

Jessica Kent
Down to Flip - Chicago, IL

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[00:00:00]

Tony Vadakumchery [TV]: Hello. My name is Tony Vadakumchery. It is six thirty p.m. on October first, 2015. We are at the Ipsento Cafe on 35 Northwestern Blvd, Chicago. And we are interviewing Miss Jessica Kent. Hello Miss Kent, one of the first questions we have for you. [Laughter] It's not very relevant now because we kind of, sort of realized that both the interviewers are under the age of 21 so we couldn't interview at Logan Arcade, but if you can answer us this question: why was this [Logan Arcade] your first choice of place to do this interview?

Jessica Kent [JK]: I feel very, very comfortable at Logan arcade and it's also a spot that I feel like anytime that I travel, I travel quite a bit, so anytime I come back to Chicago, I feel like I'm not home until I visit Logan. And I probably know the flow of clientele too well to know the best times to go when it's quiet so-- we chose that also so I can also play pinball a little bit before I met with you guys.

TV: So speaking about pinball: are there any particular games or boards at the arcade that are your particular favorites?

JK: Definitely. They cycle, I will say that. Right now, I have to always play *Addams Family*. It's one of my absolute favorite tables, it's very weird and spooky. And *Twilight Zone* is another one that I've recently been playing a lot to better learn the ruleset, it's another weird kind of dark one.

TV: Mhm [affirmative]. And I guess in general where are some of the best places for pinball and other arcade stuff in the Chicagoland area?

JK: I definitely prefer Logan arcade, but Emporium Wicker Park is also really fantastic. The best thing about both Logan and the-- there are two Emporiums, there's one in Logan Square and one in Wicker Park and they both have different games which is cool. But they have really well-maintained machines so those are typically my go-tos.

TV: You said you attend a lot of arcades, what are the kind of people you see that go into the arcades nowadays?

JK: Here in Chicago, because of the fact that most arcades, with the exception of Galloping Ghost, which is just a little bit outside of Chicago, are centered around bars. It's mostly older people and by older I mean like 20s / 30s. But I feel like if there were more that were more accessible to families, it would probably be younger kids as well, but since that's a specific clientele there's definitely a boom in the older kids like [laughs] my age to go back to that nostalgic time of our lives.

TV: What was your first experience going to an arcade?

JK: I think I was probably seven or eight. We were living in-- my family and I were living in Brodheadsville, Pennsylvania and there was a mall in Stroudsburg, and it's still there I'm pretty sure. And there was an arcade call Timeout. They were an arcade chain and I was obsessed with skee ball, so I remember playing skee ball all the time when I was growing up

TV: How has the arcade experience changed over the last couple of years or decades?

JK: With the sudden renaissance that nerds are having, it's become a lot more prominent, which is cool, and a lot more acceptable to kind of throw out what types of gaming people like, so it's becoming more popular and a lot more accessible as people bring their collections out in public and you'll find more rare or different cabinets and tables at different bars depending on who the owners know or gamers around or adult gamers, I guess, around so it's definitely become a lot more-- a less like just goth games or like these fishing games you just find in random places and like a, "Oh I haven't seen that cabinet in a really long time," because I think more collectors are finally able to bring stuff out if necessary.

TV: How often do you go to arcades?

JK: Definitely at least once a week. Sometimes three to four times. It depends a lot on what I'm doing personally-- I'm like generally a busy person, but I try to make some time to take in some pinball therapy once a week.

TV: How do you feel about more home or portable video games compared to arcade games or arcade cabinets?

JK: For a really long time, I was more of an at home gamer and I think just because the popularity of the arcades started to disappear , so like especially when I was in middle school in like the mid-90s, the arcades started shutting down more and more. Playing at home or hanging out with friends and playing PlayStation or whatever was just a lot more accessible and then all throughout college, and only recently really it's become easier to find games again. So there was a bit of a dip and decline, but I do miss having-- like I had a Wii at one point, I miss having a Wii. I feel like I'm not as in tune with the new games that are coming out or like everything that happens. It's E3 right?

TV: Yeah.

JK: I'm like, I don't even know what half this stuff is, but I get really excited when a new Mario is coming out or something but I feel very disconnected from it now

TV: Do you think arcades and arcade games can help form friendships?

JK: I do. [Chuckles] I met a lot of people just by going back out to arcades and stuff. I feel like it's one of those places where it's like socially acceptable to like go out and get a beer and play some games and ask if you can join in somebody's game and make some new friends. So it's like the only bars I go to by myself are arcade bars [laughs] cause I know I'll either meet somebody that I already know or I can make a new friend just by being like, "hey, do you wanna play some *Addams Family*?" [Laughs] It's a lot easier to talk to people.

TV: Do you think that console or handheld games can help form friendships as well as arcade games?

JK: I think, definitely, with the way that they are now where you can locate people around you who are playing certain games that you're playing, definitely. It's kind of weird cause it's like-- what is that-- oh my gosh, I feel so bad. It's like I know the game but I don't know what the game is called-- *Animal Crossing*. A friend of mine is constantly playing *Animal Crossing* and he'll just be like-- there's little alerts whenever someone else is playing around him and it's kind of like when you start following someone on twitter or something, and you guys all of a sudden become twitter friends. It's another way-- another line to make friendships that carry very similar weight to a 'in real life' friendship and you can potentially also talk to the people because you know that you have that in common already.

TV: You were talking about the renaissance going on in arcades recently; are people in general still excited for arcades as they were in the 80s and 90s?

JK: I think it's a different kind of excitement because on one level there's that nostalgic excitement and then on the other, there's that new-found kind of thing where like-- when you find a new game or something that you didn't realize existed and all of a sudden it becomes your obsession, or people who-- like myself, I haven't been playing pinball for a very long time so for me, if I'd gone to an arcade without the knowledge of pinball I would just automatically go to like fighting games and stuff like that so I found a new version of my gamer self [laughs] which is really cool. There are people who do wanna play the older games that they grew up with and people who kind of take a different perspective of what else is available now that maybe we didn't focus on a while ago, or people who just never really played video games before, and now they have better access to it. Excuse me.

TV: What do you think are some major differences between gaming when you were a kid and gaming right now?

JK: I wasn't as competitive about it when I was a kid. I think I probably take it a lot more seriously, which is a little absurd because I mean it's still just a hobby, but it's kind of tough cause-- I was a lot more laid back about stuff and didn't really know rules, so it all just seemed kind of fun and now it still is fun but there's-- Like I know the actually end goal so there's a little bit more weight to it.

TV: We talked about this a little bit. A lot of arcades now are also merging themselves with bars so people go out, they have a drink and they play some games.

JK: Mmmhmm [agrees]

TV: Why do you think arcades now are shifting focus from children to adults?

