

Podcasters Panel: A Glimpse Behind the Microphone (recorded at the 2022 OLA Super Conference)

Download the podcast episode as part of [Library Land Loves!](#)

Panellists: Matthew Murray, Brenna Clarke Gray, Alanna King, and Maurice Coleman.

Podcasts:

- Read Into This: <https://www.canadianschoollibraries.ca/read-into-this/>
- Hazel & Katniss & Harry & Starr: <https://hazelkatnissarrystarr.simplecast.com/>
- You Got This!: <https://yougotthis.trubox.ca/>
- T is for Training: <https://tisfortraining.wordpress.com/>
- Book Club for Masochists: A Readers' Advisory Podcast: <https://bookclub4m.libsyn.com/>

Matthew: Hi, uh, and this is Podcasters Panel: A Glimpse Behind the Microphone. So thank you for coming to this. I'm your moderator, Matthew Murray. I'm a data and graduate studies librarian at the British Columbia Institute of Technology and co-host of the Book Club for Masochists: A Readers' Advisory Podcast.

Joining me today is Alanna King, an instructional designer and agent of change with over 20 years of teaching, writing, and design experience, she currently teaches for the Upper Grand District school board in Ontario. She and her team at the podcast, Read Into This have been podcasting since March of 2020.

Brenna Clarke Gray is the coordinator of educational technologies at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, BC. So practically my neighbour. Uh, her research interests include the history and future of open tenure processes, the role of care and care work in the practice of educational technology, and scholarly podcasting. Outside of the academy's world, Brenna co-hosts Hazel & Katniss & Harry & Starr, a podcast about young adult literature and film adaptations.

Maurice Coleman is currently principal of Coleman and Associates. He is the host and producer of the long running and oldest training slash education and empowerment podcast T is for Training and the technical trainer at a county library system located in the Northeastern corner of Maryland.

Uh, so thank you all for joining me today. Um, and to begin with, uh, let's talk a little bit more about what our, each of our podcasts are. Uh, so Alanna, do you wanna start with that?

Alanna: Sure. So Read Into This is a podcast that we started just as we were going into the pandemic. And what we're trying to do is bridge all the corners of what it means to be a teacher, a literacy lover, and a librarian in school libraries across Canada. At least that was our original goal.

Matthew: Great. Brenna, do you wanna go next?

Brenna: Sure, so Hazel & Katniss & Harry & Starr is what I, I jokingly refer to as my fun podcast. I make it with my friend, Joe, and we read a YA book every week. And then look at a film adaptation. We try to bring, um, a sort of low-key scholarly approach to texts. So we'll draw in from queer and feminist and race theory in order to sort of offer a richer conversation around some of these texts, particular, the most popular ones.

Um, I also have a day job podcast. I host a podcast called You Got This, which we developed here at TRU just as we were rolling into the pandemic. And the idea was to try to sustain our community, even as we moved into disparate teaching and learning spaces. Um, and yeah, so I kinda, I kinda got both going on, which is fun.

Matthew: And Maurice?

Maurice: Uh, so my podcast, T is for Training. We are a library trainer centric, but not totally focused on training pretty much where every, we try to be a little bit everything it started because we had, it started at conferences. I wanted to sort of keep the conference going and trainers are usually the only people who do what you do at a particular place.

It's hard to bounce ideas off of yourself. So having a community that you can instantly touch on to, grab on to, and really discuss things was the impetus for the podcast. And that was almost 14 years ago.

Matthew: That is quite old in terms of podcasting.

Maurice: Yes, it is. I should be collecting podcast social security [unintelligible] issue social security checks or something coming on.

Matthew: Definitely. Moving onto the next thing. We've already brought up briefly the pandemic already, because how can we possibly avoid that? But how has the pandemic affected the way you podcast and the way you think about podcasts?

Brenna, do you want to start with this one?

Brenna: Sure, my first answer was the hasn't, because, um, for Hazel and Katniss and Harry and Starr, my co-host is in Toronto. So we've always, you know, um, used Zencaster, the tool that are, sorry. We use Cast for that show, but we've always used sort of a VOIP room and done it at a distance.

Um, but podcasting for me in my, in my role at Thompson Rivers University. It was a really important way to build and sustain community across distance. Um, and it was a really valuable addition to the toolkit if for no other reason than I sort of used the podcast, You Got This, as a way to gently pitch for folks to think outside the video lecture box, when it came to producing teaching and learning materials for remote instruction.

I think audio is really powerful. Um, it was a way that I delivered content in my online courses before I came into this role. And so, uh, it was nice to use the podcast, sort of as an example, like, "Hey, look, we're building community, we're connecting, you're getting information we're sharing and nobody is staring at a screen." [Laughter]

Matthew: I know you've also done, uh, an online [podcasting] course. Was that influenced by the pandemic or was that something you were already working on?

