

The Accessible Stall Podcast

Episode 40: Hierarchies Silliness and Glee

Emily: Hi, I'm Emily Ladau

Kyle: And I'm Kyle Khachadurian

Emily: And you're listening to another episode of *The Accessible Stall!*

Kyle: Hey Emily...

Emily: Hey Kyle

Kyle: How's it goin'?

Emily (sighs) Aw man, it's been a long time since we've podcasted

Kyle: I don't even know what we're doing... I think we said this exact thing on the last episode but it's, it's been another long time!

Emily: Still true. I was super sick, and then I traveled...And now I'm still a little sick, and jet lagged! But here we are! You know why? Because we're dedicated to our listeners!

Kyle: Yes we sure are! *(Emily laughs)* And Emily, before we get to the topic at hand I just wanna ask you a very, very loaded question in a very innocent sounding way

Emily: Sure

Kyle: What's your opinion on football?

Emily: Oh my goodness! Okay, so actually I don't like sports at all. I don't understand sportsing... *(Laughs)* I'm like dying laughing right now!

Kyle: Uh-huh, go on.. *(laughs)*

Emily: Sportsing is boring

Kyle: Okay

Emily: Um, I can barely make it through a baseball game

Kyle: She loves baseball, she's full of crap

Emily: I don't love baseball, I really love going to the games, and I really love when someone buys me ice cream in the little plastic hat

Kyle: Hating... Pretending to hate baseball is part of Emily's aesthetic. Okay but how do you feel about football?

Emily: Football is terrible and ridiculous and I don't understand the point of a bunch of grown men running around and headbutting each other, and chasing a ball, but what do I know?

Kyle: Uh-huh

Emily: But, I would take a knee if I could. But I can't. You know why?

Kyle: Why?

Emily: Standing for the Anthem is ableist. I can't stand anyway. I never stand for the anthem.

Kyle: Neither do I, and I can take a knee! I just don't stand...because I don't agree with it a lot. So there!

Emily: And there we have it!

Kyle: All seven conservative listeners we have are now angry at the both of us.

Emily: Well, they can buy an Accessible Stall t-shirt and then they can burn it

Kyle: Yeah man, please, go ahead, be our guest! We invite you. In fact, film it and send it to us.

Emily: There was a video on the news of a Steelers fan burning his various Steelers stuff. You're only hurtin' yourself dude.

Kyle: Yeah, I know that's stupid. You paid for it. I mean it's fine, you paid for it, but like I don't know. Anyway...What are we talking about today?

Emily: So if the same logic applies.. (pauses) ..Wait I thought we were still talking about sportsing

Kyle: Oh no, no go ahead!

Emily: I'm done! (*laughs*)

Kyle: So what are we gonna talk about today, Emily?

Emily: We're gonna talk about disability hierarchy

Kyle: What's that?

Emily: Um..that's a super loaded question. Speaking of loaded questions, I don't know if I can give a fair and nuanced definition in one go but I'm gonna try

Kyle: Go for it!

Emily: So, disability hierarchy is the perception that one person with a disability is somehow more legitimately disabled or has a harder time than other disabled people, with different disabilities

Kyle: But Emily, I thought all disability was created equal. Isn't that the whole point of our movement?

Emily: Arguably we're trying to say that everyone is created equal so it's kind of a complicated conversation.

Kyle: I agree, but then wouldn't it make sense to sort of strive to it instead of further... you know dividing our movement by pointing out our differences?

Emily: We can't help ourselves

Kyle: I agree, but I'm just asking

Emily: In a perfect world this episode would already be over because disability hierarchy... Yeah disability hierarchy wouldn't be a thing but I think the reality is that it exists, and we need to talk about it and we need to recognize that it impacts the way we advocate, the way we see

other people. I'm not saying that it actually exists, it's very arbitrary, but it is a reality that people think that way.

Kyle: I would say that it exists in sort of, you know... subversive way, right? Like, for example how we say you shouldn't assume incompetence when talking to somebody with an intellectual disability? We only do that with intellectual disability. We don't say that about any other kind of disability, and that's because we place them somewhere on this hierarchy in our mind... WeAs a people, not you and I

Emily: That's a different version of the disability hierarchy. So I think there's one where being more disabled gets you further in life, and there's one where being less disabled gets you further in life.

Kyle: There's two of them?

Emily: There's two. I think so.

Kyle: Oh God, I wasn't even prepared for one, how can I do this in one episode?

Emily: Kyle, might you say there's a lot to unpack here?

Kyle: I think that's something I would say Emily, thank you very much actually *(Emily laughs)*

Emily: Yeah, I think that not only is there a disability hierarchy but there's multiple perceptions of what that can mean. And neither one is very good.

Kyle: Okay, so let's take it from the top. Literally. Who would you say is at the top of the disability hierarchy, in your mind?

Emily: Me. I reign supreme over everyone else.

Kyle: Well that's it, goodnight everybody! *(Emily laughs)*

Emily: Um, it depends on the situation. Because I guess the term that we need to be talking about here is "Oppression Olympics" like, who here is more, "oppressed." Who has the hardest time having their rights recognized? Whose rights are violated the most often? Um, I think those are all issues that come to the forefront. But I guess this goes back to the episode that we did about um, why disability is always synonymous with wheelchairs?