[00:10:02]

JK: I feel like a lot of it does have to do with again that nostalgia of like, "this was something that I used to do" or like 'this is a creative date' kind of thing-- it's tough because it's like on one hand if you suggest, "hey, let's go to Headquarters or something" and people are just like "I don't really play games so it doesn't really sound interesting" and you'll be like "but there's a bar," Ya'know? It's more of that. Then people get interested and kind of loosen up a little bit and then play a little bit more. But it's actually something that I like that I'm conflicted about because I feel like it should be a little bit more accessible to everybody and so it's difficult for me, like I feel slightly internally conflicted about it, but I think it definitely gives a unique spin on the bar experience, but I feel like a lot of them could do without the bars, personally.

TV: Do you-- once again, a question about like, the sort of the demographics and the age demographics; do you see kids coming to arcades these days and playing pinball or other arcade games often? Not at Logan arcade, cause obviously you have to be over 21.

JK: Totally. Well I was recently in Austin and I went to a place called Pinballz Arcade there which is amazing, and myself and my coworkers were kind of the only adults there. It was like eight or nine o'clock at night. There were a bunch of kids and teenagers there, all hanging out and playing pinball and different games. Like pinball is obviously, as the name suggests-- it was mostly pinball tables. Yeah, there were a lot of kind of high school, college aged and middle school kids there which was really nice and good to see [laughter]. It was really fun and also kind of weird, cause like I'm not used to that here so it was a nice experience to be able to share that space

TV: What sort of, at the arcade, what sort of games get the most attention?

JK: I feel like that depends on the person. A lot of times if you grew up with a fighting game or an NBA Jam typed sports game-- you wanna go to what you're most familiar with. I feel like it definitely depends on the arcade, so like at Logan people always go straight to either pinball, a fighting game, or Killer Queen. At Headquarters, I see a lot of people kind of go to pinball as a last resort sometimes, but they'll spend of their time at like a shooting game or the X-men fighting game, which is great. At Emporium, I see a lot of people go into like *Dig Dug*, and *Frogger*, and like the old school games, so yeah it really depends on-- I feel like it varies by neighborhood specifically in Chicago [laughter].

TV: And you sort of answered this one already, but I'm just going to ask it again; do you have a favorite arcade out of everywhere in the world?

JK: [laughs] I have to say, I actually do have a trip planned in November to hit a bunch of arcades on the west coast. As of right now, of course, Logan is my favorite. Pinballz was fantastic and if I lived in Austin, I would be there all the time. I'm very excited to go check out some places, and going to like Portland and Seattle and Las Vegas so we'll see what's going on over there. That answer may change, but definitely, again, Logan.

TV: What is the sort of atmosphere you that observe in arcades these days? Is it a passionate one or more of a chill, laid back sort of atmosphere?

JK: That's another sort of depending on the neighborhood kind of thing and dependent on what game people are playing. People tend to get very boisterous when they're playing *Killer Queen* at Logan arcade. People can sometimes get really competitive, I've seen, at Headquarters, playing pinball when it's really late on a weekend, it gets really intense, but I think that also has to do more with the involvement of alcohol sometimes [laughs] so it's kind of tough but usually, whoever's crowded around a fighting game is saying a lot of curse words very loudly [laughs].

TV: So the next ones are specifically about pinball: When did you start playing pinball?

JK: I started really, really playing pinball about two and a half years ago. I was working in Bucktown right by a bar called Lemmings and they had two pinball tables in the back and one of my coworkers and myself would go grab a beer and play pinball after work and it just kind of kept with me

TV: What's your favorite thing about pinball in general?

JK: I like that you can basically track your progress and it's really like-- a lot of it is very dependent on-- there's just like so many different factors. Every machine, even if you line ten *Addams Family* tables in a row, they're all going to be-- they're all going to play differently. So it's like you-- everything is just-- it just changes and everything is very much based on eye-hand coordination, making sure that your brain is definitely on key and how physical-- you can be super physical, you can be not very physical and the best part is like no one can really say that you're like bad at pinball, because you're personally just trying to best yourself, so the way you leave your mark is by leaving your initials, and unless people know your initials, it's really nice to have that anonymity across the field.

TV: What sparked your passion for pinball at first?

JK: A couple of things: so yeah, just, being able to hang out with my coworker who is a friend of mine after work and actually like get to become better friends, The fact that the first pinball table I really, seriously started playing was called *Monster Mash*. It's about Universal monsters who all have a band together, and I'm a really big horror movie fan so it appealed to me greatly and that fact that all pinball tables are super crazy different, it was just incredibly appealing to me to learn about everyone cause I'm like one of those people who like as soon as I find out about something and I like it, I need to know everything so knowing that there was limitless research to be done was pretty cool; and that's pretty much-- those are the factors.

TV: So do you remember the first pinball cabinet you've played ever?

JK: I don't and it's actually been driving me crazy lately because when I-- I lived in Brawley, North Carolina in the early 2000s and I didn't have a laundry room because I lived in an apartment and we didn't have a laundry room on site so I used to go to a laundromat and there was a pinball table and I don't remember what it was, but I would end up losing all my quarters to the pinball table and have to leave with a bunch of dirty clothes [laughs] because I just couldn't stop playing and I, for the life of me, have no idea what it was. It makes me crazy. In my head, I've concocted it into a *Mario Brothers* one, but it wasn't. It definitely was not, but I like to think that it was.

TV: So when you play pinball, are you more relaxed or are you more of a passionate player?

JK: I would say that I'm a chaotic passionate player, I do yell "NO!" a lot. I started off very-- I didn't realize that you could like nudge the table. I thought that was cheating, so I started off as a very calm player, and the more that I got into it then the more that I become sometimes a little intense, but not as intense as some people. I've seen some very violent players, like they will

kick and stuff, not intentionally, but they get very in the zone. So whenever I start to get too into it, I just stand on one foot so that I'm not moving too much

TV: How often do you play pinball?

JK: You know, again, at least once a week. I used to play almost every night, but then I started taking up a couple other hobbies so that I wasn't becoming too tunnel visioned on it. So if I go more than a week without playing, I feel really weird and uncomfortable and kinda stressed out, but usually about 1 to 2 nights a week, if possible. More in the winter I feel like, because I start to feel like really claustrophobic and I need to get out of my apartment which seems weird, because I feel like in the summer, you'd be more like that but yeah in the winter. I'm like "I need to go anywhere that has a pinball table" but I always keep an eye out for a pinball table anywhere that I go

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TV: Is there any one score or one specific pinball session that you were incredibly proud of?