Brenna: Yeah, definitely. That was influenced by the pandemic. We built out our podcasting resource at TRU, uh, which is freely available and I'll make sure you have the link, um, Matthew to share with people.

Um, that's been in existence since just before the pandemic and it kind of died just because we couldn't really launch the resource. We couldn't really engage with people because everybody had a lot more on their plate all of a sudden. Um, so this year we tried to bring it back by creating what we call the Introductory Podcasting Masterclass.

We were trying to evoke that it was a sustained focused course, but that it was an introductory level. In retrospect, Introductory Masterclass might not actually mean anything. Um, but that was a way, that was really shaped by the pandemic because we did find that attendance in synchronous workshops really kind of dropped off a cliff in the fall of 2021.

I think people hit a burnout wall and the idea of sitting through a session was just not appealing to folks. Um, and so we found that there was quite a bit of pickup instead of this sort of asynchronous course delivery when it came to professional development that people could tackle in small bits.

And when they felt motivated to, not necessarily when I was going to be booting up a Teams call. Um, and so that definitely was shaped by at least our experiences of people's affective reactions to the pandemic, if not, maybe the pandemic itself.

Matthew: Great. Uh, Maurice, how about you?

Maurice: Well, because my show started as a way of connecting virtually between conferences.

The only big difference was that I couldn't record at conferences anymore. That was the really big thing. Otherwise it was a virtual show. We met every time we met using this, a thing called TalkShoe, which I'm not going to necessarily advertise. It's more tolerated than anything else, but we met somewhere continually and it, it ch, what changed was our relationship within the people who come to the show, not necessarily the show itself, but it really provided a way of, for our crew to really stay connected to other professionals.

Because the pandemic you stop, you stopped going to conferences, et cetera. You do some work. It really created a sense of continual community. And I have to say if it wasn't for my show, I likely would not have survived during the pandemic. Really it, my show happens every two weeks. It's, anyone can come onto the show.

You're all invited. Anyone who's watching can feel free to come onto the show. We, you know, sometimes we attract strays, people who come on and they go, oh, I'm going to come on only once. Next thing that they stayed around for 10 years. So we, it's really an inclusive, welcoming community. We try to, especially during the pandemic, everyone is welcome.

It's a big, you know, it's the big tent thing, but did it directly influence my podcasts? No, because I was already doing it virtually. So it was more of the same. We were their first, shall we say? It's like, oh yeah, virtual meetings. Oh, we've been doing that stuff for years.

Matthew: Great. I, I think the, the lack of in-person, um, conferences has really kind of made people look out for other types of ways to, to interact with their profession and learn things.

So I hope, hope more of them look to podcasts in the future. Alanna, you, you were the one that said that you created this, I think in response to the pandemic, your podcast.

Alanna: That's right. Um, this is the note, this is sort of my impetus, as, as Maurice said that the community already sort of existed, but in sort of a really web 1.0 version and that our, our, our Canadian School Libraries Association gets together once every two years.

And so just like Brenna and Maurice said, you know, this is about community, but what happened just before the pandemic is, um, I had a visitor, Walquiria Salinas, from Argentina. And I'd gotten to go with UNESCO to Argentina just a year, a few months before that and Walquiria came and said, I really want to check out this big conference you've got in Ontario.

So I said, great, come on. But at our, at our meeting, we talked about "How are we going to keep the flow of information and community going?" And she said, well, everybody I know speaks Spanish. So, what are we going to do about that? And sh- and we started talking about, well, maybe podcasting was the way to do that because to provide the things that we were talking about in an audio version, as well as the print version that they could get sort of online, that was sort of the original impetus is let's see if we can grow Canadian to International

But it wasn't until the pandemic that I actually had time to do it. And I did 70 episodes in like the first four months and then-

Maurice: Oh!

Matthew: Wow.

Alanna: Right? It's crazy! And then, and then my job completely changed. And now it, the podcast is between the three of us, whenever we can sort of figure out how to get people together and make it happen again.

Um, but, I mean, as you've all said, it's about sort of craving the community and making it happen, but the pod, but the pandemic has done everything from create it to make it impossible, to keep it going with any sort of rhythm. I'm really envious of the way that Maurice and Brenna have been talking about how they commit to making sure it happens on a regular basis.

Matthew: Yeah, I think scheduling can be, uh, something that people find challenging with podcasts at times, uh, finding the time to, especially when you're all in different places and people are in different time zones, uh, even figuring out when we could all record this was a challenge as well.

Maurice: [laughter]

Matthew: But, moving on. Uh, Maurice, how about you start with this one.

So what do you think success looks like for your podcast or in podcasts in general? Um, and I guess more specifically thinking about more professional podcasts as opposed to like fun podcasts, but what do you think success looks like?

Maurice: So, I think podcasts can be both professional and fun. First of all. So if it's, you know, uh, Debbie's Favourite Soy Milk Podcast, let them have fun.

