sydnee:** Axilla.

**Taylor:** I don't—no, that doesn't sound like a—

**Raleigh:** You know, what percent of our audience probably would've known I meant pits? Definitely not this one right here, 'cause I didn't know what that meant.

**Sydnee:** Hey, listen. More than you might expect.

**Raleigh:** That's probably true. Um, Taylor, if our listeners want to try Native, what should they do?

**Taylor:** Well, if you go to [nativedeodorant.com](http://nativedeodorant.com), you can get 20% off your first purchase! Just use our promo code "buffering" during your checkout. Get that 20% off. Uh, yeah. [Nativedeodorant.com](http://Nativedeodorant.com).

**Sydnee:** I wanna tell you all about Rockets of Awesome again, because Rockets of Awesome is shaking up the way we shop for kids online. I can tell you that it can be tough to shop for kids, period. Online or like, offline, which we call "IRL," which we call "In real life." Did you like all that?

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** The abbreviations I just used?

**Raleigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** Um, my daughter Charlie loves clothes, but she doesn't like going to buy them and she doesn't like necessarily looking at them, and shopping online can be tough 'cause if you just start doing like, using big mass kind of shopping for everything websites that shall not be named, you don't know the quality of

the stuff you're getting. You know? You don't know if it's gonna be good stuff that's gonna last and be durable, 'cause you want your kids' clothes to be comfortable and durable and something that they'll actually enjoy, and Rockets of Awesome has you covered in all of those areas.

They have a high value, premium quality kids' clothes. They have like, design details like little hidden pockets, reinforced knees, itch-free linings. That itch-free lining, I cannot emphasize enough how important that is for kids. Charlie makes me cut every tag out of her clothing. Uh, if something is itchy she will never wear it. [laughs quietly]

So, these are the details that tell you that the people who made these clothes were really thinking about kids when they made them. They're all—all the pieces are designed to be mixed and matched, so you can make all different kinds of outfits, and they take the hassle out of shopping for kids with sizes ranging from 2 to 14, so you should check them out. And if our listeners want to do that, Teylor, where should they go?

**Teylor:** Well, you should go to [rocketsofawesome.com/maybe](https://rocketsofawesome.com/maybe) and use promo code "maybe"! That's [rocketsofawesome.com/maybe](https://rocketsofawesome.com/maybe), and for that you can get 20% off towards your first order, so you can discover for yourself how awesome Rockets of Awesome clothing is!

**Sydnee:** All right! So check that out. [Rocketsofawesome.com/maybe](https://rocketsofawesome.com/maybe), promo code "maybe."

**Raleigh:** Um...

**Sydnee:** So, Mickey's Monster Musical. [laughs quietly]

**Raleigh and Teylor:** Okay.

**Teylor:** Okay!

**Sydnee:** I'm just saying... because you brought up Rocky Horror Picture Show, it is clearly an homage.

**Raleigh:** Now, you know what my argument is against continuing to talk about Mickey's Monster Musical?

**Sydnee:** It's not on Nickelodeon.

**Raleigh:** It's a Disney production.

**Taylor:** I agree.

**Sydnee:** That is—and that is one of the things that I'm up against now is, uh... it's funny. I, when I was younger, would have told people... I mean, when I was of an age where you would talk about things like this.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Uh, I watched a lot of Nickelodeon. I considered myself kind of a Nickelodeon kid. Like, I wasn't one of those Disney Channel kids. Those fancy Disney Channel, kids, 'cause you had to pay for the Disney Channel back in the day. [laughs quietly]

I was not one of those kids. I was a Nickelodeon kid. Our—our cartoons are cooler. We watch the Rugrats? Excuse me?

**Raleigh:** Excuse me?

**Sydnee:** Uh, and it was like a way I defined myself. It's funny now because we watch so many different... like, I couldn't even tell you the networks that some of the shows are on. Some of them I know, like because we went to Disney World and I saw the characters there, so now I remember that they're a Disney thing. But other than that, other ones I don't—like, I had to look up like, which of the shows that we watch now are Nick shows?