Kyle: I was thinking the exact same thing!

Emily: Yeah, it's wheelchair users

Kyle: Yeah, well you're being a lot more nuanced than me, I was being sort of literal. I would say the people at the top of the disability hierarchy, in that the people at the top have the most power or whatever, would be able-bodied people. Or non-disabled people, excuse me. And *then* able bodied people, and then everyone else.

Emily: I think that we need to figure out how to define hierarchy for the purposes of this conversation because there are so many different ways to look at what this actually means.

Kyle: I was thinking more of a totem pole, and I imagine you were thinking more of a tree.

Emily: I am one with nature.

Kyle: So is that a yes, or?

Emily: Umm, I don't actually know how I envision it, because I am so busy switching back and forth between the different meanings of what hierarchy holds for me. If we're going how you just described it, then I actually think that I'm thinking of something different.

Kyle: So what are you thinking of?

Emily: The reason I said wheelchair users and you said able-bodied people

Kyle: Non-disabled people

Emily: Non-disabled people, you're thinking in terms of actual like ability. And I'm thinking in terms of like there's a hierarchy of who gets more recognition in the media, whose rights are paid more attention to

Kyle: Ahhh

Emily:Who's considered a more of a legitimate disabled person.

Kyle: I would in that case, one hundred and fifty thousand percent, agree with you. Wheelchair users are not only at the top, but by a huge margin, like not even close, I don't even know who would come second.

Emily: Again I think that just completely and totally depends on the context. Maybe people who use other types of mobility equipment?

Kyle: Maybe. But I think we're both getting caught up in the metaphorical and hypothetical order of it, but I don't think that's the issue. I think the issue is why it exists in the first place and what we can do to recognize it and unpack it. Dismantle it. Get rid of it.

Emily: I guess that as a wheelchair user I often find myself most frustrated when my particular rights are being violated or I have access barriers that I experience because I seem to think that somehow the world is the least designed for me out of people with every type of disability. And then you have you know people who are blind, or people who are deaf and I need to take a step back, or a roll back if you will and remember that...

Kyle: I won't!

Emily: (*Chuckling*) Remember that they also live in a world entirely not designed for them. But again I guess I'm even creating the hierarchy as I'm talking about it, because here I'm talking about people with significant types of disabilities and entirely discounting people who are just hearing impaired, or visually impaired and mobility impaired, and not full-on

Kyle: Ah!

Emily: You know what I'm saying?

Kyle: Ah! Yes, and then you have people like me. And I'm a whole, I'm a big old wrench in this. Because the world is designed for people almost like me, I'm almost there but I have a disability, so am I at the top or am I at the bottom? This is why it's such a weird concept right, because I think if you ask most disabled people they would say, of course. Of course there's a hierarchy of disability. And then when you ask them to talk about it you get rants like the one we just went on so it's this nebulous idea.

Kyle: But I don't know, I guess the bigger question I think is, do you think it has a point?

Emily: Do you mean the fact that we've kind of pushed it into existence as a whole? Like, is their a point to it's existence?

Kyle: Yeah because...well.. sort of..right? Because if you say that you are creating it by talking about it right, the solution then would naturally be, then just don't talk about it. But I don't think that's enough. I don't think it would disappear if we just stop talking about it. I think there's certain things that would, but I don't think a perceived hierarchy of disability would. Because when I think of access need, I think of wheelchair users. I don't think of myself, I don't think of deaf people, I don't think of blind people, and I...*We* both know people who are all kinds of disabled. *(Emily laughs)*

Kyle: Every single kind, so why is it that when we both think of this we think of wheelchair users? See your excuse is easy, you can say, "Oh, I do it because I am a wheelchair user!" But then what's my excuse? I don't have one! And I think that that's the proof, if you will. That the uh, that something like a hierarchy does exist.

Emily: We also need to factor in the idea of, or not the idea, the reality of how identities intersect with this hierarchy. So, this is not something where I feel like I can go entirely out of my lane on the topic, like I'm gonna stay in my lane here, but we would be absolutely remiss not to acknowledge that the more marginalized identities you have, in addition to being disabled, the more you are subjected to this particular hierarchy. And that can go in either direction. So, I think if you're for example, black and disabled, depending on the context you can be at the top of the hierarchy or the bottom of the hierarchy. If you're looking at the hierarchy as more oppressed and "Oppression Olympics" you're at the top. If you're looking at it as, you know sort of this like, horrible superiority complex, and privilege, you're at the bottom.

Kyle: Yeah but I mean, doesn't that attribute like arbitrary values to what we perceive as, like you can do that with anything! Like you can say, "Who has more privilege, a black male or a white woman? And people will argue that for days! And you can. And there's no answer!"

Emily: Yeah

Kyle: I'm sure that someone has an answer, I'm just saying like that's a heated topic for discussion. And the stuff that's missing from there is always disability. Always. Forever. Unless you are disabled and then you're always the one that goes, "Excuse me! Actually..."