JK: There is. It wasn't all that high of a score in the grand scheme of pinball, but I played my first pinball tournament during the spring and I was playing a table called *Mustang*, which is a fun table, and I was very nervous because I get very nervous very easily and I didn't realize this was happening until after the fact and this is why I'm super proud of it. One of my friends was standing in line behind me and there was a guy next to her and he was kind of talking smack about lady pinball players and then I got a really high score on the table and he stopped talking which was really cool. So I was kind of happy to hit one home for the ladies, but I also recently broke my high score on the *Addams Family* table, which, again, I'm a newer player so it's not like an earth shattering score but I feel pretty good about it. [Chuckles]

TV: Did we already ask that question? No, we didn't. What is your favorite pinball board?

JK: *Attack from Mars*. The table way made in 1995 and it has been successfully the background on my phone since I got my new phone in December. It is-- you're basically saving the world from the Martians, like you do. It's gorgeous and weird. It's got some of my favorite callouts, which are just the voices on the pinball table. It has little Martians that shake really crazy, and it's just so much fun, and I absolutely love it.

TV: Do you own pinball boards of your own?

JK: I don't, but I wish. One day I will. I've already kind of started planning. One of the first pinball machines I would buy, if I can find them and that kind of thing, not yet, just a dream. Just a beautiful, beautiful dream.

TV: What types of skills are important to have when playing pinball?

JK: I think patience is very important, because it's something that you're not going to automatically be good at. If you are, I mean, that's awesome, it happens. But it's tough, so it's just like not, Ya'know, being a person who won't give up on something just because you feel like everyone else is better than you is very important. And just being able to play with other people because most pinball tables are up to 4 people and some people just kind of get lost in their own games that I think it's important to create an inclusive space and have a good time doing it, and honestly, good eye-hand coordination and the ability to kind of improvise where needed.

TV: So how does one go about being good at pinball if one starts out as a complete newbie?

JK: One of the things that we always suggest is watching tutorials and reading the rule sheets, so that you actually know where you're supposed to be hitting the ball or what combination of shots will get more points. There's some really great tutorials on YouTube on just about every table basically. It'll show you how to rack up the most points or get multiball or the different components of the table, and basically-- I know that my skills are always moving forward because I'm always practicing, so practice doesn't necessarily make perfect, but it teaches you hands-on what you're supposed to be doing, since all the tables are so different. Some of them, once you play them long enough-- you'll see similar qualities. *Attack from Mars* is just like *Star Trek*. The JJ Abrams one [inaudible]. You'll see that it has a lot of similar qualities. Like, this table plays like this if you've never played it before, and this is something like, "Yeah, I have a familiarity with it." So it's nice because you start to pick up on the patterns. Practice, practice, practice.

TV: So are there any particular tips that you have for aspiring pinball players, not just in terms of gameplay, but in general?

JK: Don't give up. Nudge the table. Don't tilt [laughs]. My God, don't tilt, but have fun. If you're not having fun with it, you need to just stop doing it. And I feel like that's a general rule for everything. I've been in trouble for saying this before, but know that it's just a hobby, unless you're like working for a pinball company. There's no need to take it super seriously. You're not going to make a living out of it. It's just a fun hobby. And I feel like that is something that is, for some people, difficult to respect, but for some people, I mean, nine out of ten people are like, "yeah, it's just a fun hobby." But there's also that one person that's like, "no, this is life!" It's just pinball, but it's super fun, if you, you know. It's cool to be really good at it, but just don't be a jerk.
[Laughs].

TV: Okay. Has playing pinball improved any of your real life skills?

JK: It's made me more social. I used to be a comedian, and then I stopped performing and did more producing and writing and when I did that, I stopped going around so much, because there was no need for me to be around other people unless I had a meeting. So pinball definitely got me out of my apartment more, made some new friends, met some new people, interacted with other humans, which was cool, and spent a lot more time in public spaces. So it's very helpful, and it gave me more things to talk about, because I'm very bad at small talk. So if I knew someone I was talking to or I knew they were a part of the pinball community, I'd just be like, "hey, so what's your favorite table?" And then we would start talking about pinball for a very long time.

TV: Is there anyone in particular that helped encourage that interest in pinball machines?

JK: Yes. My coworker I was talking about earlier, his name is Grayson, and he introduced me to this awesome lady named Crystal and also his friend Ben, who runs Pinball Chicago. So, Ben kind of, he taught me as far as like -- the first time I saw him play, I was very concerned, because he is a big nudger, and I was like, "No, that's weird and cheating. You're doing it wrong. This is like illegal." Just by watching Ben, I feel like I've learned how to play more like a normal pinball player. But once I met Crystal, she is obsessed with pinball in the best way possible. So Crystal and I would get together and go play pinball, and it made me -- playing with her made me want to be a better player, she's great. I think there was one game where I got a higher score than her, and I was like, "Oh my God! I'm doing it!" Like I finally felt that I was slowly earning pinball cred and ever since then, you know, it's very, very pinball focused. And she always comes up with these technical stuff, and she knows all of these names and stuff, and I'm like, "I'm glad to just play pinball, and glad that you know that stuff." She always teaches me something new and her enthusiasm for it really keeps me interested, and be a better player and know more. It's like, "that's crazy, how do you know that? That's insane." It's really awesome. It's great to be surrounded by people who have a different side of enthusiasm about something that you also love because it just, like, it makes, when you actually come together and play together, it makes it even more -- it makes you a good team.

TV: Is there any specific childhood moment that helped you grow your interest in pinball?

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JK: I honestly think it kind of harken back to my love of skee ball, because when I would go to Timeout, the arcade, not like, being put in a corner, I would always go for something that was more physical and hands on versus a video game, so it's nice to -- even though skee ball is still around, I played skee ball as an adult, I feel like pinball, and somehow being able to manipulate

a part of the machine that's not just a button. No offense to video games at all, because still, if you're hitting a flipper, you're just hitting a button. Seeing an actual movement of different pieces of a machine, so that helped. Also, skee ball and pinball both have balls, so. [Chuckles]. A really rudimentary correlation.

TV: Do you think the competitive pinball scene has been growing, or has it been dying out?

JK: I think it's grown exponentially actually. I didn't know then that the competitive pinball scene existed, until I ended up joining Pinball Chicago, and then from there I learned about the Logan League. Logan Arcade has a Tuesday night league, and then when that's on the off-season, there's some guys that run another pinball league. So I feel like things keep popping up so it's really cool Pinball Chicago keeps growing every season, which is really great. It's becoming a lot more popular, because more people are hearing about it and I think it's something a lot of people still don't know exists, but it's definitely garnering a lot more steam.

TV: So you said something earlier about pinball leagues and pinball tournaments.

JK: Mhm [affirmative].

TV: How often do you compete or play in competitive environments?

JK: So I've been doing pinball Chicago-- I think this will be our fourth or fifth season -- fourth sounds about right. So I've been doing that since the beginning. Tournaments, I've only done one so not very frequently. Again, I have a bunch of travel coming up, so I'm kind of out for the Logan league this year, or this season rather. But anytime that something's going on, I do try to be there if I'm available. It's hard because most of the tournaments are geared toward people who are the top pinball players which is totally expected, but for more amateur players, there aren't a ton of tournaments. But usually, if there is a gaming convention or something like that, there will be a tournament, so.