You know, if they, if the people who were attending, get something out of it, I think that's great. I think there are different levels of success. There's personal success. Do I enjoy the time? Because, folks who never, ever done podcasting before, as Matthew mentioned, and Alanna mentioned trying to find a time to do it can be pain in the backside.

I'm lucky I've had, I've changed times one time. I started at one time for 12 year. Um, oh, I don't even know how long. And then I switched times because, uh, support for it changed at my library. So I had to do it off hours. So I shifted times, I lost a few people because of that. But I have a consistent time. I think that's probably the easiest thing.

Try to find one time that a few people can get together and everyone can make their contributions either they come on your thing that time, or maybe they ask questions or they help you book guests, et cetera. Or you can create the community, maybe if people aren't necessarily there all the time to record it.

And I think I totally tangentially went off the question, didn't I Matthew?

Matthew: That's okay. That's that's what, that's what podcasting is about. And conference sessions are about as well. I think any podcast that stays on topic for the entire time is, well, I don't, I don't listen to any like that. It's a lot more professional than mine is perhaps.

Maurice: There's a lot of tangents in everything. I think it's, so success is personal success. Do I get something out of it? Do the people that come to the show get something out of it, do the people that listen get something out of it? Do you necessarily hear about, I, you know, I joke on my show that I always thank the five people who listen to my podcast because I have no clue.

Podcast metrics are terrible. Apple's horrible. Apple is horrible at trying to tell you how many people download your stuff, unless you know, you're a trillion, uh, views a week. Who knows how many people listen to my podcast? 5, 10, 15, 50, 5,000. I don't know. I don't care. I care that we get something out of it and that we're putting something good out for people.

So that's where my success is. Now it's honestly helped me get some consulting gigs. People know who I am. I still have to prove my ability to do stuff, but at least it, it provides the crack in the door. I mean, it's its library land. So, your reputation is what you have. Just like anything else and okay, well, Maurice, he does this podcast. Great. Maybe he knows some stuff about some stuff. And then I got to prove, I know some stuff about some stuff, so it's been a good entry point for things. Uh, so those are the different levels of success.

It's not a, necessarily a financial success. I can't retire from it, I don't do, the service I use plays ads. I don't get any money from them beforehand. So, you know, I'm, I ain't retiring on it. I'm not going on vacation from it. It helps occasionally to buy, uh, you know, uh, I don't know the, a nice picture or something. I don't know. You know, it, it's not a, it's not a revenue making thing. That's a short, it's definitely a loss leader.

Matthew: Yes. Uh, I was very excited because, uh, recently a few months ago for the first time ever, uh, my podcast got contacted and offered a book we actually wanted.

Maurice: Nice.

Matthew: Uh, usually, you know, people would get like, oh, do you want this book? And we're like, we're not, we're entirely uninterested in it, but we're like, oh no, wait, wait, we actually want this one. Why did you contact us?

Maurice: [Laughter] I will say, Matthew, that helps. We've gone through a string over the last year or two, working with a couple of groups, including Association for Talent Development, to get authors on and say, can we get the book? I interviewed the person who does the book. It helps them sell books. It helps, frankly, me get some free books and I'm able to disseminate information out to people.

So that's one way, I guess it's in-kind contribution. Which is great. Thank you very much Association for Talent Development. We love you. But that's one way for you getting things from people maybe you actually want, maybe that leads you to getting more stuff from people you want, as opposed to getting that weird unsolicited, like Eeee Ooh, who is going to read this particular... No this has nothing to do with what I do.

Matthew: Yes. Yeah. Brenna, you, you have two different podcasts. Uh, what do you think, how do you think about, um, success and how they differ for each of yours?

Brenna: Oh, that's a good question. I'm really grateful to not be trying to monetize a podcast. It seems hard. Um, and I'm really grateful to be in a position where I can make them as part of my day job. I even record my fun podcast often during office hours, because to me it's all part of a skill set that I'm developing within my role.

Um, I will tell you that the first time I really felt like I had made it as a podcaster was the first time I got a screener with my name on it. I was like, whoa, whoa. I think I might've been Love, Victor season one. And I was like, I am watching Love, Victor season line before anybody else. And it has my name right on the screen.

Maurice: Nice!

Brenna: That was, that was big. Um, in terms of. Uh, you know, how to measure success or what success looks like. You know, if the end goal is community and I really believe that's what I do podcasts for. Community, for me, looks like the kind of feedback that I get from listeners. So when people reach out, they want to chat and, and community also looks like, um, people loving you enough to correct your mistakes, to call you in when you do something you shouldn't right.

Like these kinds of things to me are how I measure, um, the success and the reason to keep doing it every day. The other thing is quite frankly, my fun podcast. I put that in a class of podcasts, I call friendship podcasts, which are podcasts that you can tell by listening to are really at their core a way for two people, three people to stay in touch.

