

<in-context>

the podcast on archives and the people behind them

Summary

The SAA Publications and *The American Archivist* editorial boards jointly propose to launch a podcast that highlights the archival literature and technologies, and the authors and creators behind them. The podcast, <in-context>, will feature interviews with authors of publications and creators of archival software and technologies. We believe the podcast will enable us to engage the profession with the archival literature and resources in ways that highlight SAA publication initiatives and complement the publication reviews in *The American Archivist* and software/digital project reviews on the Reviews Portal. It will help us publicize the intellectual products of the archives profession more broadly.

Why a podcast?

- To advocate for archivists and publicize our work in an interesting and accessible way, in order to help a broader audience understand the vital role of our profession (SAA Strategic Plan Goal 1)
- To further SAA's efforts to promote the value of archivists as professionals through their contributions as authors and technological innovators (SAA Strategic Plan Goal 1.1)
- To promote publications of relevance to the archives profession through author interviews (SAA Strategic Plan Goal 2)
- To deliver professional knowledge through the medium of podcasting (SAA Strategic Plan Goal 2.1, 2.2)
- To keep archivists informed of new ideas and developments in the profession through both publications and technology projects (SAA Strategic Plan Goal 3)
- To help SAA members develop a sense of SAA as an open-minded, openhearted, and inclusive community (SAA Strategic Plan Goal 4)

Format

- Twenty-minute episodes issued monthly and occasional hour-long episodes. Episodes can also include brief (approximately five minutes) publication/software reviews at the end
- Interviews are conducted remotely via Google Hangouts or Skype so that geography does not limit our choice of guests in addition to in-person interviews at conferences, etc.
- Interview format:
 - Introduction of episode / themes / hosts
 - Introduction of guest
 - Spacious conversation to introduce listeners to the guest, personally and professionally. Sample questions could include:
 - How did you find your way into archives profession?
 - What inspires you professionally, personally?

- What aspect of archival work has been most meaningful to you? Why?
- What one thing could our profession do to improve itself?
- What professional literature has been most important in shaping your thinking as an archivist?
- How do you describe your work to non-archivists?
- One or two short, light-hearted questions posed to every guest, in the style of the “Pivot Questionnaire” (used in *Inside the Actor’s Studio*), such as:
 - What superpower would you like to have and why?
 - If you weren’t an archivist, what would your profession be?

Sample questions if the guest is a recent book or journal article author (not necessarily in this order):

- Why did you decide to write this (book, article)?
- What is the most important takeaway for your readers?
- How does this book/article make a unique contribution to the archives profession?
- What and who were your influences?
- What part of the book/article was most challenging to write? Why?
- Talk about your writing process....
- What did you edit out of this book/article?
- Questions about the specific content of the book/article

Sample questions if the guest created software or a digital resource:

- What problem did you or your team aim to solve with this tool?
- How did the idea for this tool or resource arise?
- How did your team get funding to develop the tool or resource?
- What were the major lessons learned during the development process?
- What approach to project management did the team take?
- What major challenges did the team face while designing and building the tool or resource?
- How many people are using the tool or resource now? How is this measured?
- What should users think about while using the tool or resource now and in the future?
- How did you come to work on this tool? (personal narrative)
- Were your expectations for the tool or resource met?
- What advice would you give to others interested in creating a [type of tool or resource]?
- Questions about the specific details of the tool/resource

Guests

- The production team will choose the guests, assisted by suggestions from the SAA Publications Board and *The American Archivist* Editorial Board. The podcast’s site could

have a “suggestion box” on the podcast website will invite suggestions for future guests and topics from the archival community.¹

- Guests will include book publication authors and *The American Archivist / Archival Outlook* article authors.
- Guest appearances are unpaid
- The production team suggests the following guests for the first six episodes:
 - Cal Lee, incoming editor of *The American Archivist*, on his future plans for the journal
 - Mary Caldera and Kathryn M. Neal, *Through the Archival Looking Glass: A Reader on Diversity and Inclusion* (SAA, 2014) (also the focus of the 2017 “One Book, One Profession” book club)
 - Courtney Dean, [Acid Free](#), the Los Angeles Archives Collective’s magazine
 - Anthony Cocciolo, *Moving Image and Sound Collections for Archivists* (SAA, 2017)
 - Michelle Caswell, *Archiving the Unspeakable: Silence, Memory, and the Photographic Record in Cambodia* (Wisconsin, 2014)
 - Rand Jimerson, *Archives Power* (SAA, 2009)