Emily: Oh my God, that's literally my pinned tweet right now. Is how I bring up disability at intersectional events because it's not on everyone's mind, even if it's on the agenda.

Kyle: What do you do, you just roll up? Be like, ““Scuse me, Hello!”

Emily: I am definitely that guy who raises my hand at every event and I’m like, “Hi I really appreciate you talking about all these marginalized identities but did you think about disability, cause we’re the world’s largest minority, and you should really talk about us. Because we’re the only minority that you can join at any time. And also did you know that every other minority identity you just talked about, they can also be disabled!” I mean, my God I could say this in my sleep I’ve done this so much.

Kyle: She has said it in her sleep, it’s really bizarre.

Emily: Probably. Not last night though. Last night I had a dream, um something about moving to a new apartment, and carbon monoxide poisoning and getting a new tattoo. Also it was Passover, and I was getting the new tattoo right before the Seder. So, um make of that what you will, carry on.

Kyle: What was the tattoo of?

Emily: That’s the thing I don’t know, but the tattoo artist was the same guy who did my peacock feather tattoo. I have a peacock feather tattoo in case you guys didn’t know that.

Kyle: You should ask. Call him and be like, “Hey mister, What’s my next tattoo?” And he’s not gonna know what you’re talking about but he might know because he might’ve been in your dream too!

Emily: This seems like a great time to remind everyone, that if we get to, what was it? How many listens?

Kyle: Top Ten Listened Podcast ever

Emily: Then Kyle is gonna get our logo tattooed on him

Kyle: Yup. And that’s gonna happen now just so the world can see it. 100%

Kyle: I think when you’re talking about, any kind of oppression hierarchy then it’s all muddy because of intersections, right that’s how it works? I think when you add disability into it, it gets even muddier because you have these other arbitrary signifiers of “More and Less Disabled” in a

world that, if you talk to us, we don't even like the words, "Mild" and "Moderate" and "Severe" and yet we're the ones saying it in this context, and it just all goes back. It's a big circle of sh*t!

Emily: (*laughs*) Or, "High Functioning" and "Low Functioning"

Kyle: Oh, yeah that's... yeah I'm not Autistic allegedly, but you know.

Emily: Well I think that everything exists on a spectrum, but we use that spectrum to rank people. And we shouldn't do that.

Kyle: Yeah you shouldn't but we all do it.

Emily: Yeah I know this is definitely not disability exclusive, I mean, I think that hierarchies exist in general...I mean, of course they exist in general I'm not having a revelation here. But within minorities I feel like they exist in some ways. But, disability is kind of a unique animal because there's so many different ways to look at what that hierarchy is. It's just so dependent on who you're interacting with, what you're interacting about, I mean, I'm having a hard time unpacking the suitcase here.

Kyle: No, No, I mean... it's too dense. You know? It was all shoved in there. I think, in order to continue this conversation to our listeners, because someone's gonna point out, "Excuse me, but you're two White people!" We know. So I think in the interest of our own sake we should just stick to disability, and even that's muddy because we can only talk about ourselves really. But, that just goes to show how muddy it is, because you know, like Emily said earlier...If you think of the hierarchy, if you think it exists and the person at the top gets the most clout, it's wheelchair users, right? Because when you make something accessible, you make something accessible to them. If you think of who is at the bottom of that metaphorically, it would be anyone who is invisibly disabled. Anyone who has to prove themselves somehow. Anybody at all. Regardless of any other intersection that's who would be at the bottom in terms of disability.

Emily: Yeah

Kyle: And I think that you know, it's something we as a people don't ever notice because we're all living our respective lives on our own until we meet other disabled people who have a different set of needs than us, and you know it's a weird thing, right? Because you said earlier that we might be doing this to ourselves in talking about it, and I don't think that's far off. But I also think that it needs to be talked about, but then that would make it perpetual and it's just so weird.

Emily: Oh, we absolutely perpetuate this. But, um another thing I was thinking was you said something about meeting other disabled people, and there's another way I think we can look at hierarchy, which is what specific diagnosis you have. So I've always struggled with the fact that like, for people who have Cerebral Palsy. There's this massive group on Facebook, there's so many of you guys, and I've always sorta felt like I needed to just sit there and...pretend.

Kyle: Yeah, you know, I never really thought of that. And not that I didn't think communities of disability exist..I never really thought of somebody like you who gets mistaken for having something she doesn't. I don't even know how that would even begin to feel. That must feel very weird. It must feel like you're wearing oddly fitting clothes that aren't quite right or something.

Emily: Yeah, I guess it's just a way that I feel excluded, or like I'm not the right kind of disabled. And this is particularly top of mind for me right now because I was just in Seattle and I went to an event for work, and at the event I met someone who has Larsen's Syndrome, which is my diagnosis

Kyle: What? Aw!

Emily: And that has never happened to me, ever, it was so random! So one of my friends introduced us and was like, "She has the same diagnosis as you!" And then this woman told me that other people tell her, when they find out her diagnosis, they're like, "Emily Ladau has that!" And it was so surreal, I was so happy! We spent a very good portion of the night talking. And it was like, looking in a mirror. We were like moving our arms in the same way, our fingers look the same, we had like similar facial features, and I was just overjoyed! But I *never* get that feeling. Like everybody with CP knows somebody else with CP, you know what I mean?