You know, that's why this podcast exists. And I love a good friendship podcast because the chemistry is usually great between the hosts and you become part of this parasocial world, full of inside jokes you get to partake in. Um, and you know, the greatest metric for success of a friendship podcast is that you want to keep doing it every week. And, uh, and that's a real joy.

Matthew: Definitely. Um, I think that that's something that I think has led to the creation, was one of the things that led to a lot of creation of podcasts in the last couple of years is people wanting to stay in touch with those friends that are far away and that they could not, they cannot see currently.

Alanna, how about you? What do you think of it? Success and podcasts

Alanna: Once again, Brenda, and Maurice's responses, have really made me think about it. And I, and I feel like, um, the networking is part of it. You know, I want to be able to feed that beast at the same time, the beast has to feed me. So, I would say probably part of it is, is people just giving me a shout-out or a like, or a tweet or something like that?

Yes, there's the unsolicited authors and things like that. But in terms of success, the ultimate goal is really that the very small but dedicated audience of school library nerds are appreciating each other and learning from each other. So I don't really care about how big the audience goes as long as it continues to be enthusiastic. And, and it is.

Um, our sponsor is Canadian School Libraries, which is a charitable organization. So for the low, low price of \$128 a year, we can continue to do what we do cause they pick the tab up for, you know, our file storage and our, and our, um, you know, our, our, our Zencast subscription sort of thing.

But, um, but generally I think the successes, as long as the love is out there, we're going to just keep on, on doing it. And so far, our audience has been really tolerant of all of the tangents that we go on. And, and the fact that, you know, our, our, our rhythm is asymmetrical and, um, you know, all of those things are, are, are great, but I think that the dream would be to do more live things.

This time last year for the Ontario Library Association, we did a live “love-in”, basically like a call-in show. That was a heck of a lot of fun. Um, regularity would be a goal. I feel like I'm advertising fibre all of a sudden, but that's not what I mean. I just meant like, you know, that there was something that was a reliable structure about that.

And maybe a lot more sort of cross-pollinization too. We've had, we've been able to reach out to other different venues of library world or the author world or whatever. And as long as again, it keeps feeding each other. I think that's successful. As long as we keep wanting to do it, it's good.

Maurice: Can I just interject here, Matthew,

Matthew: Go ahead.

Maurice: Brianna, I think you're absolutely right. I think all podcasts are about the relationship with the people who are on your show. If it's one, two or three people, you end up, that's what my podcast is too, sure it's a teaching and learning podcast, but it's really, it's uh, any good, you know, stab-em book, right?

Any good mystery series, you don't show up for the, you don't show up for the mystery. You show up for the relationship between the people who, the characters and that's I think any good podcast has that relationship between all the characters, the people who show up or don't show up. And that's, I think, drives people to come to your podcast, your relationship with the people who are on the show makes people comfortable, makes people want to listen.

It makes people care about you and the other people. So Brianna, I'm totally stealing that by the way, friendship podcasts. I think all good podcasts are friendship podcasts.

Matthew: Brenna, that's her name, not Brianna. Um, one thing I want to say that has made me really excited, um, about my own podcast is when I hear that it's being talked about in classrooms, um, which is not something that happens all the time, but occasionally someone will say, “Oh, hey, I heard about your podcast, um, in my class, in my readers' advisory class at library school”, or like, when they're studying to be a library technician. And I'm just like, oh my gosh, this is so incredible that someone thought that this was a resource worth, worth telling other people about.

And I love the idea that someone had to get in front of their class and say, you should listen to the Book Club for Masochists and then explain what that actually meant to their students. Um, which I think is a pretty funny thing. The other one, um, that happened to me, this is when I knew I hit it big. Uh, it was when our logo was stolen and, uh, you could buy socks on Amazon, uh, with our logo on the side of them.

Um, which is just a very funny thing to me. I don't think, no one ever bought them, but I'm just like, why, what, why did you scrape our logo, our logo off the internet?

Maurice: Wow. Did you sue?

Matthew: Maybe's it's happened to your logo as well? No. No.

Maurice: My logo was a simple T. You're going to steal a T, fine, whatever. It's all good. I, yeah, I didn't put my, I just did like 10 minutes of thinking about the logo.

Hey, you want to make money from a T go right ahead.

Alanna: I'm going to add something to my success list, which is merch. We totally need merch.

Matthew: I made some stickers for my podcast, but that was the most, I think I did. Oh, no, I had some, we, I think we made some like one inch buttons as well at some point, but I haven't made any in a while.

Maurice: I think I remember a one-inch button at some point from ALA or something.

I remember a one-inch button at some point you left in the Commons at ALA, anyway, I'll shut up now. I talk a lot.

Matthew: It's okay. That's that's what podcasts are about. If you didn't talk a lot, I don't know how successful a podcast would be for any of us.

Brenna, um, how do you engage with your audience? How do you. What do you think about engaging with audiences in regards to podcasts? You mentioned parasocial relationships earlier. So maybe.

