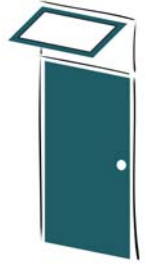


the transom review

August, 2002

Vol. 2/Issue 7



Edited by Sydney Lewis

John Hodgman's Topic

About John Hodgman

John K. Hodgman is a Former Professional Literary Agent who lives in New York. He has provided fiction, essays, reviews, profiles, quizzes, and commentary for *This American Life*, *The Paris Review*, *One-Story*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Groom Magazine*, *React* (a website for teens), *GQ*, and *Men's Journal*, where he is a contributing editor covering the drinking-and-lobster-roll beat for their somewhat monthly food column.



For 13 months he answered questions on the subject of publishing, writing, cryptozoology, Robert Cormier, and THE LORD OF THE RINGS as part of an occasionally helpful advice column "Ask A Former Professional Literary Agent" at <http://www.mcsweeneys.net>, a task to which he hopes soon to return. Meanwhile, he hosts the Little Gray Book Lectures in Brooklyn on a monthly basis, and he remains an expert on ultra-hot hot sauces, hobbits, and the radio arts as they were once practiced at WMFO-FM, Medford, MA, from about 1988-1990, where he was briefly the host of an actual radio show. He is available to speak on these subjects, or any other, to your group, party, or corporate retreat. In fact, he is apparently desperate to do so. His nemesis is the mad Dr. Craig Kittles. He has two cats.

Intro by Jay Allison

June 23, 2002 - #1

Those of you coming from **McSweeneys** are aware that John was once a Professional Literary Agent. He has also been on the radio, as you will discover, and the experience clearly marked him. John is willing to answer questions about all jobs he has held and many other topics. We urge you to ask them; otherwise things will get boring quickly. John wondered if he needed to put forward a provocative topic worth discussing, i.e. do we all agree that radio must be abolished? We felt we could rely on you for questions, but if you can't think of anything else, ask that.

John's **bio** will tell you something about who he is, if you don't know, and so will his manifesto, which follows. You will discover that he has a lovely critical affection for the radio. We at Transom are very pleased to have him here for a visit and are grateful to Sarah Vowell and Paul Tough for their encouragement of the idea.

John Hodgman

The Promise Of Radio

June 23, 2002

In Western Massachusetts, there is a stretch of I-91 between Springfield and the Vermont border that is haunted by radio. Somewhere between the hills and the sky, especially if it is cloudy and dark and you are driving alone, something in the air gathers up AM signals from all over the east. They twist and spin around one another up there, bouncing off cloud and mountaintop, before being caught by car antennae heading northward, and suddenly, impossibly, you are hearing broadcasts from Louisville, Kentucky, from Baltimore, Maryland, Niagara Falls and the Great Lakes and Washington DC, our nation's capital.

Some time ago, as I drove this road, I found myself listening to the Art Bell program. Of course you know that Art Bell is America's greatest radio commentator on matters of UFOs, the paranormal, bigfootism, etc. And though he broadcasts, naturally, from Las Vegas, in this case the feed of his show was coming to me via a small AM talk station in, I believe, Ohio. On this night, the call-in lines were open and unscreened, as always, but Bell had set a few numbers aside for special callers. If you were an alien, you were asked to call number X. If you were a time traveler you were asked to call number Y. If you were a werewolf or a vampire, you were asked to call number Z.

I remember feeling that it was unfair to ask werewolves and vampires to share the same call-in line, given their long history of animosity. But at this time, I was no longer a famous radio personality. I had long before given up my show at WMFO in Medford, MA, and it would be years still before I would return to the air to discuss superpowers (thus making me America's second greatest radio commentator on matters of the paranormal) on Ira Glass's program "This American Life." No, at this time I was merely a Professional Literary Agent. Who was I to tell Art Bell what to do with werewolves?

Naturally, several people called in claiming to be aliens. There is never any lack for call-in aliens, apparently: they are the baba booeys of the paranormal radio circuit. Many also called in claiming to be time travelers. And some called in confused, since they were time traveling aliens and they did not know which was the correct phone line to use. Only one called in on the vampire/werewolf line.

"I am a vampire," he said.