TV: Where do you normally place?

JK: So, there's a group of guys called Dead Flip that have a tournament at their shop and I personally have not played in one, but the next time it comes up, I want to. I just usually -- my schedule is kind of messed up. There's the Midwest Gaming Classic, MGC, Milwaukee every year that was where I played in my first tournament. And then there is Expo, which is coming up in like two weeks in Wheeling. Technically Chicago, but they're in a place in Wheeling, but they'll have a tournament. I will not be there, unfortunately. For pinball Chicago, we play in different bars and arcades around the city. So like Delilah's [inaudible], Headquarters, Emporium, Logan, Double Bubble, which I think is in Edgewater. Places like that.

TV: I might have phrased my question wrong there.

JK: Oh.

TV: That was okay. That was also a very good answer. It seems like you took it as, “Where do these tournaments take place?” I meant to ask, “Where is your own position in these tournaments? Like where do you end up as a player?”

JK: [laughs]. Oh. Got it. I'm kind of middle-ish. As of right now, I have PA rankings. I think I'm 7,363 out of 20,000 players internationally. So I'm like not too bad, not too great but not too bad. Fairly mediocre, but higher than like 13,000 other people. [Laughs]

TV: S do you like digital pinball games or like pinball simulators like say *Pinball Arcade* for like a PC? Do they seem to function as well as physical pinball games?

JK: Yes and no. No because you can't really nudge in the same way that you would have control if you were actually touching the table. But they're a really great way to learn different rulesets for tables. You can't really get a ball stuck. You could get a ball stuck in a table, but if it's digital, it's not going to screw up like that, not screw up, but you aren't going to have that minor malfunction. They're so great for learning the general mechanics of pinball and the rulesets for the specific tables, because there are some simulators that are tables that are not in existence, but there are a lot of them which are physical tables that you can actually find in arcades, so if you can't get out or if you're just starting and are nervous, it's still a great place if you still want to play instead of just reading stuff, if you're more of a hands-on learner. And it'll save you some money in the long run, instead of putting a bunch of quarters into a table.

TV: You kind of answered this question in the last one, but do you prefer real pinball tables to simulated ones?

JK: I do love the real tables. Yeah. I find it difficult to not have my hands on either side of a table and push on an iPad screen or something like that. Although Space Cadet pinball on Windows was always my go-to in college. That was somehow easier. Although, you can nudge that table if I recall correctly. But it would get stuck and you'd have to restart the program. But yeah, definitely the physical table.

TV: What innovations, if any, have been happening in the production and play of pinball? Have there been any new tables come out recently?

JK: Oh man, yeah. A bunch. For me personally, one of my most anticipated tables which I haven't seen is called *Lexy Lightspeed*. The protagonist is a female in a good light which is nice. A portion of the board is actually digital. It's like a LCD, LED-- I get those mixed up. Part of it is just digital. And part of it does use a physical pinball. That's one that I'm excited about. Someone has built a pinball table simulator that is actual pinball table sized, and you can pop it into a pinball table so you're playing a digital version of the table on an actual pinball table scale. I saw someone do this with *Addams Family* when I was at MGC. The table reacts just like it would with a physical ball. It would move if you nudged it, although there is no actual physical ball. But it's kind of like maybe 15 years ago that was a simulator of every Nintendo game that you could play on the Super Nintendo. That's a really cool thing. There are a lot of prototype pinball table from the old school pinball days, like the ones that were banded in the 20s and 30s that people would use to gamble. And a lot of independent people putting out tables. It's kind of hard to explain. *Scorgasm* was what it was called. It's a stupid name but a really cool table. You would have different colored balls and have to put them in different colored spots in the table in order to get your points, and then you'd add up your points and whoever had the highest score would win. That was like, no real high-tech mechanics. Those were all spring loaded and handmade too. There's a lot of stuff going on and independent stuff going on too. There's a guy who made a *Goonies* table. *The Big Lebowski* table is always moving around. There's a company called Jersey Jack that just completed *The Hobbit* table so there's a lot going on and a lot of people trying to put things out there that were different and do really cool custom cabinets and tables. It's hard though, because I saw someone made a really cool *Ghostbusters* table. Obviously, he doesn't have licensing for it. He himself owns that. But yeah, there's a lot to get licensing to name if it's an actual entity. But Lexi Lightspeed is what I'm most excited about.

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TV: You talked a lot about the mechanics of pinball games, do you know anything about the internal works of a pinball game?

JK: Nothing specific yet. I'm now becoming friends with people who fix tables because I would love to learn how to do that. I've always been more of a technical, how does it work person so potentially being able to fix machines is cool. I was just talking to my friend James who was working on the tables at Logan, about different pieces that make different sounds and spin in different ways. If someone is fixing a table, I ask them a ton of questions if it's clearly not going to annoy them. I always wanted to own a table so I could take it apart, and then put it back together.

TV: Do you think that pinball has the ability to grow, in terms of like a younger audience, in the age of free and accessible mobile games?

JK: I hope so. I feel like pinball has the ability to flourish by younger generations or get completely lost. So if there is a better accessibility to it, that would introduce people to pinball prior to getting into an arcade but also lead them to the arcade, that type of environment. I think that would be really great. There are a lot more apps and simulators coming out now which is awesome. So I'm hopeful for the future.

TV: Do you think that competitive pinball and stuff like that, is it more of a niche scene or is it one that most pinballers are actually apart of?

JK: I think-- that's a really good question. It's a scene that's definitely- I feel like there are a lot of parts to this. I think it can be-- It can kind of flourish past being like a niche thing as long as people keep talking about it. The most common way that I've gotten my friends interested in pinball is by them being like "What did you do last night?" or "What are you doing tonight?" and me being like "Oh I'm gonna go play pinball." Their response is always "Really? Where?" and I'm like "Come into my world. I'll show you where all the pinball is." [Laughs] So I try to make it a point to talk about pinball as much as I can if people are asking like "What's going on?" or "What are you excited about that coming up?" or whatever, which is probably really annoying to some people because some people are like, "I'm a vegan," and it's all they talk about all the time. It's like I just want to talk pinball. My hope is that more people get interested. And that's kind of my goal is to bring people who are like "I don't know anything about pinball" into pinball and make it more included. There are definitely people who are very specific about who they want to play with or telling people how and how not to play. It's a generally friendly community, and very welcoming, but like any community, there are those people that are like, "Oh you haven't been playing pinball forever? You didn't grow up with a table? What are you doing here?" So, I'm trying to bridge that gap.

TV: Are there any pinball tables in particular that you would suggested for starting pinball players to start off on?