Brenna: Yeah, I think, um, for me, it's always been really important to maintain, um, a space where people feel like they can give feedback or let us know. So on Hazel & Katniss & Harry & Starr, um, we do a once a month book club.

And we solicit listener contributions to the book club and people write in sometimes the nicest, like most thoughtful, like if an undergraduate wrote this for me, I would be so excited because it's just so incisive and beautiful, you know, these thoughts about books and we, we always pull out examples and share them.

Um, so that's one way we make connection with our audience and obviously social media. It's nice to know that people are listening and that, you know, with the podcast we do, that you're all reading the same book. Um, my work podcast, the feedback is definitely of a different sort. It's um, you know, people get in touch and they say, oh, you should have so-and-so on your show.

And it's been a really valuable way for me to get to know our campus community because I arrived about seven months before the pandemic. And so I didn't really know anybody. So it's been a really nice way to make connections across campus. Um, my favourite feedback that I get is when people think that I, um, pushed, you know, an issue or an envelope or an administrator, uh, just a little bit.

And they're glad that somebody is out there doing it in a public space. Um, that's at least part of why I think, in particular, a community that brings together faculty, staff, and students, and allows them to talk about significant issues is so important because universities are governed collegially and it's really important that those conversations take place.

So I guess feedback comes in all sorts of forms. And the way you model being open to feedback is that you take it seriously and you treat it seriously and you treat it with the intention that it's given. So, um, you know, there was, uh, there are times on, um, Hazel and Katniss and Harry and Starr when Joe and I are, are called in by listeners because we, um, use language that's troubling in some way.

Um, a good example was, um, Joe and I learning from a listener about the importance of, um, the way we talk about suicide, for example. And that was a really valuable thing. Um, being willing to be wrong publicly is always a really great way to get people to give feedback because it demonstrates that you're listening and you're taking it onboard.

Um, and I think that that also feeds into the idea of community, right? If you really are building a community, then those conversations have to be reciprocal in some way to some degree. And I've really treasured the lessons I've learned from that experience. Even when you know, they are by definition sometimes quite humbling,

Matthew: Definitely. Uh, Alanna. How about yourself?

Alanna: in terms of feedback, I think in a lot of cases, it's. It's seeing ripples in terms of the topics. Uh, I don't know if the, if the rest of the panel sees that as well, but I feel like either something that we've picked up on from something always sort of leads to other things.

I see it repeated in, in other podcasts, like maybe it was just a small impetus and, and, and I live in an echo chamber and so everything feels like it's echoing to me, but, but I like to think that we're stimulating thought and action. And even changing in behaviour. And so if I see that, whether it's in another month or, or a few months, or even a year away, things like that changing, um, I think it's because we, we call attention to it.

As Brenna said, you know, the fact that we're just saying, "Hey, this, this exists and why don't we do something about that?" And then, and then it happens. That's, it's really, uh, it's really satisfying. But of course I love it when people DM me and say, You should, don't forget, you know, all of those, right, 14 more episodes that we should be doing, right? I love that. That's the feeding, feeding itself sort of thing.

Matthew: Maurice, do you have anything to add about engaging with audience?

Maurice: I think Brenna and Alanna said it best, it's amplifying the stuff that needs to be amplified. And then hearing an echo a year later, it's like, oh yeah, we were talking about that a year ago.

Yeah, we moved on, but hey, that's great that other people have picked it up and that it's, it has received some traction somewhere. So knowing that we had a, uh, a lot, Allana you said it best, we had a sidebar conversation about something and then a year later it's like, oh, this person's wrote a book about it's like, holy .

You wrote a book about what we had a five minute conversation about that. Cool, good on ya. You want to come on the show? Get me a copy of the book? Great. You know, that's, that's really what it is. It's, it's, that's really the long, the long tail of the podcast. Those things that you see, maybe you talked about, you discussed, you had something and then someone else picks it up and we're just a stealing profession.

You know, we, we, we borrow, I'm sorry, we borrow it. In training, teaching, learning, if you can't make, it steal it. That's the key, you know. You borrow things from other people and that's all, okay. We're not, no one's in this for the straight cash homie or anything, you know, we're, we're not, we're not getting rich from this. No, one's getting, no one in library podcasts is getting rich.

So if you want to get library podcasting and would like to get rich, try some other type of podcasting, because this is not the place for you. You'll be rich in friends. You'll be rich in ya'know meeting new people, new experiences, et cetera. But it's not your, not, your bank account is not going to get more zeros in it.

Maybe zeros to the right of your decimal, sure, but nothing to the left, ain't nothing to the left. Maybe to the right. Yeah.

Matthew: I have to say I'm kind of jealous of all of these. I feel the engagement I get with my podcast is people, uh, telling us they want me to read Amish romance novels because they know I won't like them.

