 Resource 17

Koenig’s Impartial Perspective

Transcript of the final Episode of Serial. <https://undisclosed.wikispaces.com/file/view/All+Serial+Podcast+Transcripts+with+ToC.pdf>

**Sarah Koenig:** So back to Adnan’s question. Do I have an ending?

**Adnan Syed:** I was just thinking the other day, I’m pretty sure that she has people telling her, “look, you know this case is-- he’s probably guilty. You’re going crazy trying to find out if he’s innocent which you’re not going to find because he’s guilty.” I don’t think you’ll ever have one hundred percent or any type of certainty about it. The only person in the whole world who can have that is me. For what it’s worth, whoever did it. You know you’ll never have that, I don’t think you will.

**Sarah Koenig:** Adnan told me all he wanted was to take the narrative back from the prosecution, just as an exercise. So, people could see his case without makeup on, look at it in the eye up close and make their own judgments. He told me, he doesn’t think I should weigh in.

**Adnan Syed:** I think you should just go down the middle. I think you shouldn’t really take a side, I mean, it’s obviously not my decision it’s yours, but if I was to be you, just go down the middle. Obviously, you know how to narrate it but I checked these things out and these are the things that look bad against him, these are the things that the State doesn’t really have an answer for. I think in a way you could even go point for point and in a sense, you leave it up to the audience to determine.

**Sarah Koenig:** While I appreciate Adnan’s blessing to take a powder, I’m not going to. Dana’s right to be sceptical. What are the chances that one guy got so unlucky? That everything lined up against him just so. Because yes, there’s a police file full of information, circumstantial information that looks bad for Adnan. But let’s put another file next to that one, side by side. In that second file let’s put all the other evidence we have linking Adnan to the actual crime, the actual killing. What do we have? What do we know? Not what do we think we know, what do we know? If the call log does not back up Jay’s story, if the Nisha call is no longer set in stone, then think about it. What have we got for that file? All we’re left with is, Jay knew where the car was. That’s it. That all by itself, that is not a story. It’s a beginning but it’s not a story. It’s not enough, to me, to send anyone to prison for life, never mind a seventeen-year-old kid. Because you, me, the State of Maryland, based on the information we have before us, I don’t believe any of us can say what really happened to Hae. As a juror, I vote to acquit Adnan Syed. I have to acquit. Even if in my heart of hearts, I think Adnan killed Hae, I still have to acquit. That’s what the law requires of jurors. But I’m not a juror, so just as a human being walking down the street next week, what do I think? If you ask me to swear that Adnan Syed is innocent, I couldn’t do it. I nurse doubt. I don’t like that I do, but I do. I mean most of the time I think he didn’t do it. For big reasons, like the utter lack of evidence but also small reasons, things he said to me just off the cuff or moments when he’s cried on the phone and tried to stifle it so I wouldn’t hear. Just the bare fact of why on earth would a guilty man agree to let me do this story, unless he was cocky to the point of delusion. I used to think that when Adnan’s friends told me “I can’t say for sure if he’s innocent, but the guy I knew, there’s no way he could have done this.” I used to think that was a cop out, a way to avoid asking yourself uncomfortable, disloyal, disheartening questions. But I think I’m there now too. Not for lack of asking myself those hard questions, but because as much as I want to be sure, I am not.

When Rabia first told me about Adnan’s case, certainty, one way or the other seemed so attainable. We just needed to get the right documents, spend enough time, talk to the right people, find his alibi. Then I did find Asia, and she was real and she remembered and we all thought “how hard could this possibly be? We just have to keep going.” Now, more than a year later, I feel like shaking everyone by the shoulders like an aggravated cop. Don’t tell me Adnan’s a nice guy, don’t tell me Jay was scared, don’t tell me who might have made some five second phone call. Just tell me the facts ma’am, because we didn’t have them fifteen years ago and we still don’t have them now.

Review the final moments of the podcast. As you listen, highlight the important aspects of her language.

1. How true is Adnan’s belief that ‘I don’t think you’ll ever have one hundred percent or any type of certainty about it. The only person in the whole world who can have that is me.’? Is this an absolute statement?  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
2. How does the final statement by Koenig that she wishes to ‘take the narrative back’ reframe our perception of the podcast? Is it factual or is it a narrative?

Click or tap here to enter text.

1. What impact does Koenig’s decision to split herself as a ‘juror’ and ‘person’ have on an audience?  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
2. Adnan’s desire that Koenig ‘leave it up to the audience to determine’ is interesting. Do you think Koenig has achieved this?  
   Click or tap here to enter text.
3. Why do you think Adnan would want this to occur, rather than a statement declaring his innocence?  
   Click or tap here to enter text.