JK: I would. I feel that, and it's not just because it's my favorite, but I feel like *Attack From Mars* is a good one to start on. It has a fairly open play field until you get to the back of the table, which is where the giant UFO is. So you can see a lot of the different shots that you're aiming for very well. Monster Mash is tough. I would not recommend starting on that one because it could probably make you know want to play pinball ever again, even though it's fantastic and I love it now, but there's just too much going on. As much as I don't particularly like the table, like it's not my first, second, third, or fourth choice to ever play, the WWE table that just came out last year from Stern is a pretty good starter table, and it's fun. A lot of people recommend Addam's Family; I don't recommend it as a beginner table. Metallica can also be really fun. Stay away from, if you're first starting, ACDC, Simpson's Pinball Party, TRON, because TRON is very fast, but very fun. Mustang's also a good one for starters.

TV: So, would you say that there's a sort of difficulty curve to each sort of pinball, because, you know, there's, in a lot of video games, there's like, "oh this is for casual or starting players, and this is for more advanced players", or, as the game goes on, it gets more increasingly difficult. Does that happen a lot in pinball?

JK: I feel like it does, and a part of it is also dependent on how the table itself is set, so you can set a table so it's a little more difficult so that, if you drain a ball right away, you don't get a ball save, for instance. A lot of tables are set where you get a ball save if you don't reach a certain amount of points the first time that you're playing your ball. Some tables don't have a-- Addam's Family does not really have a ball save, I don't think. I've never seen one with it, or maybe it's just never been turned on. But, yeah there are definitely different difficulty levels. There's a table that, it's called "Fish Tales", and the first time I played it, I think my longest game was thirty seconds. It was awful and I hated it, and then a couple of my friends from Dead Flip taught me how to play correctly and now I absolutely love it, but yeah depending on what parts of the table spin, or where you hit the ball so that it accidentally comes back too fast, there's just so much... Oh Jurassic Park is a really good table for starters too. But yeah, there's a lot of craziness in some of the tables that have these weird mechanisms that are there just to screw with you. It can be very devastating when you're doing very well, and then all of a sudden you just drain because of something really stupid; not stupid but very unavoidable.

TV: So, one of the first reasons that we came to contact you was because you claimed to have started a sort of pinball group called Down to Flip, and what is Down to Flip?

JK: So, Down to Flip is something that my friend Crystal, who I mentioned earlier, and I started a couple months ago. Down to Flip is an all-women's pinball club. Our goal is to basically make pinball more accessible to women in the Chicago area, and we've also been meeting and did some meet and greets so women pinball players could all meet each other, because it's a fairly male dominated area. We, through playing with Pinball Chicago, we encountered a lot of other women who were like, "Oh I love pinball, but I feel like sometimes it's just kind of tough to navigate the different arcades, as a lady just trying to play a game", for a multitude of reasons, and we also came across friends who were like, "Oh I'd to play pinball, but I just don't want to contend with potential guys who are going to make it awkward", so, thanks to Jim Zespy, who runs Logan Arcade, he gave us a space, and every Thursday we all gather and play pinball, and teach each other different skills we do some workshops. We held a charity tournament and hope to hold a couple more, so we're trying to raise money for different female centric charities.

[00:50:08]

I think we have a couple coming up for women and children, and then pets, stuff like that, but mostly like... Our first one was for the Endometriosis Foundation, which was awesome. Oh yeah like our goal is to just make it more inclusive and help people build up the confidence to who

want to play in the different leagues but feel a little nervous about it. It's working, we have a whole bunch of ladies who are joining Pinball Chicago, so we're really excited.

TV: When and why did you start Down to Flip?

JK: So, we started it July-ish. It's one of those where Crystal and I were always talking about it'd be really cool to have a women's league, we'd seen them work Bells and Chimes in California. There's a ton of women's leagues. I say a ton but there's like-- I mean—it's pinball. There's probably like 15 or 20. We kind of surprised that there wasn't one in Chicago yet, considering how big pinball is here. So we kind of just... Crystal created a Facebook page like, "I did it, we have to do this now", and... yeah, so we did it just to get a better idea of how many women around Chicago actually were interested in pinball and were playing, and to give everybody a cool little community to discuss different things pertaining to pinball, or experiences with gaming, or just, you know, if you wanted to find a couple people to play pinball with you... and we used to... when we just started playing pinball, on our Pinball Chicago team, we would put up little flipper signals, like "Hey is anybody DTF (Down to Flip)?", so that was a bit of an extension of those awkward days where people asked me really weird questions as to why I was constantly posting on Facebook why I was "DTF".

TV: Why did you choose pinball over other sort of arcade games?

JK: Mostly because it was something that I was playing on the regular, and my general interest in other video games is very casual, whereas pinball is a lot more [inaudible]. There were some times where I was playing pinball 20 hours a week, so it was a bigger part of my life, and it just seemed like a lot more welcoming for women in general, as any sort of stepping stone into the gaming industry.

TV: Where exactly did you get the idea for Women's pinball?

JK: Everywhere. Again, Bells and Chimes, there's a woman named Molly Atkinson in Los Angeles who has a really awesome... I think just started as she just had a bunch of tables that she would fix in her garage, and then she opened a real place, and you're seeing more women just taking charge, you know, instead of asking permission to be a part of something, just making it something. I think that became really important to us, just making sure that that was represented here, because that was happening in New York and California and Texas, and it felt necessary here.

TV: You mentioned Molly...

JK: Molly Atkinson, yeah. A-T-K-I-N-S-O-N. She's in LA. I don't know her, but I know people to do know her. She seems really cool, and there's a little documentary about her, too, that I watched a couple years ago that was really inspirational for me.

TV: What are the primary events of Down to Flip?

JK: So, we're still kind of working on a format for workshops and stuff like that, but we've had a couple of workshops. Mostly it's just a social kind of get together, meet your fellow pinball players, more charity tournaments we definitely want to work on, raising awareness about different organizations and stuff like that. Really, so far, we've just kind of been getting to know people, trying to get more people to come to the Thursday night casual plays, and finding out who actually wants to have a competitive side to it. We sent out a survey a couple weeks ago to get people perspective on "Are you more of a casual player? What are your goals as they pertain to pinball?" So we're trying to assess what everybody wants, which has been incredibly helpful, because I feel like just putting something out there can sometimes be difficult, and we have over 100 women in the group, so "Tell us what you want to see! We want to do what you want to do." So the workshops are, I think, one of the most important things, and yeah the charity tournaments are just super fun.

TV: So you mentioned you have over 100 members?

JK: Yes.

TV: How many of those are active?