Maurice: Oh, but Matthew, you should challenge them and start reading some. I have a friend who does read Amish romance novels.

Matthew: No, literally the most recent episode was on Amish romance novels. I've read one. I hated it, but I know our audience is really going to enjoy me hating this book. That's what they're there for, me not enjoying what we're reading.

Alanna: I feel like that's a subtle Vogon poetry reference.

Maurice: Yes. Yes. That ain't that subtle. That is not that subtle. But there are people who do, I have a friend, a good friend who is a library director, somewhere who reads Amish romance novels, who loves them.

Matthew: They're just not for me.

Maurice: That's okay.

Matthew: Anyway, you can listen to my podcast to find out more about this.

Maurice: And the name of your podcast is?

Matthew: Book Club for Masochists.

Maurice: That's right.

Matthew: Uh, Alanna. Um, how do you draw the line between your job and your podcast? And have you encountered any issues in this area?

Alanna: There's no line. I haven't, I haven't, I haven't been officially reprimanded lately, but I would say that, like you know, I don't know, in 2009, when I joined social media and was still trying to negotiate what those boundaries were between professional and personal, um, there was a lot more concern about it.

And, and now I say, hey, I'm representing a profession. And, but the thing is, is that, you know, I've got my foot in a bunch of different spots. I'm an online teacher, I'm an English teacher, I'm a school librarian. And at the same time, I'm trying to, you know, professionally develop on a volunteer basis through podcasting myself as much as, you know, as, as much as I, as we talk about and, and the audience that we hope to reach.

But, um, but the line is I read young adult voraciously, I'm on a, an adult selection committee and, and so, it doesn't really, there's no line.

Matthew: Maurice, how about you. Are you the same or do you find, try to create a line between work and podcast?

Maurice: So, as I hinted to earlier, that we had to change time of my podcast, because at one point my podcast was supported by my particular place of work, which is why in your introduction, Matthew, I don't mention my library system.

Now I do it on my own time. So that was, um, that was traumatic. Shall we say? And, uh, so yeah, it was like having the rug swept out from under you. But in terms of stuff, I'm still influenced. I still train people for a living. So obviously that feeds into the podcast. What I do in the podcast feeds into what I do at work.

But yeah, that was, that was, that was, uh, traumatic. I have to say that, that, yeah, that, that conversation we can, we can have a conversation over adult beverages at some point. And I can tell you the real story, but that that's the sanitized version. That the support, support was lifted from my podcast to do it at work as professional development, which it is, it still is for me, but I'll just do it on my own time.

Matthew: Brenna, how about yourself? Have you run into any, um, problems?

Brenna: I don't know that I've run into any problems. I, uh, my job is very strange. So just a little bit of background. I'm an educational technologist, I'm a faculty educational technologist, which

is a really privileged position to be in because I have the protection of a strong union and, um, academic freedom for the work that I do.

Um, but I am also tenure track. I am not tenured yet. And so, I don't know, this week is a classic example of an episode that I hit publish on, and kind of held my breath because I didn't know if I had pushed too far on an issue that was too sensitive. Um, there have never been any ramifications and I should say explicitly that I have never been concerned about the support of my director, my immediate supervisor.

They're all very supportive of the work that I do and the way that I do it. But, um, I, um, I feel like I'm always kind of travelling this line of being, uh, of security and precarity, right? And I'm just sort of, I'm not quite secure yet, but I also, everything I've ever read about the history of tech history of tenure processes and how they work, um, it's very rare that people get more progressive after tenure. Right? The whole process of tenure is like an indoctrination into a series of systems. And so I really believe that as you start you need to go on, doesn't mean my heart's not in my throat sometimes.

And I worked previously, you know, before I was an educational technologist I was, uh, I was a college professor of English. Um, and in that role at that institution, which was just a little bit more conservative across the board, um, I, I kept on the down low, most of what I did on the internet, including a lot of my podcasting work.

Um, and so, you know, I'm really sympathetic to people for whom that's a major concern. I feel really lucky that at the moment I can use the time of my day job to, to work on my podcast. Um, but faculty day jobs being what they are, that doesn't mean that I'm not editing podcasts on Saturday nights on a pretty regular basis.

So, you know, it is what it is. Um, but yeah, I think it's not a line that I have had to draw very robustly, but it doesn't mean I'm not always aware of the sensitivities at play.

Matthew: Definitely. I hope that in the future, maybe your podcast can be considered as part of your tenure package for, for anyone going up, I think, I hope that.

And that kind of brings me into our next question. Um, which is where would you like to see podcasts go in the future? Maurice, let's start with you.

Maurice: I think, um, more accessibility for them, uh, at least from the podcaster point of view, maybe a way of telling me how many people are actually listening to my damn show, that would be nice.