Kyle: Ehhhh...Yeah sort of.

Emily: I'm also in a unique position because I know my mom and my uncle, who also have Larsen's Syndrome, and like I know other people with Larsen's. But you never just...run into them!

Kyle: I mean, the reason I said "Yeah, sorta" with CP is because it's a rare sight that I meet someone with CP like me. I know a handful, I know more people with CP like me than you probably know at all with Larsen's Syndrome and I appreciate that. But I feel the exact same way, exactly to a T, like you do when I meet someone with CP like me. "Can you do this? Can you do this? Can you do this? Can you jump?" That's the big one. Because that's like a hit or miss with us.

Kyle: I don't know though, if that feeling is evidence for the fact that a hierarchy exists, or evidence for the fact that the disability community melting pot is more like the disability community "salad"

(Emily laughs)

Kyle: No, I'm serious, I'm dead serious. You know how they say New York City's a melting pot? And it is except that we're all segregated by neighborhoods? So it's really kind of a salad bowl? Like, it's the same thing. It's like, yes, we're a melting pot in that we're all here but we just sorta, I don't wanna say we hang out with our own kind but I know more people with CP than any other disability. I do.

Emily: Yeah, me too!

Kyle: Uh, well then that doesn't really....then I'm wrong. Then it really doesn't work!

(Emily laughs)

Kyle: Well, but okay could that be because CP is much more prevalent than Larsen's?

Emily: Oh, yeah. What is the statistic for CP? Because Larsen's is 1 in 100,000

Kyle: Okay that's why, because our's is...CP is so common, and so never talked about that it's actually a joke. It is 3 in 1,000. Think about it, think about how many babies are born per day...

Emily: Wow

Kyle: Yeah it's common as sh*t! It's everywhere, it's so everywhere. It's ridiculous. And we get no funding from the NIH or from anyone. But people with Cystic Fibrosis get like thousands and thousands of dollars, not that I'm bitter or anything cause they deserve it too, but it's just an odd...we can spend a whole year talking about that!

Emily: No, see there's hierarchy in another form! Because...

Kyle: Okay, well that's different because

Emily: So Larsen's Syndrome had funding for a little while for genetic research, and then it suddenly just like, ran out, and everyone was like, "Whatever!"

Kyle: Well I agree that it's f****d up, but Cystic Fibrosis kills people, so that should be funded quicker

Emily: Well, Larsen's in its more severe forms kills people, but then I feel like I just made a hierarchy move right there by being like, "Well actually..."

Kyle: Okay, but actually...

(both laugh)

Kyle: Actually, in that case that you just said

Emily: Actually!

Kyle: Well actually! We're just both like...I actually think in like that case that you just did that it actually is, I said "Actually" God Damn! I'm just gonna say "actually" every other word.

(Emily laughs)

Kyle: I think in that case, it's not a bad idea. CP also doesn't kill by itself. But there's a ton of comorbidities that can exist if you have the most, air quotes, "CP"...that could kill you. There's the famous author that wrote Ender's Game, Orson Scott Card. Horrible person! Great author, Who thinks that his son died of CP. He didn't. But he's a guy that really believes that he did, because of a comorbidity, I think it was epilepsy, and he had a seizure that killed him.

Emily: Right..

Kyle: But, I think when you do that, I think when you say, "Oh it's a hierarchy because I don't have the kind that will kill me" That's necessary, because you know we have, we live in this society, where like, I swear non-disabled people think that having a disability, like every disability is terminal. How many times have you run into a person, and then you have, they do that, "Are you okay?" thing. And you can see them just go soft when you tell them you're not gonna die? Like, "OH THANK GOD! I would've been sorry I met you!"

(Emily laughs)

Kyle: You know, I really think that it's, I don't wanna make this generalization about most of the world but I'm totally going to. I think that most people think that disability is like, actively harmful instead of something that you just live with.

Emily: But sometimes it is and we need to acknowledge that

Kyle: No, absolutely! Yeah, yeah, absolutely.

Emily: Degenerative disabilities are a thing, and

Kyle: Absolutely! But where would they be on the hierarchy, right? Cause I would say, I would say that they should be at the top. They should. Anything that can physically progress or kill you, or harm you in any way other than the way that you first got it, like that should be you know *(unintelligible)*

Emily: But what kind of hierarchy are we talking about here? Are we talking like, "Oppression Olympics" hierarchy,

Kyle: No, well..

Emily: Or are we talking like hierarchy... I realize Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is actually a thing, but I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about like, hierarchy of health needs, physical needs.

Kyle: Well, yeah. That's what I'm saying. Yes, precisely! And I know that we just jumped into four different hierarchies just like you said we would, and I said "No, we're not!" And we just did.

Emily: We did!