Recording and Production

The authors of this proposal tested several systems that could be used for recording interviews. The team created test recordings with AdobeConnect, Skype, Google Hangouts, Callnote, and QuickTime. After assessing sound quality and ease of use for each system/tool, the team decided that interviews would be recorded using two systems--QuickTime and Callnote. Two QuickTime (or one QuickTime and another recording app that performs best in tests with the interviewee’s technology) recordings will be made (one by the interviewer and one by the interviewee). This setup will give us two high-quality audio files that can be stitched together with GarageBand. The third recording created with Callnote will serve as a reference while editing. In case of a WIFI disruption or Skype/Hangouts failure, the voice recordings aren’t tied to the calling software and won’t be lost. To summarize, the following recordings will be made during an interview:

1. A QuickTime recording with only interviewer’s voice
2. A QuickTime recording with only the interviewee’s voice (or another app that performs best in tests with the interviewee’s technology)
3. A Skype/Hangouts + Callnote reference recording with both voices

This approach will let us control the level of each person's voice/audio to help ensure consistent audio quality. The podcast team will create instructions for interviewee to use/install any (free) software needed for the interview.

Once editing is complete, the audio file will be uploaded to the WordPress site (see below) and published, and synced with iTunes.

¹ Please note that we will also make sure to communicate and coordinate with other archives podcasting projects to avoid duplicating content (for example, with Geof Huth and Karen Trivette, *An Archivist’s Tale*, <https://www.spreaker.com/show/an-archivists-tale>).

Platform

- The SAA podcast will be hosted on a WordPress site (linked from the SAA website, under the Publications drop-down menu), using a podcast plugin (i.e., [Seriously Simple Podcasting](#))
- The content would be synced with and also hosted on iTunes; using the above plugin would enable us to set up an RSS feed for the podcast so listeners can subscribe via iTunes or any other podcast app
- Interviews by Reviews Editor Bethany Anderson and Reviews Portal Coordinator Gloria Gonzalez will also be posted on the Reviews Portal
- The website will include the title, podcast logo, information about the production team, and photographs, links, and biographies related to our guests.
- The podcast team will communicate new podcasts, calls for suggestions, etc., via SAA's social media sites, using a special hashtag (such as #incontext), and through podcast email (tentatively: incontext@archivists.org)

Preservation Plan

All files from the interviews will be transferred to the SAA Records at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee. The interviews could also be added to the UWM Digital Collections, as another collection in addition to SAA's 75th Anniversary Oral History Interviews Project: <https://uwm.edu/lib-collections/saa/>. The podcast team will schedule the regular transfer of both raw interview files and the final, edited version, along with any preservation description information required by UWM. Any records created as part of the podcasting project will be retained or transferred to UWM in line with requirements specified per the Publications and Communications Series in the "Records Retention Policy for the Society of American Archivists and the SAA Foundation."²

Sustainability

The podcast team hopes the podcast can be maintained and sustained in the long term. We hope to work with SAA to develop a plan for the long-term sustainability of the podcast; for example, creating an "appointed group" for the podcast, thus setting up term limits for production team members and recruiting new members to fill roles as they become unoccupied. SAA could consider adding some positions for the podcast to its annual call for volunteers to serve on SAA-appointed groups (as needed). SAA will also need to ensure at least two members from each of the editorial boards volunteer to manage the podcast.

Production Team³

HOSTS

Nicole Milano: Head Archivist and Historical Publications Editor, AFS Intercultural Programs

² https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/SAASRecords_PolicyAndSchedules_071614.pdf.

³ All unpaid, volunteer positions.

Ashley Levine: Archivist/Digital Resource Manager, Artifex Press

Bethany Anderson: Archival Operations and Reference Specialist, University Archives, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Gloria Gonzalez: Library Strategist, Zepheira

Duties include:

- Identifying possible guests with producers and advisory board
- Reading background information compiled in preparation for the interview
- Writing introductory material for each broadcast, with assistance from producers
- Writing interview outline and specific questions, with assistance from producers
- Scheduling interviews with guests
- Conducting and recording interviews
- Sending unedited audio files to post-production technician
- Reviewing edited audio files prior to publication.