**Raleigh:** Yeah. Yeah, I had a hard time thinking about shows I watched other than these, that kind of were made before me, but I watched because they were still on TV as I was starting to watch TV. Um, and most of the ones I could come up with were on Teen Nick, and they were all live action shows.

So it was like, you know, you had Nickelodeon that was all cartoons, and this block of shows that was Teen Nick where I found most of my favorite shows. They had Zoe 101, Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide, Drake and Josh, stuff like that. It was all live action, and I loved, but no cartoons that I remember being Nick shows that weren't made before my time.

**Taylor:** Well, and there was a precedent for that, I guess. Because, I mean, like—you know, you look at like, SNICK, which was specifically—like, that was Nickelodeon for teenagers. Like, you had the Round House. You had Are You Afraid of the Dark? You had Alex—

**Sydnee:** Clarissa Explains It All.

**Taylor:** Alex Mac. Like, yeah. Like, Clarissa was a little more—but still, you had—like, maybe that's the one thing that Nickelodeon's continued to do, is like, they've still cornered the market on teen programming. It's just I think what teen programming is has kind of changed. Like, cartoons are in a weird place where it's like, it's for adults and teens watch them, or it's for kids and adults watch them. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** That's very true. And it is weird, 'cause like, I mentioned Rugrats, and I loved Rugrats, and I still love Rugrats, and it's funny to think, why did I love it so much as a kid? It's weird—it's a show about babies and parents.

**Taylor:** And the parents are just—I mean, there's about divorce, there's about single parent households. Like, there's stuff that's like... there was actually useful stuff for kids to know, but it still feels like, "Oh, do I want my child to be exposed to this?" Like, it's still—for as old as Rugrats is, it's still kind of, like, ahead of its time.

**Sydnee:** It is! 'Cause there are a lot of jokes about like, parenting stuff that I've watched—like, we've re-watched some of it now and Charlie likes it, although I don't know how long that's gonna hang on, because I really think more and more there are shows that are geared towards kids that are her age. And kids like to see reflections of like, the stuff they do and the stuff they're into.

**Taylor:** Right.

**Sydnee:** In the media that they enjoy. And so I can't see her maintaining an interest in a show about babies as long when she has 10 different shows she could watch where there are kids her age doing stuff she does.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** You know? I mean, it's just—I think that's a kid thing, but as an adult, like, the parenting stuff... man, it speaks to me. [laughs] I mean, it speaks to me hard! And like, the struggle of like, the working parents versus the stay at home parents, and like, all the different—like, the child rearing books, the Dr. Lipschitz stuff. That stuff rings true as a parent. I have a t-shirt, by the way, in case you're interested, in the Nick Box.

**Taylor:** Oh, what is your t-shirt?

**Sydnee:** A Rugrats—a rugrats t-shirt from Funland, and it just has—it's like you're an employee of Funland. It's got Funland and then it's got a big thing of ice cream, like the big, uh, ice cream sundae—

**Raleigh:** I love that.

**Taylor:** That's a great shirt!

**Sydnee:** —with the, um—the mini golf.

**Taylor:** Yeah!

**Sydnee:** It's the mini golf ice cream sundae.

**Taylor:** I remember that ice cream sundae.

**Sydnee:** It is a good shirt. It's a very good shirt.

**Raleigh:** Um, I found this graphic that has, like, all the most popular Nickelodeon cartoons, because I was trying to think, there have to be Nickelodeon cartoons that I watched that were not made in the 90s. And I am remembering that The Fairly Odd Parents, Jimmy Neutron, Danny Phantom... My Life as a Teenage Robot was one of my favorites. It was all about teen robots, but it was a cartoon. And Avatar the Last Airbender was a Nickelodeon cartoon.