"And have you fed on human blood today?" Art Bell asked, legitimately curious.

"No. I typically go up to someone on the street, and I feed off their aura."

"Their aura?"

"Yes," said the vampire. "You know: their energy. I steal their life energy"

"Ah. So you are a psychic vampire," Bell announced.

"Um, yes."

"OK, we're not doing psychic vampires tonight," Bell said. He explained that that was a very different kind of vampire. And they might do a show on that phenomenon soon, but for now, Bell said to the audibly disappointed psychic vampire, "we are just going to wait for a traditional vampire, the blood sucking kind, to call in."

I don't know what happened after I reached my destination and got out of the car, but by the time I turned off my radio at least, Art Bell was still waiting. The night felt darker and stranger.

I tell this story as a means of illustrating the power and promise of the radio arts. Where television luridly reveals everything, radio is coy; radio conceals its sources. It is a voice behind a curtain, and you must provide the face. Or, if you do not keep your radio behind a curtain, as I do, you can imagine it as voices in the next room. This is what makes radio so powerfully consoling to the lonely-it creates the illusion of company in a way that few other media can. Public radio is particularly adept at creating this illusion of companionship, in part because they do not advertise (pledge drives don't spoil the illusion-while it would be unusual for a friend to suddenly start yelling at you from the next room about the low financing on this year's Toyotas, it is almost expected that he will occasionally ask you for money over and over, for days on end), and because of the close and uncanny naturalness of its voices. After growing up on tinny, ratatat Boston all-news AM stations (punctuated, of course, by the ceaseless and somehow insidious sound of a simulated ticker tape), the deep, round, FM depth of the voices on All Things Considered sounded so lifelike to me, so nearby, that I was immediately unnerved, convinced it was some kind of special effect or a practical joke.

This intimacy is also what makes radio at the same time always a little spooky, even when it does not involve aliens. Receiving a radio broadcast can be like getting an unsigned letter slipped under your door, the origin unknown, its author obscure. Anyone who has ever explored the ends of the dial, picking up the sound of a woman's voice, slightly robotic, endlessly reading long strings of numbers without explanation, understands this. This is heightened by the comparative democracy of the medium-its openness to anyone with a short wave or even just a phone line. The air is haunted by voices-countless and unknowable, searching for someone to pull them down and listen.

And so it seems to me that the great power of radio is not so much its ability to disseminate news from far continents near-instantly, or to join us in national conversation, or to reveal to us the stories of our neighbors that they cannot tell us but will happily tell to a microphone. Instead, the promise of radio is that vampires might be calling in at any moment. This is an exciting prospect, and so it is smart to do as I do, and keep your radio on all the time. I also advise keeping it behind a heavy velvet curtain, for reasons I should not have to explain.

My Career in the Air

There was much talk in the last century about the "world wide web" and how it would make available a national platform to anyone with something to say. And with the proliferation of weblogs and personal sites and bulletin boards, we may indeed soon become a nation of individual broadcaster-listeners, each sending out a highly individual program to a small audience, or just to ourselves.

The radio and the web are alike in this way, and sympathetic to each other-they share a primary emphasis on words over image, an abundance of channels all passively waiting for an audience, a vibrancy and idiosyncrasy, and both encourage instant feedback and conversation. That is perhaps part of the reason that transom.org, a website about radio, seems instantly, metaphysically appropriate.

In many ways, my now-very-occasional column on <http://www.mcsweeneys.net> "Ask A Former Professional Literary Agent," is the radio program I always wanted to have-a kind of "Car Talk" for aspiring writers-and would still like to do were it not for the various controversies that chased me off the Boston airwaves forever.

But before the advent of the web, there was only one way to become a broadcaster, and that was by

- 1) convincing your high school's French department substitute teacher that you should fill in for his two hour weekly radio program on the local college station,
- 2) quickly learning that the summer management of WMFO was either too busy or too sleepy to care who went on the air,
- 3) proving yourself by playing the same Billy Bragg and Tom Waits albums week after week, and

4) because you were not patently insane, being trusted with your own weekly two hour show at the tenderly pompous age of 17 for the benefit of a single repeat listener, whose name was Chris, and who was very depressed and would call every week pleading for something other than Billy Bragg.