JK: So we've had about 15 to 20 come out on Thursdays. It's just a timing thing that I know is kind of tough for people because they are, like... I can think of 30 people who just aren't available on Thursdays, but they're also part of Pinball Chicago, or they play in the other leagues, so as far as actively meeting I would say 20 to 25, but there's still so many more that will post "Oh I'm going to play here", and people will join them, or someone will be like "Oh I'm coming out tonight, who should I look for?", and we'll always just be like "My hair color changes almost every other week, so just look for the girl with X colored hair." So yeah, we're constantly meeting new people which is great. More people are asking to join the group. I had a guy ask if he could join the group. I felt really bad rejecting him, I sent him a really nice message, and now we're friends. Making friends through pinball! But, yeah it's a really good group, but yeah there's definitely a core group that comes every week but then there will be people like "I'll be here on Tuesdays, is anyone going to be around?" So it's hard scheduling wise, because I feel everyone in Chicago is doing a million different things. We've had really good turnout when we've workshops, so that's nice.

TV: How often does Down to Flip meet?

JK: We try to meet once a week, and we weren't super good about that over the summer because I went to Delaware to visit my family, and Crystal went to the beach, so neither of us were there. People keep going, which was cool, they would be looking for us but just find each other at like... any time. If you go to Logan Arcade at a Thursday at eight-o'clock at night, and you see a

woman who makes eye contact with another woman, she's about to ask her if she's there for Down to Flip, so pretty much even without us people are going, which is cool.

TV: Where do you meet usually?

JK: Logan Arcade. This should just be a giant commercial for just Logan Arcade, sorry not sorry.

TV: We sort of touched up on this. What's the average attendance for each sort of event?

JK: About twenty-ish people. It's also tough because I feel like, again, scheduling, but like, people will come throughout the night, so like maybe someone will show up at nine, nine-thirty, or like, I usually leave around ten to ten-thirty, but someone might be showing up right as I'm leaving. So it can be kind of difficult to gauge, but it's usually about twenty-ish people.

TV: And you said you ran a charity thing?

JK: Mhmm. [affirmative]

TV: How many people attended that?

JK: That was a good one. So, we had thirty players in total, but a lot of people brought friends, so we had at least 40 to 50 people. We ended up raising \$350, which was awesome, because it was a \$10 buy in, but some people didn't have \$10, some people just gave us money, which was cool. It was really good, so like... I still feel really great about it.

TV: What charity was it?

JK: Endometriosis Foundation. It's a really horrible thing that happens to ladies. So they're constantly doing research to find out-- it's just like really-- I don't want to get too into it, because it's kind of... I don't know how squeamish you guys are. But yeah it's like-- you know how women typically complain about their periods? It's like getting 20 periods at once. It's uncomfortable.

[01:00:00]

A lot of-- and what was good was I got in touch with them to get some information to give out to people, and they also promoted the event on their page, which was really cool even though they're based out of New York, but a lot of people-- like, thousands of people like their page so it was really cool.

TV: How often do you get new members for your club?

JK: Not super frequently now, so when we first started we were getting new people all the time... At this point though it's usually once a week, well, yeah since we meet once a week, that like someone will bring a friend, or like, there's one woman who, I posted something about the charity tournament on twitter, and she tagged Logan Arcade and she followed Logan Arcade and she was like "I want to go but I'm not really very outgoing.", and I was like "Well you'll know me if you go.", so basically I just tried to like and she came which was awesome, she's the best, but yeah I would say we have maybe one or two new members every month now, but... It started off fairly, now slow, but like, we had 28 members, then we had 30, and then all of a sudden, out of nowhere, we had 100, and I was like "Oh god, where are all these women coming from this is awesome!"

TV: Are there any similar groups from outside the Chicagoland area?

JK: Oh yeah there's a ton of them. There's one in Minneapolis, definitely one in Milwaukee. There's a bunch of them along the mid-west. There's New York, I think there's one in Pennsylvania in the Bethlehem area, I believe, I'm not 100% certain. Definitely in Los Angeles and San Francisco, yeah, we're everywhere.

TV: What's the average age group for members of this club?

JK: Mostly like 20s to 30s. There are some older people, older by like -- they're in their 40s, they're not that much older. But yeah typically like 20s to 40s. [Long pause] Sorry I just kind of trailed off there.

TV: You talk a little about uncomfortableness about women pinballers going to arcades and having to deal with men. Are there any particular challenges for women getting into the pinball scene?

JK: Yeah. Let me preface this by saying dudes are great, but yeah I feel like a lot of times, as a woman alone in front of a pinball table, you get a lot of... If people don't really know you, or aren't familiar with you, or they're not part of the pinball community, you get a lot of unsolicited advice, or touching. It's really weird, because like, for a lot of people, going to a bar means that you're trying to meet people, but for a lot of women gamers, if you're in front of game, you just want to play. But there are environments where that type of behavior does not happen, which is awesome, so it's like... Again, dependent on the neighborhood. It can be challenging, and I think like... One of the toughest challenges that I've seen, and my friends have encountered is... Just for people assuming that you don't know what you're doing, so that's, I think, the most frustrating thing, when someone tells you not to shake a table, or they yell at you for nudging like you're going to break the table, like no you can walk across a pinball table, physically walk across it and it will not break, like... Sure there are parts that will definitely pop off or fall apart, and you're like standing next to a guy who's doing the same thing but it's like "Ma'am don't shake the table, Ma'am." So... it's uncomfortable sometimes, but I started wearing headphones when I'm by

myself, and if I'm with a group of friends I do get kind of mouthy. I'm a problem starter, but there's also... I had one day where I went to one arcade bar and had a couple different bad experiences, and I went somewhere else, and noticed this guy standing behind me when I was done playing pinball. He was like "Wow that was really cool!" This made my day way better, so it's fifty fifty, but for me-- My opinion is if you start getting better known within the community, and you see people more and more, less people are going to mess with you, because, more than likely you're going to be playing with your friends, and stereo-typically your friends are going to be a bunch of dude that play pinball, and no one's going to mess with you if you're with a bunch of dudes that play pinball, which, as a feminist, really sucks to say but that's the truth. Or they're not going to mess with you if they know you, because they see you all the time, so being more visible is cool.

TV: So, one question I have here is-- How diverse is the group in terms of race, gender identity, sexuality, financial background, etc., ability, etc.

JK: It's... I would say fairly diverse. Down to Flip or the pinball community in general?

TV: Both.

JK: Ok, yeah it's fairly diverse. I mean, there are definitely a lot of white ladies, that's unavoidable in the mid-west, but we do have all sorts of people. Background wise, everybody's different. I have a 9 to 5 office job that's not a conventional office job, but, you know, we have people who also work in bars, or baristas, other office type people, hair stylists and stuff like that. It's one of our... one of our women is a mud wrestler, which is awesome. So yeah, just kind of across the board, and we're open to pretty much anyone as long as they identify as woman. That was the thing that, when the guy contacted me I was like, "I don't mean to be rude, but do you identify as a woman? Because if you don't you can't be in this group.", and he was like, "I don't but I like women.", and I was like, "that's cool, thank you, I'm glad you support us.", but yeah, unless you identify as a woman or are gender-fluid, that's totally-- you're part of our team.