**Sydnee:** Oh, I didn't know that.

**Raleigh:** That was one of my favorites.

**Sydnee:** Well, that one's, I would say, popular. [laughs quietly]

**Rileigh:** Yeah. Spongebob, of course. But there were a lot. We could talk about—

**Sydnee:** Spongebob persists.

**Rileigh:** —Catdog. Catdog was good.

**Taylor:** Catdog, yeah.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Rileigh:** Catdog scared me a little, too. [laughs]

**Taylor:** It was a little weird.

**Sydnee:** Catdog was—Catdog was one of those you just could not think about too much.

**Taylor:** Yeah. Um—

**Sydnee:** Accept Catdog for what Catdog is—

**Rileigh:** Accept Catdog. Don't question it.

**Sydnee:** —and do not question Catdog.

**Taylor:** Wait, what was the Coward—uh, Courage the Cowardly Dog?

**Rileigh:** Courage the Cowardly Dog.

**Taylor:** That—

**Rileigh:** Was that Nickelodeon?

**Taylor:** I think that... was it?

**Rileigh:** Probably. It had to have been. That was a freaky cartoon. That wouldn't have been Disney Channel.

**Taylor:** Let me make sure, though, 'cause that one... I mean, that one was amazing.



**Raleigh:** I loved that, though.

**Taylor:** That was great. Like, a lot of the references they made were like, to like, old school horror writers. It was a smarter show—oh, that's Cartoon Network.

**Raleigh:** Ohh, I forgot about Cartoon Network! That's a whole other thing.

**Taylor:** Yeah, well Cartoon Network kinda came along alongside of this.

**Sydney:** Cartoon Network's great.

**Taylor:** Like, Nickelodeon kicked it off, but Cartoon Network kinda picked the ball up on that. I mean, and maybe did it better?

**Sydney:** I mean, they've got Steven Universe. It's hard to argue with that.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah. But wait, Angry Beavers. Angry Beavers was...

**Raleigh:** Angry Beavers was Nickelodeon.

**Taylor:** Okay.

**Sydney:** I've got Angry Beavers enamel pins!

**Taylor:** What?! I loved The Angry Beavers!

**Raleigh:** What?

**Sydney:** Do you want these? I know you millennials love your enamel pins!

**Taylor:** I—I love the—Syd, honestly, The Angry Beavers always kind of reminded me of you and me.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydney:** I think that's fair.

**Rileigh:** Which one's which?

**Taylor:** 'Cause one was kind of... I think... I mean, I think we both know.

**Sydnee:** Which one am I? I don't remember their names.

**Taylor:** There was Norbert and Daggett. Um, and Daggett was like, a little bit more straight-laced and a little uptight, and Norbert was a little bit cooler and a little bit more relaxed.

**Sydnee:** So I was Norbert?

**Taylor:** Wait—the one that was cooler and more relaxed?

**Sydnee:** [laughs] I'm joking.

**Taylor:** No! You were Daggett! I was Norbert!

**Rileigh:** I thought we decided earlier you were self aware. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I was joking! That's fair. That's fair. I can see that. I could—that's a—yeah. I agree with that characterization.

**Taylor:** I remember watching that ep—I remember I watched that episode with you were they stayed up all night and watched the horror movies about the spleen? And they kept saying...

**Sydnee:** Yes!

**Taylor:** "Spleeny weeny!"

**Sydnee:** "Spleeny weeny!" Man, that persisted. That kept on. "Spleeny weeny!"

**Taylor:** Forever.

**Sydnee:** They're also featured on this, uh, dopp kit, in case you wanted a Nickelodeon—do you have a dopp kit? Do either of you need a Nick...

**Rileigh:** I kinda want it. I keep looking at it and I kinda want it.

**Taylor:** What is it? Dopp?

**Raleigh:** It's like a little—it's like a toiletry bag that you travel with that has like, all the little different compartments.

**Taylor:** Okay.

**Sydnee:** It's a nice thing to have. I have one—since we travel so much, I have one that's pre-loaded with a double of all my toiletries.