I am happy to say that, if you follow these four simple steps, you too will be able host the famous radio program "Radio Consuelo" on Fridays, from four to six, from Studio A in Curtis Hall on the Tufts University Campus in Medford, MA from 1988-1989. I recently came across two recordings of this program, to my knowledge the only ones that exist. Jay Allison has very kindly agreed to make portions of these available to you via streaming audio. A guide to what you can hear there can be found via this link.

Radio Consuelo Audio:

http://www.transom.org/guests/specialguests/johnhodgman_radio.html

It is a unique kind of torture to hear the 18 year old version of yourself talking about why compact discs will never replace vinyl, and I understand what I am doing when I give you these tapes. Unlike radio, the web does not dissolve into the air the moment it is created, and what you put out into it exists perpetually in the digital silt, searchable and trade-able and peer to peer file sharable. And while I doubt anyone will be interested in doing this, I now make it possible for three reasons:

1) Because even though WMFO is not an NPR affiliate, it was and is a great public radio station, a place of such openness to its listener-ship that they would give even me a show. And though it was sometimes shaggy and strange, its devotion to the community was never in question. One great program was hosted for years by Mikey Dee, who invited local bands into the studio each week to play in the cramped, damp quarters of Curtis Hall.

2) Because while recently visiting the WMFO website, I learned that not long ago Mikey Dee suffered a debilitating stroke. He is slowly recovering with the help of a lot of loving friends, but for now he cannot speak, either on-air or off. And this reminds me that the lives we leave in our past are not frozen on tape or in time, as we are sometimes tempted to believe. They go on, and if you would like to say something nice to Mikey Dee you may do so here: <http://www.rockopera.com/mikeydee>

3) Because as improvisatory and ephemeral as radio may seem, it also goes on, traveling into space, and you never know when a time traveling alien might hear it. Thus, it is important to make all of your work something you can be proud of forever, lest it come back to bite you on the ass like a psychic vampire.

Questions For Discussion

Since those days, I have had the pleasure of contributing three stories to "This American Life," a program that understands as few others do all the intimacy and spookiness of the radio, and the fact that everyone is telling stories all the time-sometimes in a single sentence, sometimes over the course of an entire life-and that finding them requires only careful listening, good editing, moving

their words around on a computer to make them say what you want, plus music. Many people like this show, and I am one of them, and I would be happy to talk to you about it if you want.

As well, I have been taking something of a hiatus from my duties as a Former Professional Literary Agent. As a result, I have accumulated many questions from good people on the subject of publishing, writing, and The Lord of the Rings that have gone, heretofore, unanswered. I have encouraged, therefore, <http://www.mcsweeneys.net> to direct those patient souls here, where I will help to advise them on these subjects or any others. You should also feel free to ask me questions of this kind.

As well, I would be pleased to read your opinions and contribute my own thoughts on the following issues...

- 1) What was your spookiest moment listening to the radio?
- 2) Would you prefer to be invisible or to have the power of flight?
- 3) Are any of you vampires?
- 4) Have you ever called into a talk radio program, and what was it like?
- 5) Is the web a satisfactory substitute for radio?
- 6) Which one of you people is going to buy me a Grundig Sattelit 800 SW/AM/FM radio, not long ago described as "the most anticipated radio in the past few decades?" For I do not feel I can go on for much longer without it.

HINT: it costs 500 dollars.

Thank you. I have taken up too much of your time. For now, at least...

That is all.

A Conversation with John Hodgman

Can Spiderman Save E-Bay?

Darin S. - June 24, 2002 - #5

What makes you so smart?

Do you think radio will eventually kill off such newer, lesser technologies as the so-called "world wide web?"

Science by Hodgman

John Hodgman - June 25, 2002 - #9

You have actually asked two questions, but they have the same answers:

the radio will thrive due to the emanation of "radio waves." These are vibrations in the air which, over time, will destroy all lesser technologies.

they also make me "so smart."
That is all.

LGB Bazooka Joe Gum Wrappers?
Sam P. Potts - June 25, 2002 - #12

Are there any plans to migrate the Little Gray Books series to another medium, such as radio? Have you considered other formats, such as bottle-cap rebus, skywriting (costly and time- and space-consuming, yes, but think of the readership!), and billboard?