Kyle: No, you're absolutely right. But I think that I mean you know, I don't have a progressive disability, allegedly, so you know, I can't really speak allegedly too much on the alleged topic but

Emily: Actually

Kyle: Well, there's..The jury's out right? Because CP doesn't progress literally

Emily: Right

Kyle: But what it does to your brain can sort of make it so that it sort of feels like it. Sort of like how when you eat hot sauce, your temperature's not actually heating up and your body is not really attacking itself but it feels like it is? It's sorta like that. So I don't wanna speak for people with actual degenerative disabilities, I don't know what your positions are, and cures and things but as someone that doesn't have it, I look at stuff like that and am like "Oh yeah, they need help, any form at all, anything they need, whatever form they want, way more than I do." I really think that. And I'm sorry if that makes me a horrible person.

Emily: But not, Jerry Lewis telethon levels of help.

Kyle: Oh God, no no no no. I said what they need. Whatever it is. Whatever it is...

Emily: Yeah, what they need, not what other people *think* they need

Kyle: No, what they need. If Jerry Lewis's telethon is what they need, then by God, bring em up!

(Emily laughs)

Kyle: But no, no I do not support Jerry Lewis's telethons. I don't. To make that abundantly clear. Yeah, I think that, well that's exactly, I think a good answer though, don't you think? Health needs...Lifespan comes first In a hierarchy of disability right?

Emily: Oh, my Lord!

Kyle: Shouldn't it? Shouldn't it? I don't know.

Emily: I guess so! But in what way? So just needs, not like you're more legitimately disabled? Or are you?

Kyle: No, no that's a load of bullsh*t. I disagree with that entirely. I should have said that at the beginning of the discussion. If you have a disability...

Emily: No, I think we both disagree with that.

Kyle: Oh, well we should've said that at the beginning. I think that if you have a disability at all, then you're disabled. And there are people who are like, "Well, people with anxiety don't really

count. If you're colorblind you're not really one of us." I don't care. If you're diagnosed with something, you're one of us, I don't care what it is. I'm very, very broad with that.

Emily: This is very tangentially related. Or maybe not. But I get really frustrated with people who say, "We're all disabled!" Like no, we're not actually. Like, you either have a disability or you don't. I'm not telling you what that disability can and cannot be, but if you don't have a disability, you're not disabled. We're not *all* a little disabled.

Kyle: You know, I don't know where I saw this on Facebook today, but I saw something that is extremely relevant to the point you literally just made. Having glasses is a disability that most people, well I don't know if most people wear glasses. But tons of people across the world have, that it is so common and accepted, that it is no longer thought of as a disability. But it totally is! Because, I'm gonna tell ya something, I don't know about you but if I don't leave my house with glasses, I'm walking into everything.

Emily: Oh yeah, I physically can't function without my glasses.

Kyle: The fact that I can't see does a lot more disabling, than my CP to me. Absolutely, not even close. Cue all the blind folks that we have listening to us that are gonna be, "Well, Actually!"

(Emily laughs)

Emily: This is a lot of "actuallys!"

Kyle: Well no, it's just because I, you know (unintelligible)

Emily: No, but the thing is, a pair of glasses is assistive technology.

Kyle: Yes, but it's just so far beyond that at this point that we don't even think about it that way. I want that for everything. I do.

Emily: That gets complicated though because you could also talk about it from the flip side where it's like, do want an erasure of disability identity?

Kyle: Yeah, well that's a whole different topic for like... No, go ahead.

Emily: But like, would getting to the point where disability is not even recognized as a thing because wheelchairs are just as common as a pair of glasses, or wheelchairs are seen in the same

light as a pair of glasses. Then are we erasing, some kind of like, you know, identifier? Like when people say, "I don't see you as disabled!"

Kyle: I am the wrong person to ask about that, but I think, I think yes. But I also think if we ever got to that point we wouldn't need to identify as disabled because part of the reason why many of us do it is precisely because that doesn't happen.

Emily: Yeah, I guess like for me, um

Kyle: But I don't know, like how is it for you? Because I do not

Emily: Well I'm super adamant about being called disabled because I'm trying to get the point across that it's not a negative thing. That it just is.

Kyle: Mhmm

Emily: And so, I guess the very same reason why I'm now happy to be called disabled is the very same reason why I would arguably be happy to be not called disabled. But it would have to be a very specific reason. I would need people to just realize that it's not a bad thing, and it's just a part of who you are. Until we get to that...

Kyle: Precisely like glasses

Emily: Yeah

Kyle: You know, you don't wonder how you're gonna hide your glasses from a job interview, you know what I mean? Like it's just not something you do.

Emily: Well I never wonder about hiding my disability because I, you know, somehow made a career out of it.

Kyle: Well, that's one of the perks I guess. But you know what I'm saying? I hear you, I actually hear you and I never...You made me think of it in a way that I didn't. I don't the answer. I've always said that I'm happy to be part of a dying breed. I say that in jest because apparently wanting things like medical advancements in every field at all is apparently supporting eugenics somehow? I don't agree with that, but that's what some people believe. But it's..it's true, you know? I always said I don't identify...I identify with disability in that I have one, and I'm not shy about saying I have one. I don't identify in terms of the culture, I don't drink the Kool Aid, I don't. But a lot of my friends do and I love them, including you so, you know. Hooray!