I think podcasts currently, I think with the pandemic we had, we had to really couch things in the well, what was before the pandemic, what's after the pandemic. Because if we were doing this, so we're doing this panel virtually, if it was before the pandemic, odds are, we'd all be at the Ontario Library Association, yes? And we do it maybe face to face in a room together. There'd be other people breathing on us and all. You know, all that other stuff, sharing the same air, You'd be able to talk to people afterwards, et cetera. I think really making sure that podcasts are

as available to people who need them. It's up to us as good podcasts to just share the really good ones, to mentor those people who want to do one, and just say, well, I've always wanted to do a podcast. Well, then do it, I would say. Time is stopping you. Nothing else is stopping you. It's, surely there are so, there are almost too many resources out there if you want to become a podcaster. For those of you out there, Google, I want, how do I podcast? You'll get maybe a billion hits on various things, how to do it, et cetera.

It's all out there for you. So I think it's up to us to mentor the next people who want to do it. And say, hey, yes, here are the things that I went through. I hope you don't go through these things. Here are the lessons I learned. I hope you learned these things.

Um, I also in the future, want more live podcasts. I love doing live stuff. I would do round tables after conferences to break down the conference. Hey, ALA just happened, what did you learn? And spend an hour talking to people about hey or, OLA just happened, what did you learn? I want to do those again. I don't know how, I, look at this point, as we all know, it might be another two or three, two or three years before we all get together again in such a situation where we're going to have that happen, really. It stinks.

Um, accessibility, I think getting more people to do it. I think a lot of people have their own voice and it's good. Make it really a. Uh, very much like we-, like having a blog. It's, everyone has something to say. It might not all be great, but at least give people the opportunity to say what they want and be as creative as they want to and support them in that.

Matthew: Great. Um, I think the other thing with accessibility that I think about a lot and maybe our other panellists will talk about this is, uh, doing transcripts as well, which I think more and more podcasts are doing to, to make their stuff done and not- It's, it is time consuming and can be expensive as well, which is why not more of them do, but I I'm glad that people are at least thinking about doing it.

Brenna, how about you? What would you like to see in the future of podcasting?

Brenna: This is a big question. This occupies a lot of my professional energy. Um, I'm, I'm lucky to be part of a project called The Amplified Podcasts Network, which is, um, a project that's being helmed by Hannah McGregor from SFU who folks may know from the Secret Feminist Agenda podcast, um, which was the first podcast to go through a peer review process.

Um, it kind of gets back at what you were saying previously, Matthew, it's like this goal to create a, uh, way of podcasts counting in the scholarly space. So what the Amplified Podcast Network and the ensuing grant are trying to do is, um, we're trying to create all the infrastructure. So, um, folks who have submitted journals using the OJS, uh, platform that they developed at SFU, it's a very similar idea, but for audio, like where, what's-

My librarian friends would like this. What's the metadata going to look like? And how do we organize that in a meaningful way for podcasts? Um, how are they going to get archived? Uh, how can we simplify and, um, make the transcription process the sort of seamless part of that? What does the peer review infrastructure look like?

And it's an interesting project. I'm developing a podcast for that project as one of three, that will go through this peer review process within this larger infrastructure. And what's interesting about that is can you, is it possible to protect everything that's great about podcasts? Community spontaneity, the sort of DIY rough around the edges punk rock edge that makes me love podcasting.

Can you protect all of that and put it through a peer review process? Or are we basically creating audio monographs? Right? And I'm not sure what the answer is to that yet. I've been really struggling with my piece of the project for exactly that reason, trying to support these vibes. So all that to say my hope is, is that we move towards a future of podcasting, um, where we can make podcasting more legible to more institutions.

So that the people doing the podcasting are not constantly doing an off the sides of their desks, right? We know that knowledge mobilization efforts are primarily undertaken by marginalized folks in their positions and primarily done off the sides of their desks. What if we can bring it into the institution so that the work counts without losing what's great about it.

And that's where my energies are focused these days.

Matthew: Great. I think, I think also I'd love, personally I would love to see the, like, academia embrace also, more alternative forms of scholarly communication. And so that your podcast doesn't have to end with, you know, like 10 minutes of you talking, it's just say reading off citations and references of things you've talked about in that episode.

Brenna: No, he's going to say the structure of the show notes to me is like such a right place for doing that kind of work in really visual and transparent ways. Um, so that people can see how thinking develops.

Matthew: Um, no, I recently listened to an episode of the podcast called Horror Vanguard, which usually does like, uh, leftist critique of horror movies. Um, but they did an episode, uh, I think a couple of months ago that was, they just did a chapter by chapter analysis of a scholarly work of, I think it was called The Industrial Gothic. Um, and so they're both like academics and they went and they talked about all the arguments and everything, and I'm like, this is like the best book review I've ever read, you know, like, but listening to it in podcast form. And I think that's something that I would love to see more of.

Alanna, how about yourself? What would you like to see happen in podcasts?