On second thought, perhaps radio would be the most viable.

Train Wrecks In A Sweaty Room
John Hodgman - June 25, 2002 - #19

No plans so much as wishes, confounded by logistics. There is something about this Lecture series that would lend itself to radio broadcast, and who wouldn't want radio celebrity, the chance to drink cristal every day on a cigarette boat protected at every moment by his private army of ninjas, such as one "G Keillor?" The answer is no-one. Every one would like this.

But at the same time, how can you convey the sheer visual poetry of a man throwing a whiffle ball at another man who is dressed as a giant sea gull in a purely auditory medium? Or auction off flea-market tiki statues or broke down pianos if people cannot even see the merchandise?

This goes, in some strange way, to our discussion of web vs. radio. Obviously whatever similarities I might note can be countered by obvious differences. While it's possible that adaptation for the air might winnow out some of the Lectures' more egregious sight gags and gimmickry, leaving only audio beauty behind (<http://ww.jonathancoulton.com>), it's just as if not more possible that the only form suitable to this monthly train wreck is a sweaty room in Brooklyn.

The Wolfman Anodyne
julie shapiro - June 25, 2002 - #14

one of my earliest memories of listening to the radio is one of my clearest, and may also be my spookiest. in the early 1980's i was just entering my double digits, and so, according to my parents, was not yet ready to watch certain things on the tv. specifically, i was sent to bed before the made-for-tv docudrama 'the day after' was broadcast, depicting life post-nuclear war. more than a little curious about something i wasn't supposed to watch, i snuck down and took in about fifteen minutes from the stairs, where i could crouch and just make out the images on the tv in our living room. i was freaked out of my mind.

apparently so were dozens of other people living in northeast ohio -
after retreating to my room and turning on the classic rock station my clock/radio was tuned to, i listened to Wolfman Jack, the DJ who was on that night, trying to calm the fears of callers who

rather than requesting favorite songs expressed openly their fears about what the movie had revealed.

in retrospect, twenty years later, i'm amazed at how much responsibility 'Wolfman Jack' took on that night, (thinking back on it now, i'm thinking that he must have broken format to take the time to address callers' concerns) at how much emotion was expressed over the airwaves by young (and not so young) adults needing consolation, at the sheer gravity of it all, in the middle of a classic rock music show. at the power of radio to draw together a troubled community and offer such an anodyne...

Cruise Culture

John Hodgman - June 25, 2002 - #21

I recall "The Day After" as well, and it seems like a kind of dream. Did network television really produce such a thing? And did we all really respond with such unjaded anxiety that way?

I suspect that it is one of those things--like bedtimes Wolfman Jack's howling midnight comfort--that our culture could not replicate today. This is sad, but it leaves more time, at least, for discussion of Tom Cruise.

Shackled Keyboardists Beat Squabbling Masses Off-Air

Shauna McKenna - June 25, 2002 - #16

5) Is the web a satisfactory substitute for radio?

Although I liked your comparison very much, I think that the media are different to a degree that resists comparison. The best of the web is stuff like this, conversations between equals. I mean, I know it's not technically so -- you're the moderator, and you possess that most coveted of American characteristics, celebrity -- but the web makes it so that you are a person at a keyboard and I am a person at a keyboard, and in fact, I probably am at a conversational advantage, because I type 107 words per minute. With my hands shackled.

Even call-in talk shows, on the radio, have very clear delineations between broadcaster and listener. The control of radio is probably where it excels over the web; the selection of the finest, most coherent voices from the squabbling masses.

AOL Soon to Own Handcuffs, Too

John Hodgman - June 25, 2002 - #23

You are right that we have all been empowered by the web: everyone with a keyboard can now effectively broadcast to a national audience. In a sense, it puts each of us on the same footing as the major media conglomerates, except for AOL, who now apparently own all our thoughts and teeth.

This is, I think, a positive development overall. But also consider: it is this same extension of power that allows me to mercilessly spam A. Knight with Little Gray Book Lectures, and contributes as well to a fractured culture of increasingly specialized niches in which even a barely showered and non-cristal drinking former professional literary agent may be considered a "celebrity."