TV: And now about pinball in general... Did you say it's diverse?

JK: It's getting more diverse, I feel like. It's definitely got a ways to go, like everything else, but it's definitely getting a little bit more diverse. I can't think... I'm trying to think of another word besides "diverse", because I just keep saying that over and over, but yeah, it's getting there, slowly but surely. Hopefully it will continue to get more and more diverse.

TV: What are some of the events that your group hosts or takes part in?

JK: The charity events... We're definitely very vocal about getting people involved in other pinball type of tournaments or competitive play or teams. Since we're still kind of young, one of the things that we would love to do it to go to different cities and meet their pinball clubs and

kind of play against them... see what their home bases are like, that kind of thing, but these are like grand ideas for the future. So mostly we're just doing kind of our socializing and playing pinball, since we're still getting a hold on that, but the workshops are also a really big part of some... you know, some of things that we do is try to teach people the different mechanics of the tables, and different rule-sets, we do an Off the Glass... or.. Glass Off Workshop, where we take the glass off of the pinball machine, so everything is super crazy loud, and you can actually touch things, or like feel how heaving a ball is, or how hard the flipper is actually flipping when it feels like it's not actually flipping that hard, or... identifying different parts of the table, that kind of stuff.

TV: How much community influence do you think this group has, in general, in the pinball community?

JK: You know, when we started this, a lot of guys, a lot of our guy friends were really excited, because Crystal and I are pretty big pinball nerds, and I have, many times, voiced my displeasure of the lack of inclusive spaces for women within pinball.

[01:10:00]

So, I feel like the impact has been small but positive. As we actually figure out the direction that we're trying to go in, and what would best benefit the members. I feel like it'll start to get cooler and more, you know... Especially with the charity events, we definitely want to make a great positive impact that way, just because it feels really good to be able to support awesome organizations, so... We're hoping to do more there, but right now we're just a little baby idea that's slowly unfurling.

TV: Was founding Down to Flip a new experience for you, or have you had previous experience with starting groups of clubs?

JK: It was... kind of new. I've been part of different theater groups and comedy communities... organized shows and different kind of things that way. Actually I used to organize a lot of charity shows, so for me, it was just kind of going in a different direction. Different yet similar, but I've never had to kind of reach out to a lot of complete strangers before about something, so it was kind of tough, because sometimes people will be like, "What are we doing this week?". I'm like "I don't know, we're just going to play some pinball, we'll figure it out." So I feel like I should be doing a lot more than I currently am, but like we're still gathering data, but, yeah, it's been different in the gaming respect because I also feel like, as someone who's only been part of the gaming community here for like, two years, I sort of feel like a poser sometimes because I know there are people who have been playing pinball for way longer than I am, and are way better than I am, so like, what actually does give me the right to start this? And it's simply the fact that no one else did yet, and I wanted to.

TV: Compared to any. Is being a leader for your group a new experience for you?

JK: Kind of, and I'm really lucky to be more of like a co-leader with Crystal, because I feel she and I have such different different but complimentary styles of leading, and what we want is very much in line what we want for the group is very much in line with each other. Like I said before, I've directed and produced shows, so... I'm used to being more of like an Iron Fist leader versus a "What would be best for everybody?" kind of thing. We don't really have a deadline for anything unless we're doing a charity tournament, and typically that's something Crystal and I throw together, we don't expect anyone else to do it, so it's a little bit different in that respect of like 100 people looking at you to make a decision about a thing that's going to affect everybody, even though it's just about pinball, like it's not a life or death situation, not that theater is either, but it can be- But yeah, it's very different. It's really cool, and I'm really glad that it's not just me doing it.

TV: Were there any challenges you had when first forming a group?

JK: Oh yeah. We were really worried that no one would be interested in it, and that we'd get a big negative reaction from dudes, because it was just for ladies, and sometimes that can happen. So it was of us like "Ok we're going to do this thing, and we're just going to see what happens, and if there's any backlash we'll deal with it as it comes in." So we kind of prepared ourselves for what we would say if people were like, "Why aren't there guys here?" and "Why does this need to exist? Why do women feel like they can't just play pinball?", and like that kind of thing like, "Why does it just have to be ladies?" That didn't happen, which was really cool, but it was very much... it was very expected, which I feel kind of bad about, because most of the guys in the pinball community are pretty cool, yeah no we were expecting it. There was like, one or two people who, I was just like, "Any day now they're just going to think this is stupid.", but everyone was super supportive.

TV: Looking back on it, did you expect any of the success you've had so far?

JK: No. For the first charity tournament that we had, we were really nervous that maybe two or three people would show up, and I was like, "If we don't raise \$100 I'm definitely going to up some more money to put towards the donation, because Endometriosis already knows about this thing, and we're going to end up sending them \$50, that's awful. We had a lot more people come out than I anticipated and it was really cool to see that. Yeah I did not anticipate that at all.

TV: So what are some of your favorite moment from Down to Flip meetings or events?

JK: I always love when someone new comes, because I always try to find out what their favorite table it and why, and it just-- I feel like that's a good icebreaker kind of question, again because I'm really bad at small talk and that's a great gateway, unless you have a dog or a cat, I don't really know how to ask you questions. So yeah like-- and doing our first workshop, and seeing

how beneficial people felt that it was, was really cool. And also, creating a cool night, where people are just like, "Hey I haven't really gone out this week, but I was really looking forward to Thursday, like the first time someone posted in the group, like, "Really excited to get out of work and hang out with y'all tonight", like, it's those little things that-- it doesn't seem like they make a huge impact, but to me I'm just like "We've created this space that we've wanted to create, and now we can pretty much do anything with it, but people are excited just to have new friends, and a new place to go, and a new thing to do. It's neat, thank you.

TV: This is a couple-- this is a couple miscellaneous questions we have right down here... Do you think there's any issues that you have with current gaming culture in general?

JK: Yeah. I don't know, I sometimes get very nervous to talk about this kind of stuff, just because I've seen what's happened to other women, but I feel like even though there shouldn't be this divide, there is, even when, I think, women make up a larger percentage of gaming than men, but it's very discouraging to see women pushed away from gaming because someone found out that they were a woman and started saying awful things. Actually, before I came here, I was looking something up about Molly Atkinson, and I ended up on a forum site called "Pinside", which is a pinball forum, it's just like... a bunch of different threads about different kinds of tables, you can find rule sheets and stuff like that, and someone started a thread like "Who are the most influential women in pinball?", and the first couple people answered, and the rest of the people like... tore the whole thing... "Why do we need this?", "Why can't we all just be people who play pinball?", and then it just got really bad. A lot of stuff I was like "I can't read this anymore" because it's basically like "Oh yeah the comments at the end of the article", you know? And it becomes this really weird situation like, there was a pinball table that was released at the beginning of the year called "Woah Nelly, Big Juicy Melons", and the whole table is basically about boobs, and anyone who expressed their displeasure about the table on the company, Stern, their Facebook page, they were banned or the comments were deleted, or they just were not taken seriously or told, "Why don't you just get off the computer? Go play some pinball!", so it's little stuff like that, that just builds into a very weird place as a woman, and so it's like, you can either stop playing games, or you can just put on your headphones and deal with it, and it sucks. But... I don't want to stop playing pinball, so instead I'll just, you know, ignore it sometimes, or, again, mouth off at people... yell at them for just being idiots, and get really "feminist" at people.