Emily: We could definitely do an entire episode on you know, whether or not making genetic advancements is ableist, but...

Kyle: It's not. That's my position on it.

Emily: Well it depends in what context you're trying to do it

Kyle: Tell me a context where it is and I'll say if I agree with you

Emily: Save it. Save it for another episode.

Kyle: No no, just one, because I totally, this is definitely an episode, just give me one where it would be!

Emily: Like I think that it makes no sense to actively try to cure something that's not really harming people, when you should be instead focusing on improving quality of life.

Kyle: Like what? Like CP?

Emily: Yeah

Kyle: Oooh I don't know. That's a tough one. I'm actually gonna have to think about it. We're gonna reveal this on the next episode because you gave me the one example where I actually would have to really think about it and it's totally because I have CP.

(Emily laughs)

Emily: Stay tuned!

Kyle: No, we're totally doing it. And we're not doing it from a cure perspective because that's a loaded word. But in terms of hierarchy, right? Here's...But. But on the flipside of that whole argument right, if nobody was disabled, *that* hierarchy wouldn't exist but it doesn't matter because like eleven other ones do. So it's like, does the fact that a disability hierarchy exists even matter or does it just complicate something already complicated even further?

Emily: It's just a complicated concept is all. Because I recognize how arbitrary it is, but that doesn't mean that it doesn't inform my thinking.

Kyle: No, but it's something we all agree on right? It's like when they gender or race swap a character in a movie we all, like no one knows where the line is where that becomes screwed up but we know when we like it and we know when we don't! (*unintelligible*)

Emily: Do you think we all agree that it exists? Is that what you're saying?

Kyle: I think we do. I don't think we have to....

Emily: I don't think we do.

Kyle: You don't think that every disabled person...Dude I've been called "not disabled" by disabled people!

Emily: Or, you know what.. I think that people buy into disability hierarchy, but may not believe that such a thing exists by that very name.

Kyle: Well then just make it (*unintelligible*)...Okay so what you're saying is that there's some people who know it exists but don't call it that?

Emily: Um, I guess that there are some people that just don't want to acknowledge it's existence or...

Kyle: Oh, but I..yeah okay, but isn't that the exact argument that people who say there are people in America for example who are ignorant to White male privileges? Like that's the argument that they use to say, "Well, look at these ignorant people, they don't even know it exists!" So yeah! That's what I would say to them, who say that about disability how about that?

Emily: Um, two different concepts but reasonable argument.

Kyle: Well, of course it is (*laughs*) I'm not equating the two types of privilege, I'm just saying like, if the argument that people make when they say, "Well I don't experience White Privilege I was born poor" that's the same thing.

Emily: Oh yeah like that's not how that works

Kyle: Right. Just because you don't acknowledge something doesn't mean it doesn't exist, kinda like I don't acknowledge Australia really but it's there.

Emily: Did we just insult our Australian contingency? No, we're obviously just kidding!

Kyle: No, I am just kidding! But I don't know, I hear you right? I think that *(sighs)* It's just so weird! Cause like, what is it doing, in effect for our community if we all acknowledge the disability hierarchy? Nothing good. Nothing good!

Emily: Well, I actually think that acknowledging that it exists is useful in so far as then we can dismantle it.

Kyle: Agreed. However, you can also use that as a crutch to say well as a..

Emily: Oh someone's gonna call you out on saying using a mobility aid as a phrase. I can't think of it right now, but don't say you use something is a crutch.

Kyle: Oh you mean the ableist language that falls on deaf ears and I'm blind to it, and using it as a crutch and all that stuff?

Emily: Mhmmmm

Kyle: Those are idioms, and that's like the fourth thing on our list of episodes...

Emily: Yeah why couldn't I think about that? Why couldn't I think of that word? I'm an English major failure!

Kyle: We actually when we made a list of podcast episodes, just so you know, this is a little "Inside Baseball" on the Accessible Stall but idioms are like, on our list and we just constantly ignore it because it comes up in small doses in every episode we've ever done and we've never done a full episode on it, on them

(Emily chuckles)

Kyle: But my point is, acknowledging something it is the first step to getting rid of it, absolutely. But it can also be used as ammunition to say, "Well my opinion of disability trumps yours." Trumps yours? Oh boy...

Emily: Ohhh Someone take a shot! Ohhh..

Kyle: "...Is more important than yours because I am at the...I have more of a disability than you. So my opinion matters more" And I..

Emily: Is there anything it's okay to say? Like Trump ruined everything. I don't even like the word "trumps"

Kyle: I used to say, I used to say, *(Imitating Donald Trump)* "huge"

Emily: *(Imitating Donald Trump)* "Huge"

Kyle: And it's part of my accent but I try very actively not to anymore because he made that into a joke, just like his life.

Emily: *(laughs)* I would love to know if we have Conservative listeners.

Kyle: I think that any Conservative listener that we have probably doesn't like Forty-Five. I know a ton of conservative people that don't like Forty-Five. I do. I don't know many Conservatives that do. I know a ton of Republicans that do, unfortunately but I make a very sharp distinction between those two because one is a different ideology and the other's a cult.