How can this be good?

Cuervo Man

jake - June 25, 2002 - #17

I'm particularly fond of your TAL "Cuervo Man" piece, not least because the Man (aka Ryan McDonough) is an old high school friend of mine whose unique talents had gone uncelebrated for too long. I encourage Transom visitors to check it out via the links at end of John's bio above (and <http://www.mcshowoff.com/>, Ryan's site).

5) Is the web a satisfactory substitute for radio?

No, but it could be if/when wireless broadband internet becomes omnipresent & cheap, and we can get worldwide streaming audio just like satellite radio today, with tivo-like audio-on-demand features in our car stereo, plus all the interactive possibilities of the webbed world.

Hodgman's Big Plan

John Hodgman - June 25, 2002 - #24

Ryan is a very talented but troubled person who needs help. This is why I put him and all his dirty secrets on the radio: to force him to hit rock bottom so that he can start putting his life together. Also, with him out of the way, I hope that I soon will be able to replace him in the liquor promotion department, though my act will be somewhat less ab-intensive, mainly involving me sitting in a comfortable chair while wearing loose pants, drinking. You have no idea how successful this campaign will be.

Move Me, Groove Me, Wave Me, Don't Web Me

Sam P. Potts - June 25, 2002 - #18

I often feel overwhelmed by the web in a way that radio never inspires. I listen to only one station on the radio, and it seems that that is about half the number that are actually worth listening to. On the web, there is a lot of really excellent stuff, sometimes very easy to find. But I have never been moved by anything on the web as much as some things I've heard on the radio.

Radio Buddies, Hens Teeth, Ice Cubes in Hell...

Shauna McKenna - June 25, 2002 - #27

It's important to distinguish between looking at the web as a reader, and participating in all the various subnetworks weaving and winding like so many strands of a, um, cobweb. I have a fine array of acquaintances and friends met through the web; yet none, that I can think of, through radio.

And Did You Forgive It?

Jackson Braider - June 26, 2002 - #29

When did radio really, honestly, truly disappoint you?

Hope Follows Fading Signal, Sublime Pain

John Hodgman - June 26, 2002 - #31

I will only be disappointed if/when satellite radio really takes off, removing regional character from radio, which is one of its finest and shiniest charms. I don't want a continuous signal when driving from coast to coast. One, I don't drive from coast to coast as often as I used to. Two, the sublime pain of a good station fading out while driving, and the hope of finding something as good or better in the next town--all of this is the point, to me.

Media are defined as much by their limitations as their promise. When those limitations are taken away, you get something else, something different, something perhaps not as good.

Radio Consuelo, Cuervo Man Join In Aural Assault

jonathan menjivar - June 26, 2002 - #30

A radio question. Can you talk about the balance of your position in a story as both a storyteller and a character? "Cuervo Man" was too, my favorite of your pieces. And one of the things that made it so special was that no one else could have told the story the way you did, you are, will always be, and have always been, "John Hodgman, former Professional Literary Agent." I present Radio Consuelo as evidence of that. And still you never got in the way. And I actually believed you were being sincere when you were out failing to replicate Cuervo Man's act in the bar. I don't really care if you were being sincere or pulling a cruel, cruel radio joke. The fact was that I believed you.

5) Is the web a satisfactory substitute for radio?

Not at all. No room to be assaulted and forced to pay attention like can happen with the radio.

If Cuervo Man WAS President, We'd Invest In Limes

John Hodgman - June 27, 2002 - #46

It is absolutely true that, the moment I saw Ryan screaming from the docks of Cuervo Nation, I thought that would be the greatest job in the world. It's true I usually have this reaction to almost any job, including stevedore, scrimshander, cheesemonger, any kind of monger really, and Professional Literary Agent. But this job was better than all of those because it involved yelling at people for money while drunk.

Or at least, that's how I'd do it.

The desperation that you hear in my voice on the radio program as I attempt to give away free alcohol is very real. Like acting or being president, Ryan's is a job that seems so intuitive and skill-free that you initially think anyone can do it. It's only when you are trying and failing to get someone to drink a shot of tequila off your head that you realize how hard it is to be Cuervo Man. Or, in the case of our current administration, president.