**Raleigh:** That's good.

**Taylor:** Nice.

**Sydnee:** So I don't have to like, pack them and take—I just throw it in my suitcase and it's already ready.

**Raleigh:** But this has all the characters on it. It's got Rugrats, Ren and Stimpy, Aaahh!! Real Monsters, Angry Beavers, The Wild Thornberries... that was a good one.

**Sydnee:** Hey Arnold! characters are on here.

**Raleigh:** Hey Arnold!

**Sydnee:** Yeah. It's got everybody.

**Taylor:** I don't—I—Raleigh, you take that. I want the enamel pins, but you take that.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** I'll bring the enamel—the enamel pins and The Rocko's Modern Life picture frame.

**Taylor:** Thank you! I'm an adult. These are my concerns.

**Sydnee:** I—I have postcards from all these shows. I've got Rocko postcards, I've got Spongebob postcards, I have something called Rocket Power postcards which I do not remember.

**Taylor:** What?

**Raleigh:** Um, I watched Rocket Power. That was about the kids who skateboarded, right?

**Sydnee:** Yes.

**Raleigh:** I watched that.

**Sydnee:** Yes. 'Cause the kid—yes, because the kids on it are skateboarding.

**Taylor:** That's why you know that.

**Raleigh:** Taylor, there was a show you introduced me to that was a cartoon that was on Nickelodeon that I had forgot about, and that's Invader Zim.

**Sydnee:** Oh, yes!

**Taylor:** Oh, Invader Zim—was that Nickelodeon? That was!

**Raleigh:** That was Nickelodeon.

**Sydnee:** What a great show.

**Taylor:** But I mean, that's kind of the epitome of what we're talking about, because that's made by, like, Jhonen Vasquez who had Johnny the Homicidal Maniac under his belt. Like, a super talented dude. Like, the teens and the adults in that time period were loving the heck out of his stuff, but he got optioned for a cartoon on a children's network. And did anybody see that, like, given the standards of the time, going well? [laughs] Like...

**Sydnee:** No. It's so weird to think about, but I mean, again it's like the—nowadays there's so much specialization in the channels. You would find a channel—actually, Invader Zim would probably be something like on a streaming service now, you know?

**Taylor:** I think that they're—I've heard rumors of a movie being made, so maybe we'll get that.

**Raleigh:** Really? Oh, man.

**Sydnee:** Ooh, I wonder who's making it?

**Taylor:** 'Cause Invader Zim was hilar—like, the cartoon was amazing. I watch it now. Like, when I'm like, at night just trying something to watch, I'll put on a few—I have all the DVDs. Like, I'll put on some Invader Zim. Like, it's—it's well written, it's funny, it's disturbing... I mean—

**Sydnee:** It was so good.

**Raleigh:** What was the one... the green character?

**Sydnee:** Gir?

**Taylor:** Gir!

**Raleigh:** Gir?

**Taylor:** Yes.

**Raleigh:** That was one of the first, like, stuffed animals I remember having—

**Taylor:** Yes.

**Raleigh:** —that was not just like, a teddy bear.

**Taylor:** I think you had mine, yeah.

**Sydnee:** It was probably from Taylor.

**Raleigh:** I think Taylor—yeah.

**Taylor:** Exactly, yeah.

**Raleigh:** Got me or gave me a Gir. Um, I think it's funny that they made All Grown Up on Nick, which was the Rugrats as teens, and I think it was after you all would've been watching cartoons, but they made it in like, 2007 or 2008, when I was watching cartoons, but Rugrats was made before I was, so I think

they created All Grown Up partly for, you know, college aged, just out of college kids, or high school, who watched Rugrats.

**Sydnee:** Oh, yeah.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** And then wanted to see them grown up, but also like, the—I didn't watch Rugrats on TV. I had all the orange VHS tapes that had Rugrats on them and watched those, and then All Grown Up came on TV when I was just starting to watch TV.