Emily: Okay, I'm like really infuriated right now because we were just having a great conversation

Kyle: Oh it all comes back!

Emily: Donald Trump's existence...

Kyle: Ruined everything!

Emily: ...Just interrupted it!

Kyle: Oh by the way, shoutout to all of our homies at ADAPT because you are doing the good work that we are sitting her podcasting instead of doing the Lord's work but

Emily: There many ways to be an activist. But I do fully support what ADAPT has been doing in getting arrested.

Kyle: Ah, that is a hierarchy too. Everything's a hierarchy. If everything's a hierarchy, nothing is!

Emily: That's totally a hierarchy like, are you an activist or are you a "slacktivist?" Are you doing enough or are you not doing enough? Can you physically do it? I mean...

Kyle: (*sighs*) I don't think it matters. I think when it comes to like everything like that, you just do what is in your most capacity to be able to do in terms of your physical ability and your morals and just do that and if you do that then everyone will be happy and if there not, tell them to go f**k themselves. That's how that works in my opinion.

Emily: And that's how Kyle sees it. (*chuckles*)

Kyle: I do like that

Emily: Yeah, what is that from?

Kyle: It's from *Glee*, "That's How Sue Sees It"

Emily: "That's The Way Sue Sees It"

Kyle: Yeah

Emily: Oh my gosh!

Kyle: Yeah!

Emily: Wow, throwback

Kyle: I used to love *Glee*

Emily: Throwback Monday! Cause we're recording this on a Monday (*laughs*)

Kyle: Did you used to love *Glee*?

Emily: Yes! That's so funny because I was just listening to some *Glee* covers today.

Kyle: Wow, you're the worst! I totally also do that.

Emily: They're really good, some of them!

Kyle: They're really good, all of them

Emily: Lea Michele's cover of "Go Your Own Way" by Fleetwood Mac is amazing!

Kyle: Ugh! I know

Emily: It's beautiful

Kyle: Their cover of, "Annie are you Okay... Smooth Criminal!" With the 2CELLOS guys is also pretty good because I love the 2CELLOS guys.

Emily: Yeah, I know. *Glee* did a good job. *Glee* did not do a good job with disability representation but hey, that's another issue isn't it?

Kyle: You know what though? I'm gonna give them a little credit. If you listened this far then you know, good for you. But I'm gonna give a little credit...

(Emily laughs)

Kyle: Because here's why. You're right, they chose an able-bodied actor to play a disabled person, we all know that's bad, we did a whole episode on it. They also chose a professional dancer to play that role, where everyone else got to be a professional singer which is, must've been a kick in the pants for him. But, I give them props a little bit because if you ask somebody to name a disabled person on TV you're gonna hear about Artie. And they really tried in the first season, before they became "Social Justice High School" to include everybody. And yes, they should've found a disabled actor but like, before then what was the best disabled character on TV? I don't even remember. So they did good on that front. But that's all you.

Emily: I miss that show.

Kyle: It was good, it was good (*unintelligible*)

Emily: That was actually the subject of my college Honors Thesis?

Kyle: *Glee*?

Emily: Um, it was a part of it. I talked about how media portrayals of romantic relationships among disabled people impacts uh, perceptions of disability.

Kyle: You know what? That was actually, I don't remember how I felt about it at the time but thinking back on it, when he was banging that cheerleader for like those two episodes?

Emily: Yeah?

Kyle: I thought that was pretty cool. I really did. I was like, “You never see that!” I didn’t care that he was able-bodied, I really didn’t like it...

Emily: You were like, “Get it!”

Kyle: Yes... but it was also like, you don’t see that on TV, you barely see it now! You know where I last saw that? On a foreign Netflix show from Brazil. You know where I saw it before that? *Glee*. So yeah, it wasn’t perfect but my God, you wanna talk about strides? *Glee* made some. And I will say that. Grown ass man. Love *Glee*. Hundred percent.

Emily: Little known facts about Kyle

Kyle: Yuppp

(Emily laughs)

Emily: I think the fact that this devolved into a conversation about *Glee* clearly indicates that it’s really difficult to talk about disability hierarchy because it’s just so complex that it kinda makes my head spin.

Kyle: I think that if...I think the first step in talking about anything disability related is trying to have an honest conversation about it. Which is something the greater community can’t do about anything. So, you know, baby steps. And there’s gonna be some people that say the hierarchy doesn’t exist. I appreciate it.

Emily: The limit does not exist

Kyle: Yeah, but if you really think that, honestly if you really think that please tell us why because you know, before we recorded this, you know Emily and I got into a small argument, as we do, where I said the hierarchy didn’t actually exist. It exists perceptually among disabled people, but it’s not something that actually *exists*. And I don’t mean physically, I mean in the same way love exists, you know? And her argument was..

Emily: Love is real only if I'm in a good mood.

Kyle: Which is like, zero percent of the time.