Arming Fort Satellite

whitney pastorek - June 26, 2002 - #41

I have a real question. You have commented on your sudden misgivings about satellite radio, and the way it would diminish some of the quirks and challenges that make current coast-to-coast radio listening such an adventure. But how could the long and consistent arm of satellite possibly be any worse than the even longer and clearly corrupt arm of Clear Channel Communications or one of the other giant radio conglomerates currently forcing me to listen to that Spiderman song 30 to 40 times a day? I realize that public radio is, for the time being, holding its own, but how much longer can they survive? And what can we do to help them? And at what point will it make sense to give up and retreat to satellite radio stations of our own, where we can broadcast monopoly- and Chad-Kroeger-free? And do you happen to know how to build and launch a satellite?

Strange, Weird, Beautiful

John Hodgman - June 27, 2002 - #45

I wonder if this is not a sort-of answer to the dilemma posed by Whitney: how can satellite radio possibly be worse than national radio networks controlled by corporate fiat?

This "everything is bad" thesis is provocative and largely true, though I remain unsure of how satellite radio run by a single corporation could possibly be better.

I am more cheered by all of the strange and weird and beautiful local and independent radio stations I am able to listen to on the web. This seems to me a better coast-to-coast solution, as it is much more likely I will be sitting still and wanting to hear many distant voices than I will be traveling across the country wanting to hear the same uninterrupted stream of lite jazz.

I tune my browser from time to time to these stations (<http://wmfo.org> -Medford, MA, <http://wwoz.org>-- New Orleans, wbur.org-Boston, <http://www.cbc.ca/> radioone-Canada), though I'm sure you good people know of many more and better ones. Please list them now.

How About All Them Other W's?

bw - June 28, 2002 - #58

with all the great stations in the boston area how is it you ended up listening to only wmfo.. what about wibr or wzbc or whrb??

and how is it you didn't do radio in college? to busy with the campus crusaders???

Bogus But Sublime

John Hodgman - June 28, 2002 - #59

I didn't only listen to MFO. Of course I also listened to ERS, BUR, GBH, HDH when Gene Burns was on, WBRS when Ari Vais was on. ZBC is obviously a great station, but not one I listened to regularly, for no good reason. And of course in the mid eighties, FNX was an eye-opener to an important American band called Animotion. Finally, there was whatever Christian AM station that then aired the sublimely weird "Talk Back with Bob Larson:" more bogus recovered memory satanic abuse tales than you could shake an inverted cross at.

Joe McCarthy Wouldn't Think So

Shauna McKenna - June 28, 2002 - #60

Have you considered conducting or encouraging spin-offs of the Little Gray Book lectures in other cities? Say, Philadelphia? A radio program would be lovely, too, but I don't think one can be properly impressed by things like a piano hauled by frightening Russians unless one sees that piano mere feet from where one sits.

Some Notions With Legs

John Hodgman - June 28, 2002 - #61

I agree with you that there is a certain frightening immediacy to the Lectures at their best. But as it was imagined, in part, as a radio program on stage, it's hard to get that idea out of my head. Much like my idea for a car powered by melons.

Derek Powazek's very fine storytelling site <http://www.fray.com> has had great success setting up live, often simultaneous, events in many different cities. I wouldn't be averse to taking the show on the road, but right now we're concentrating on making each show a very good, self-contained, successful program.

And Sell Lots And Lots Of Booze

whitney pastorek - June 28, 2002 - #64

Something that could be tried, in terms of the discussion of the LGB's breaking out to other cities, is USING the internet via webcams to broadcast-- "stream", if you will-- readers from other parts of the world into many locations. Have them on remote, sort of. That way, people sitting in bars all across this great land of ours could see the same thing all at once. And it would bridge the gaps between live performance, radio, and the internet. And be brilliant.

A Dedicated Serb And Circus Cemetery
John Hodgman - June 29, 2002 - #71

Yes, I would like to break into that market--young people gathering at bars, ordering chicken wings, and watching literary readings from around the world on large projection televisions.