**Sydnee:** Well, I have to imagine that that was a similar thing—it's funny, do you know how many different Doras there are now?

**Raleigh:** So many.

**Sydnee:** So many different, like, iterations of Dora the Explorer.

**Raleigh:** There's a Dora that's like, a teenager.

**Sydnee:** Yeah! And I mean, obviously the movie's about to come out, too. But it's funny because it has to be trying to capture the cohort of people who were kids and fell in love with Dora the Explorer and like, follow them on through teenager land. [laughs] Or not—I mean—although, I don't know. Charlie likes 'em all. Although she'll tell me sometimes like, "Can I just watch the original Dora?"

**Raleigh:** Kid Dora. [laughs]

**Sydnee:** "Kid Dora? The original Dora? Kid Dora?" Um, which, that's what—I mean, Nickelodeon today, like, I'm so much more familiar with Nick Jr, which I don't know exactly when Nick Jr. was a thing, but I know—Tey, when you and I were little I'm pretty sure it was not.

**Taylor:** Uh, I think Nick Jr. came along in a similar time, 'cause it was just—at first it was during the day.

**Sydnee:** And then it evolved into two separate channels.

**Taylor:** Yeah, because at first Nick Jr. was what they did during the daytime, and then during the evening they would show Nickelodeon and they would go to Nick at Night!

**Sydnee:** [laughs] I watched that. A lot of old reruns of Dragnet and Get Smart.

**Taylor:** There was that weird—

**Raleigh:** Nick at Night—

**Taylor:** Go ahead.

**Raleigh:** I was just gonna say, Nick at Night was always the thing that came on whenever I was supposed to be asleep at like, 11:00 during the weeknights. That it would just—for me, I just always remember it being just reruns of George Lopez.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Just constantly on TV, at Nick at Night. That was all I remember.

**Sydnee:** You didn't get the—

**Raleigh:** Also Full House.

**Sydnee:** I got those plus—see, that was not my—that was still on for me, so for me Nick at Night was like—I mean, seriously, like Bewitched and I Dream of Jeannie and all that stuff. I Love Lucy. Uh, but now Nickelodeon... I know Nick Jr. so much better because there's so many shows that kids love on that. Like, The Bubble Guppies are on Nick Jr. Of course Dora. Diego?

**Raleigh:** Diego.

**Sydnee:** Love Diego.

**Raleigh:** I love Diego. Sometimes I liked Diego more than Dora when I was little.

**Sydnee:** Well, first of all, the music—

**Raleigh:** There were animals.

**Sydnee:** —the theme song is better.

**Raleigh:** Yes. [laughing] Justin loves the Go, Diego, Go! theme song.

**Sydnee:** It's really good!

**Raleigh:** It's very good.

**Sydnee:** Um, and Diego, like... I mean, they really go there with some of their environmental messages. Like, they really take a stand.

**Taylor:** They do!

**Raleigh:** Well, every episode there's a different, you know, species they talk about at the end of it. A different kind of animal.

**Sydnee:** And they—I mean, they go—they like, double down on stuff like climate change. Like, they're like, "Listen, this is a problem. Diego's telling you, kids."

**Raleigh:** "Hey, kids. Listen to Diego."

**Sydnee:** Yeah. "Listen to Diego!"

**Raleigh:** "[laughing] He's telling you the planet's dying.

**Sydnee:** I like that.

**Taylor:** But that's the kind of thing, like, what is appropriate children's programming? I think it's a funny thought to come from all this, because just as much as like, these shows we're talking about like, "It shouldn't have been for kids!" But like, something like Rocko's Modern Life that's introducing you to like, the sort of... I don't know, the existential ennui of being an adult with like, a middle income job, and not know what you're doing.

Like, is that something that we just hide from kids until they're there? Or is it okay to like, have cartoons that introduce kids to tougher thoughts in bright color and like, digestible ways?