(Emily laughs)

Kyle: But her argument was, and I'm paraphrasing for you, you know feel free to tell me to shut up. Was that if you perceive it, then it has to be real in some aspect. But then the question became, "Does that perception, does your perception then extend to others?" And of course your perception of other people like it will...the way you see them, but then, does everyone do that? And if everyone does that then that means of course that it's real. And it became this really weird thing that eventually became what you're listening to right now. So forgive us for sounding like jumbled messes. It's been awhile, but we chose like *the* hardest topic in the world to talk about on our first trip back

Emily: I'm sure there's a lot harder topics to talk about

Kyle: Oh, I'm sure there are but I'm saying like, in terms of like, what to do after a one month hiatus? Yeah, why don't just pick something horribly complicated that can last five episodes?

Emily: Jump into it!

Kyle: Feet first? Or is that ableist too? Not everyone has feet Emily. Not everyone can *(unintelligible)*

Emily: I can't jump

Kyle: Yeah, there you go. I can, I can jump. But most people with CP can't!

Emily: Hierarchy!

Kyle: They're f**in' weird right? Anyway, I'm Kyle, she's Emily and we didn't give any final takeaways because...this is complicated as s**t! Unless you want to...

Emily: That was tough

Kyle: Yeah, man.

Emily: That was a hard episode to get through

Kyle: Yeah, I'm still recording

Emily: Because I still can't exactly sort out my thoughts so...I just don't know man, I don't know. Hierarchy definitely exists, but it exists in many different forms, so I guess in that case, um, there's no real conclusion that we can come to on it, other than that it's there. *(laughs)*

Kyle: You know what we sort of tried to touch on and didn't?

Emily: What?

Kyle: If you do think of hierarchy is a totem pole where every layer is sort of a different grouping of people...In between which two things do you think disability would fit? As a whole? I am not sure of that. I think that that's just a whole other mess.

Emily: I don't know

Kyle: But you know what I mean right?

Emily: Yes

Kyle: Like if class is up here, and race is here, and gender's here, and sexuality's here and blah blah blah blah, where is disability in all that?

Emily: That's a conversation of hierarchy unto itself

Kyle: Part two everybody!

Emily: And that is a larger form of Oppression Olympics is all that is.

Kyle: You're right! But it matters, doesn't it?

Emily: 100%

Kyle: But I don't think there's clear lines in that either. In fact, I think that only makes it more complicated as you were alluding to earlier so I don't know... *(unintelligible)*

Emily: I would genuinely like other people to weigh in on this issue

Kyle: Oh please, please message us! Please! This is the one time we're actually asking for it. C'mon do it, do it, do it!

Emily: We always welcome messages from our devoted listeners!

Kyle: Mhmm! We actually do. We love it.

Emily: Yeh, we love getting messages!

Kyle: So, on that note...

Emily: Oh! Final takeaways?

Kyle: Oh, wasn't that that? Wasn't it what you just said? I don't know.

Emily: Oh, yeah sure.

Kyle: Okay, my final takeaway is the same. It's weird, I don't know man, disability is a weird thing.

Emily: Yeah you're right, I already gave my final takeaway which is that I'm not really sure I have a takeaway.

Kyle: I'm Kyle. She's Emily. This has been another episode of *The Accessible Stall*

Emily: Are you like, mansplaining for me right now by saying my name? Are you talking over me? Are you talking for me? Do you know what term I heard today, now there's "He-peating" Which is when a man...

Kyle: What?

Emily: "He-peating" He. *He* like you are *hepeating* instead of repeating? Which is when a woman shares an idea, no one listens to her, and then two minutes later a dude shares the same idea.

Kyle: That has totally happened to me. I mean, I'm not a woman but that situation happens to me all the time. It's like when I say something in a meeting and someone acknowledges it, and then they say it it's like, "Hey good job...Trisha!!" It's like, you didn't come up with it Trisha, shut up!

(Emily laughs)

Kyle: You microwave fish, ya b**ch!

(both laugh)

Emily: Nobody asked you, Trisha!

Kyle: Anyway, good night everybody!

Emily: Oh my Lord! What is this episode? Thanks for listening!

Kyle: Bye

Emily: Bye!

Kyle: Hey, Emily.

Emily: Hey?

Kyle: I'm still recording so I can tell you this.

Emily: Okay

Kyle: I made a Fiverr profile where I started selling my voice, and no one has clicked on it yet or bought anything from me.

Emily: Did you record your voice so people know what they're getting into?

Kyle: They make you, so that they know what they're getting into, and I'm insulted. Anyway! That's what I wanted to say while we were still recording.

Emily: This is amazing! Kyle has the best voice.

Kyle: I think they know that On account of they're listening to it

Emily: Like, tell me the truth everyone, do you just listen for Kyle's voice, because that's why I listen.

Kyle: No, they listen for your opinions man, no one likes my opinions!

Emily: Well, now that we have gotten to the bottom of this, and Kyle has acknowledged that I am the superior one.

Kyle: She is! Yo, she is the best.

(Emily laughs)

Kyle: I'm just the producer and co-host. She brings in the money.

Emily: That's me

Kyle: Goodnight everybody.

Emily: A champion. Bye! Thanks for listening