TV: What are some of your favorite non-pinball... non-arcade games that you enjoy?

[01:20:00]

JK: I love Tetris. I-- I love everything about Tetris. The music, and I don't-- I just prefer straight up old school 1989 Tetris... I don't like Tetris Party, or any of that crap. God, I miss Tetris, I miss I don't know what happened to my GameBoy, I lost it a very long time ago, like my old, you know, the first ones. But yeah, definitely, although I guess that's not a non-arcade game, is it?

TV: You're talking about the GameBoy version of Tetris, right?

JK: That's true, that's true. Oh, me and my roommates -- we like to play Sentinels of the Multiverse, it's a board game. like an RPG kind of board game. I also play Dungeons and Dragons a lot, because it's great, but yeah I love roleplay games, or board games, *Settlers of Catan*, you know, basic but a lot of fun. Longest road, for life.

TV: Do you think your taste in pinball reflects your taste in other games?

JK: Yeah, sometimes. I do find myself more drawn to things that deal with space, or superheroes, or horror, so, generally, it kinda follows the same rule.

TV: Are there any new or upcoming games that you're excited for?

JK: Pinball or otherwise?

TV: Anything.

JK: So, I don't watch Game of Thrones, but there's a new Game of Thrones table that's coming out. I'm just really excited about new tables. [Inaudible] Lightspeed. Oh, there was board game that somebody sent me that was about. It was all about dogs, and I forget what it was called, but like I have friends that are working to open up a board game cafe here in Chicago, so they're always like tagging me in stuff, because I'm also a pet sitter, so like anything that has to do with animals, I'm all over it. But yeah, whatever that dog board game is, I'm very excited about it.

TV: Do you have anything else that you'd like to say as this is our last question?

JK: Oh really? Wow. No that's. I feel like we covered quite a bit of ground, this was really cool. Yeah, just, you know, I really hope that-- I really hope that another, like right now there's only one major pinball company, and it'd be really cool if there were more than one. There are always more tables being developed independently, and as there are more people coming out of, or learning programming a design and stuff like that, it'd be cool if someone was, and I mean this is. I dunno, I don't know how frequently people are like, "Pinball! I want to create pinball tables for a living and build a company!", like that's tough, but it'd be really cool if there were another big pinball company, because, as great as Stern is, they have no major competition for mass production of pinball tables, so I'm hoping that there is a resurgence of pinball in the coming years, because it's cool to be enthusiastic about it, but it's another thing to potentially, you know, create a whole mass produced table.

TV: So how do you see pinball in, like, ten years, let's say?

JK: Oh man, I never really thought about it. It could go either way. I feel like there's such great enthusiasm about it, in specific parts of the country, and then the world. My hope is that any sort

of division that currently exists in it goes away, and that it does becomes a lot more diverse, and people, you know, focus more on making sure that it flourishes, as opposed to, you know, the general snobbery of, "This is something that I like, you only just started liking this.", you know, I want more people to foster a love of the game. It would be really cool, I dunno, I feel like it'd be really cool if it grew more and became more popular, and if older tables started getting made again, but I don't think that's likely, I mean there's reissues of updated version of tables and stuff, but, yeah, and if licensing for a new table wasn't so difficult for something that's already in existence, but, those are crazy pipe dreams and I'm sure that won't happen in ten years, but yeah no I just hope that people keep playing, and that people keep learning how to fix tables, because those things break like crazy. There's a place on Western, in Lincoln Square, yeah, that's just filled with old pinball tables and video game cabinets that are busted, and I just so badly want people to fix them, and put them out into the world, but I'm starting like. several of my co-workers have pinball tables that they just kind of inherited, and so I just keep telling them more and more about them so that they can pass on the love of pinball to their kids and friends. So yeah, I hope it spreads more.

TV: Thank you for coming out and answering our questions.

JK: Any time.

TV: Do you have any suggestions for who else we might ask in regards to archiving Chicago coin-op?

JK: Yes. Yes, yes, yes. First and foremost, Jack Danger. He is a. I dunno if he's the leader, but-- He, if you guys look up "Dead Flip", they are a huge pinball-- magnet is the wrong word, but I'm going to use it anyways, but yeah they have a pinball livestream. Monday through Friday on Twitch, which is awesome. Yeah, Jack Danger. Nick Campbell moved, but if he's around, that's cool. Basically, Crystal, who I keep mentioning, Crystal Gemnich, G-E-M, as in Mary, and like Nancy, I-C-H. Yeah, she's my pinball life partner, she's amazing. There's a guy by the name of Jack Benson, who used to work for Stern, I don't know if he would. I feel like he would do it but I don't know if he would do it. He's kind of an odd fellow, but very knowledgeable, and also like a. A champion type player. If you got in contact with a gentleman by the name of Jody Denkberg, and I can spell that for you, D-E-N-K-B-E-R-G, he's the director of marketing and licensing at Stern, he could probably get you in touch with Steve Richie, and Gary Stern, potentially, which would be cool. They run the only mass producing pinball company right now. Oh. what is that guy's name? Roger Sharp, if you talk to Jack Danger you'll be able to get in touch with a lot of these people too. Roger Sharp, I'm pretty sure his name is Roger and I feel bad if I'm wrong, he's the reason why pinball is legal in Illinois, which is really cool, it was illegal for a really long time, and I think it was in the 70s or something, he made one shot in court and it changed the face of pinball as we know it. It's so funny because like it's mostly dudes. I think that's. you guys already talked to [inaudible], I don't know who owns Emporium,

is it still recording? [Inaudible] is terrible, you don't want to talk to anybody from there. Yeah, I like that's a. and Jack Danger will give you a ton of people to talk to, too. But yeah, start with him and you'll get the world. but that's specifically pinball though. Oh. My friend Grayson, who I mentioned, his name. let me spell it for you because it's crazy. His first name is Grayson, which is just G-R-A-Y-S-O-N. His last name is D-A-S-K-O-W-I-C-S.

[01:30:00]

Dakowics-Davis. He and his roommate are really big in the world of competitive fighting games. Yeah, that's all I got.

TV: [inaudible]

JK: Cool, thank you guys