**Sydnee:** [sighs] I think that I would say—there's no problem with introducing it. One very, like, logistical issue is that if it's too far above, like—if they won't comprehend the main message from the episode or the series, they'll lose interest.

**Taylor:** Right.

**Sydnee:** And this is something I've observed with Charlie is like, "I know this is supposed to be cool, mom, but I'm not interested in this."

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** Like, I tried to get her into Elena of Avalor a little too young.

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Taylor:** You'll wait on that one. That's all right.

**Sydnee:** Yeah.

**Raleigh:** You just really wanted her to like it.

**Sydnee:** Ah, I love Elena of Avalor so much... I know that's Disney again, but... but like, it's funny because other shows, like—I would say the Nickelodeon show The Loud House is not necessarily targeted at kids as young as Charlie, although certainly the fact that there are 11 siblings in this family that span from like, older teenagers to baby, helps because like, every kid can find a character with which they sort of identify.

But I think the neat thing about it is she's been exposed to a lot of cool ideas and like, concepts and stuff, from watching The Loud House, and she's been really engaged by it. And stuff like the dad quitting his boring office job to like, pursue his passion of working in a kitchen... and I don't know!

Like, they have themes like that, and all the kids support him and help him out, even though it means, like, the family's gonna make less money. I don't know, it's like, there are cool ideas like that that she... so I think if it's done well, you can expose kids to... I don't wanna say like, adult ideas, 'cause when you say "adult" you always think of sex. I just mean like, stuff that's more complicated than sharing your toys.

**Raleigh:** Complex themes.

**Sydnee:** And you know, again, this isn't a Nickelodeon show, but you can do it with almost anything, just ask Daniel Tiger.

**Raleigh:** Yes. Sydnee loves Daniel Tiger.

**Taylor:** Yes.

**Sydnee:** I mean, they talk about everything!

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** They cover, you know, all kinds of different tough topics for kids. So I mean, I think you can do it if you are sensitive to it. Um, as long as you can hold their attention.

**Taylor:** Makes sense.

**Sydnee:** But there are lots of cool shows like that on Nick Jr. She likes that Sunny Day thing, she likes Butterbean's Cafe. Those don't necessarily teach lessons. Sometimes they'll try to tell you on Nick Jr. what lessons your kids are gonna learn from the show.

**Raleigh:** Yeah. They do do that.

**Sydnee:** And I wanna be like, "Shimmer and Shine? Come on."

**Raleigh:** You're teaching Charlie anything. She just loves your outfits.

**Sydnee:** Right. You are two mythical genies in sparkly outfits. You live in a lamp, and you take your friend on adventures. This is not teaching her anything. [laughs] It's fun! I'm not saying she can't watch it. I let her watch Shimmer and Shine. I'm just saying, come on, Nick Jr. You're not fooling me.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** Well, and—yeah, I don't think every... not every kids' show I think has to have like, secret hidden lessons for them to accept adulthood, but... [laughs]

**Sydnee:** No, I think—you know what I think? Really, the thing that I'm seeing more now... or at least I'm more aware of. I mean, maybe it was happening in shows when we were younger, but I'm a lot more aware of it now 'cause it's something I worry about.

I think the thing you can model in children's shows, especially cartoons, 'cause kids tend to be drawn to those, think that they're probably for them, is, uh, like diversity, representation. That's the thing—I mean, like, especially when you consider that where we live, here in West Virginia, is a pretty homogeneous place where diversity in your daily life you may not encounter a lot of.

You can see that modeled on television programming for kids, and that can really help shape the way they look at what does the world look like? What do people look like? What do relationships look like? What does love look like? Like, you can... that's easy to do. You just have those characters there.

**Raleigh:** Exactly.

**Sydnee:** And you have diverse voices making the programming, 'cause it can't just be onscreen. It has to be behind the screen, too.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Sydnee:** But...

**Taylor:** Well, that's—

**Sydnee:** But that, all kids can enjoy.

**Taylor:** And I do love the cartoons that like—I mean, Steven Universe, once again, not Nickelodeon, but prime example. But like you said, The Loud House is the one that you said that there's like, same sex parents in that? Is that the one?