POST-PRODUCTION SPECIALIST

Ashley Levine: Archivist/Digital Resource Manager, Artifex Press

Gloria Gonzalez: Library Strategist, Zepheira

Rebecca Chandler: AVPreserve (tentative)

Duties include:

- Editing audio files to omit verbal and conversational misfires and to achieve the best sound quality possible
- Sharing edited audio files with hosts and producer for review before publication
- Uploading audio files for distribution to the public
- Managing the podcast hosting platform and website
- Assisting with management of podcast WordPress site

PRODUCERS

Bethany Anderson: Archival Operations and Reference Specialist, University Archives, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Colleen McFarland Rademaker: Associate Librarian, Special Collections and Archives at the Rakow Research Library, The Corning Museum of Glass

Duties include:

- Identifying possible guests with hosts
- Inviting guests to be interviewed
- Mailing recording equipment (microphone, pop filter, and headphones) and their return postage to guests
- Compiling background information for hosts to review prior to the interview
- Assisting with writing / editing introductory material for each broadcast
- Assisting with writing / editing interview outline and specific questions
- Reviewing edited audio files prior to publication

- Identifying measures of success and collecting data to measure success
- Promoting the podcast on social media and monitoring related social media accounts
- Managing podcast social media sites and monitoring website suggestion box
- Reporting to SAA Publications Board and AA Editorial Board, SAA Foundation, and other interested parties

ADVISORY BOARD

SAA Publications Board and *The American Archivist* Editorial Board

- Provide oversight, feedback, and strategic direction to the production team
- Evaluate the efficacy of the podcast

IT

SAA staff

- Assist with setting up website presence (one time participation)

MUSICIAN

Adam Fligsten

- Create introductory bars for the podcast intro. Musician Adam Fligsten will create three versions of the theme song for the production team and editorial boards to select

LOGO DESIGNER

- Outsource design of podcast logo (SAA staff will facilitate this process.)

Budget

The below budget consists of estimated costs for equipment, software, and creative work for <in-context>. Most of these are one-time costs, with the exception of the WordPress hosting fee increase and postage.

Equipment Type	Product	Cost
Software	Google Hangout/Skype	\$0.00
	QuickTime; Callnote Recorder, https://callnote.net/	\$0.00
	GarageBand or Audacity	\$0.00
	iTunes	\$0.00

Microphone & Accessories ⁴	Blue Snowball USB Microphones (x3), http://a.co/9WMSiSg	\$297.00
	Sony MDRZX110 ZX Series Stereo Headphones (x3), https://goo.gl/Uxh9AN	\$45.00
Postage ⁵	Large Flat Rate Shipping Round Trip (a recurring charge for each podcast episode)	\$37.50 x 12 = \$450.00
Hosting ⁶	WordPress Plan Upgrade (Business Plan)	\$24.92/month (\$299.04/year)
	WordPress + WordPress Podcasting Plugin (" Seriously Simple Podcasting ")	\$0.00
	Podcast Logo	TBD
	Music (x3 versions)	\$250.00
TOTAL		\$1,341.04

Respectfully Submitted by:

Bethany Anderson, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, *The American Archivist* Editorial Board

Gloria Gonzalez, Zepheira, *The American Archivist* Editorial Board

Ashley Levine, Artifex Press

Colleen Rademaker McFarland, The Corning Museum of Glass, Publications Board

Nicole Milano, AFS Intercultural Programs, Publications Board

⁴ Two of the microphones and headphones would remain with the hosts. One set will be mailed to the interviewee. We will include the return postage labels inside the box so that guests would be inconvenienced as little as possible. UPS offers free pickup of packages, so if the guest can simply tell us when and where the package will be available for pick-up, we can schedule a pickup via the UPS website.

⁵ We will try to keep postage costs down by asking guests to ship the recording equipment to the next guest rather than returning it to the producer. If this approach is successful, actual postage costs will be less than budgeted.

⁶ SAA is currently paying \$8.25/month for a Premium Plan WordPress subscription, so this would actually be an increase of only \$16.67/month. This would be a recurring cost for SAA.