Alanna: You know, there's this phenomenon that I've been reviewing lately. And I know it's in the unpopular right now, JK Rowling area, but it's the Time-Turner, because I feel like I don't have enough time to listen as much as I want to produce.

Um, you know, the, the fact that Maurice and Brenna and I are just getting acquainted today, is it, that's a shame. Why? Why? And, and so maybe there needs to be more, recognition. Maybe we need a podcast about podcasts that are about libraries in specific.

Matthew: Uh, we, we, we need to do my podcast conference idea in which every session is just a podcast, but, someone needs to pay me to do that.

Alanna: I love that idea. And, and so same, you know, maybe there needs to be an award. Maybe there needs to be, um, there's gotta be some sort of ALA, OLA, CSLA love child, doesn't there? I mean, you know, where, where we-

Matthew: Just more recognition for podcasts?

Alanna: Yeah! Like, where, how do we find each other and make that club, and the merch obviously, happen? Yeah. You know, can you imagine if we all had like, microphone covers that were branded, right? I don't know, like let's sell it, right?

Um, so the Time-Turners one, we got to figure out how to work across systems. Analytics have to be part of that, but also just, I don't know, there's just gotta be someone who takes all of that on for me, so I don't have to do it. But I really want to benefit from it, something like that.

Maurice: We need a MacArthur Genius Grant. Someone who's just, all right, that's our pitch. We need someone to figure out how to monetize and how to organize it. How do we publicize podcasts? And just someone who has just so much, you know, several zeros floating around, go give them a couple of million dollars to figure it out.

Alanna: This is going to sound crazy, but I think maybe we need a library.

Maurice: A podcast library?

Alanna: Yeah! And someone to organize it and catalogue it and metatag it.

Matthew: I'm just imagining this horrible place filled up with like burnt CDRs. Every episode on a, on an individual CD.

Um, okay. Final question. Before we end here and building off what was just said, what's one podcast, that's not your own, that you think people should go and check out with. Uh, who wants to start with this one?

Alanna: There's just so many, but, but I feel like, like the bomb, for me, would be something like The Cult of Pedagogy. Has anybody ever checked that out? Okay. And I mean, and it's a teaching thing, but I would say the library world that is outside of teaching, the question they always ask me "So can you like tell me how to teach in about five minutes?" And, and The Cult of Pedagogy is the answer to that, for me. I would highly recommend it.

Matthew: Maurice? Brenna?

Maurice: Hold on, I'm writing.

Matthew: Brenna, do you have one?

Brenna: Yeah. So my favourite podcasts are ones that introduced me to a world that I don't have access to otherwise. Um, and so I, I've got to give, um, huge love, not that it's in short supply for this podcast, um, to the Ear Hustle podcast, which is a podcast that's all about life inside uh, well San Quentin is the it's the prison it primarily takes place inside.

Um, it's created for, and by incarcerated persons at that institution, but it goes now as the podcast has, uh, has grown and some of the folks involved in it have, um, left prison it's, it goes into other institutions now. And it's just, you know, when podcasting is good, it takes us places that we don't have access to otherwise.

And it shows us other kinds of, the possibilities when it comes to things like equity and access and you know, education. And I just think, um, Ear Hustle's quite, uh, a remarkable example of really doing the work. So I recommend that one if folks haven't listened,

Maurice: I have one, it's a friend, a friend of, we say on T is for Training they call it "a friend of the show."

It's Circulating Ideas. And he does interviews with interesting library folk. And it's very much very different. My show is more of a wacky tobacky, I don't know what panel. Uh, Steve's show is one person, two people. He does an interview with them, maybe 10, 15, 20, 30 minutes. You get to know them, for example, those who are listening, so I know this is primarily to the Ontario Library Association, but as we know, borders don't really exist anymore during COVID. So if you're listening to this in America, the American Library Association, ALA presidential elections are coming up. I'm sure Steve will have interviews with the presidential candidates so you can hear what they have to say, et cetera.

And he has really interesting people on his show. He doesn't do it as much as Alanna mentioned, it's sort of the, uh, time gets away from you and you could, you kind of have to roll back how much you do, but his show is great. It's called Circulating Ideas and Steve is wonderful.

Matthew: I've also been in that I've, I've been a guest and host, a guest host on that podcast as well.

Uh, but anyway, thank you for all of you for, um, being on this panel. I think, I think I really enjoyed our discussion and learning more about different aspects of podcasting. Uh, to those watching us, um, there'll be links and resources available for you. I think it's either going to be emailed to you or it'll be on the OLA conference website.

Uh, so thank you all for coming today.

Brenna: Thanks for having me, Matthew. It was fun.

Maurice: Yeah, thanks for having us. This was, this was a lot of fun and we're doing things cross border, which I think is really cool. At least for me, I don't need a passport necessarily to go to Canada. I love Canada.

Alanna: Good Point, I don't need to have the right vaccinations in the right order either.

It's awesome.