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm.

**Taylor:** Yeah, like, it's not like we're making a—cartoons that don't feel the need to like, this is whole center of our thing, it's just a fact of life that like, this is how the world works, and it's okay. Like, that's really... [laughs] There's—there's our

insidious agenda of accepting people! Like, "Ha ha, get the kids to believe that everybody is human just like them!"

**Sydnee:** Exactly. Well, and you know, they've done a really good job. It's interesting, on The Loud House they've started... I haven't seen the... I don't know if it's a different series or if it's just like, certain episodes of The Loud House where it's actually not about that family.

**Rileigh:** Mm-hmm.

**Sydnee:** The—whose last name is Loud.

**Taylor:** Right.

**Sydnee:** That's the—the thing. [snorts] Uh, one of the children in the family is dating a guy, and it looks like the whole episode, 'cause I just saw a snippet of it, this is why I don't know all the details 'cause I just saw—Charlie was watching like, two minutes of it, and Justin was with her so he probably knows all the details, but it was actually about her boyfriend's family, and her boyfriend's family is all Latino, and it was an entire episode centered around them.

And it's so nice to see that, because I think when we grew up so many cartoons, like were centered around, like, a white voice as the main character, and you're seeing more and more cartoons that aren't. Um, and again, that's just—I think that's so important for all people, but especially, like... it means a lot to me as somebody who lives in a very homogeneous part of the country, that my children are seeing these shows that are completely centered around people who don't look like them.

I think that's very important, you know? And of course important for kids who are watching that show and saying, "These characters do look like me! And they speak another language like I do, and this looks like my family, and this is very exciting for me," you know?

**Taylor:** Well, and that's... that's like, where I think there's a lot of power to the idea that what you teach kids when they're still young enough to not have things locked into place is like, how you kind of change the world. I mean, 'cause I don't know how many people in my age range I've talked to that are other like, queer people that watched Sailor Moon growing up or something like that where it's like,

that was my first notion that like, queer people were acceptable. Like, that was a narrative that I needed, that I was desperate for.

Like, giving kids those things when they're young enough to not be like, locked into their beliefs. Like, have beliefs forced upon them by outside sources. Like, as much as a wish that boycotting Amazon would change the horrible people in charge of that, there's also like, maybe more power in like, let's focus on the kids. Let's raise them right and like, to not be evil. [laughs] Like, let's raise better billionaires and maybe we can save the world.

**Sydnee:** No, I agree, I agree. And, uh, Nickelodeon's doing that. [snorts]

**Taylor:** [laughing] You think so?

**Sydnee:** Was that our—was that our final message?

**Taylor:** Well, I have no idea! I don't watch Nickelodeon now.

**Sydnee:** I don't know. We watch a lot of cartoons in this house. They're all from... there's lots of different people doing good stuff. You just gotta find the right creators, I think, these days.

But, uh... the Nick Box was cool either way. I enjoy this Nick Box, I'm going to give you guys all these things.

**Raleigh:** I'm glad we've divvied up all its contents.

**Taylor:** Yes, yes.

**Sydnee:** The only thing I didn't mention... there's also a Gerald bobblehead from Hey, Arnold! So that's cool, too. Yeah.

**Taylor:** Dude. There was no show that had more heart than Hey, Arnold!

**Sydnee:** I know. What a great show.

**Raleigh:** Yeah.

**Taylor:** The bird man episode? The guy that took care of the pigeons?

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm. It's a... yeah. It's a good show.

**Taylor:** That was a good show.

**Sydnee:** That's my whole thought. It's a good show.

**Taylor:** That show had a lot of heart.

**Sydnee:** But, um... this was not an endorsement, by the way. Like, Nick Box—we pay for this.

**Taylor:** [laughing] Nickelodeon is not paying us for this podcast!

**Sydnee:** No, and like, I didn't... it'd be really cool if they sent me this for free so that I would talk about it on my podcast, 'cause then I would've gotten it for free, but the truth is, they didn't. [laughs] We just get it 'cause Justin thought I would think it was cool, and I do, and I enjoy a lot of the products from it, so.

And Charlie really enjoyed—there was a Reptar ball we got one time, which is a beach ball, and it had the city around it, and inside was Reptar. It was like, see-through. It was very cool. Anyway.

**Raleigh:** That's very good. Charlie loved that.

**Sydnee:** But, um... but no. I don't—this is not, like, viral marketing for Nick Box. I just have it and thought our listeners would enjoy hearing about it, so. Uh, so you don't have to buy that. [laughs]

**Raleigh:** Unless you want it.

**Sydnee:** I mean, if you do, feel free. I don't—I don't know. I'm sure that there's a way to find out where it is. I'm not gonna—[laughs]

**Taylor:** I hope you get like, a 90s Snick Box at some point.

**Sydnee:** That would be so cool. That would be very cool. I don't think anyone from Nickelodeon listens to our show but if they do, you should make that.

**Taylor:** I want like, the—

**Sydnee:** And I'll buy it. [laughs quietly]

**Taylor:** —include like, the googly eyes from like, that one episode of Are You Afraid of the Dark? Like, allowed you to see the other..

**Sydnee:** Ooh, yeah. See the other universe.

**Taylor:** Mr. Sardo gave you.

**Sydnee:** Mm-hmm. You could see the upside down.

**Taylor:** Oh, see, oh wow! That tied it all back in! Look at that. Wow.

**Raleigh:** Oh, tied it back around.

**Taylor:** Wow!

**Sydnee:** Circles—it all circles back around.

**Taylor:** Great job!

**Raleigh:** What a good episode we've created.

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

**Raleigh:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Well, thank you, sisters.

**Taylor:** Thank you.

**Sydnee:** For your help. Uh, thank you Nickelodeon. [laughs quietly] You didn't endorse this, but, you know, we talked about you a lot, so there's that. Thank you to our listeners, and you should check out [Maximumfun.org](http://Maximumfun.org) for a lot of wonderful podcasts that you would enjoy, and you should tweet at us if you would like, @stillbuff, and you can email as at [stillbuffering@maximumfun.org](mailto:stillbuffering@maximumfun.org), if you have thoughts or suggestions or questions or comments or show topics that you think we should discuss, and thank you to The Novellas for our theme song Baby You Change Your Mind.

**Rileigh:** This has been Still Buffering, a sisters' guide to teens through the ages. I am Rileigh Smirl.

**Sydnee:** I'm Sydnee McElroy.

**Taylor:** And I'm Taylor Smirl.

[theme music begins in the background]

**Rileigh:** I am a teenager...

**Sydnee and Taylor:** And I was too.

**Rileigh:** [singing along quietly]

**Sydnee:** [laughs]

[theme music plays]

**Amy:** Hello, this is Amy Mann.

**Ted:** And I'm Ted Leo.

**Amy:** And we have a podcast called The Art of Process.

**Ted:** We've been lucky enough over the past year to talk to some of our friends and acquaintances from across the creative spectrum, to find out how they actually work.

**Speaker One:** And so I have to write material that makes sense, and makes people laugh. I also have to think about what I'm saying to people.

**Speaker Two:** If I kick your ass, I'll make you famous.

**Speaker Three:** The fight to get LGBTQ representation in the show.

**Speaker Four:** We weirdly don't know as many musicians as you would expect.

**Speaker Five:** I really just became a political speech writer by accident.



**Speaker Six:** Of realizing that I have accidentally, uh, pulled my pants down.  
[laughs]

**Ted:** Listen and subscribe at [Maximumfun.org](http://Maximumfun.org), or wherever you get your podcasts.

**Speaker Seven:** It's like if a guinea pig was complicit with helping the scientist.

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