A very nice thing happened at the last Little Gray Book Lecture in which the author Ethan Watters, of San Francisco, greeted Williamsburg via videotape to discuss bluffing at cards. This was done from the vantage point of a Jewish cemetery, one of four surrounding a bay area card room, and including a dedicated Serb and circus cemetery, while Watters performed card tricks. It was at once very funny, very moving, and 3000 miles away. So there is some possibility to explore there.

I hope soon that some of the audio tapes we made of the first Little Gray Book lectures will be available on the web. The problem is, those DAT tapes are still in Brooklyn, and I am on 104th Street, and you good people are everywhere in the world, and none of us knows how to make all those places meet. Yet.

Kinda Like Free Range Chickens
J. S. Van Buskirk - July 1, 2002 - #88

5) Is the web a satisfactory substitute for radio?

- Definitely not until I have a better web connection, maybe then. I will also need the web in my car if it is to substitute for radio. Though, you might have left this open purposefully. "Substitute for radio" is ambiguous. My first response was to question whether the web could be the thing I listen to while working at home or driving. On further reflection, if the function of radio is defined as something broader: what gives me my news, what blows my mind, what reassures me that I am not a tool of the entertainment conglomerates, where future society is born and bandied about, then I would say yes, that those functions are for me served in combination by radio and by web, and web has certain other possibilities that can take it beyond radio.

One of its main advantages is the lack of physical control- say, thinking about them changing the rules for how many radio stations and other media any one entity can own in a given geographical area. As far as that goes, there are big advantages on the web, at least for now. It is very difficult to stop information- they can trace things later, sure, but it is hard to stop it.

Bilderberger-Like Crass Zeal Rules Inside
John Hodgman - July 1, 2002 - #91

Yes. At the risk of sounding horribly paranoid, it is this possibility of being pawn to conglomerates that is most on my mind lately, except when I am thinking about my machine to slow down time.

You may know that I was once a professional literary agent. You certainly know that nearly all mainstream publishing now exists as an arm or other limb of a giant media company, typically a German one. During my brief time as a high powered media insider, I regularly laughed off the

suggestion that somehow the books we had a hand in publishing were controlled by a bilderberger-like corporate agenda--the level of incompetence and laziness I encountered daily just made it seem too implausible.

Now that I am on the outside and have been for some time, it is hard to maintain this casual attitude. There is still plenty of laziness and incompetence, and also dedication and good taste, on an individual level and in all media; occasionally, these things conspire to allow good and beautiful things to escape. But I can no longer laugh off the clear and primary mission of most mainstream media: to make us care more about Tom Cruise's braces than our very souls. And it does this with such unrelenting and unapologetically crass zeal that I can only conclude that I was missing something all along, or that it all went to hell the moment Hodgman was no longer there to keep it in check. I suspect the latter.

Play Not The Dirge

Shauna McKenna - July 1, 2002 - #93

When Mr. Hodgman said, long ago, that the unruliness of the web may be giving rise to dubiously credited "celebrities" and the like, I think he hit on exactly how the subculture is making creativity persist and disseminate, far better than photocopied zines or single-city poetry readings of the past.

Okay. So the media conglomerates have pigeonholed "literary fiction" and "debut fiction" and "adult contemporary music" and "investigative reporting" and "lifestyle programming" and "urban humor" and "sodomasochistic story hour" ... but hey, viva the worldwide web! It's still pretty painless for an aspiring whatever to run a whatever web page, and the best marketing is still via word of mouth (or word of keyboard, as the case may be). My point? Play not the dirge yet. We write. We read. We traverse the transom. Broadband will become more accessible, I'm sure of it. We will donate, as we are able, to far-flung independent radio stations and miscellaneous arts organizations as we enjoy improved technology and reception.

Computer Brew

bw - July 2, 2002 - #96

John I would like to know this - if you started doing your own weekly radio show.. lets say wnyc calls you up and says, "hey, John.. we NEED YOU" ...what would it sound like???

Rockapella's Rocking Edge

John Hodgman - July 4, 2002 - #98

I hope it would sound something like the very lovely Little Gray Book Lecture we enjoyed last night, especially Todd Pruzan's piece on sadistic 18th century children's book author FL Mortimer and Brendan Greeley's frighteningly insightful powerpoint presentation on lawn mower racing in Germany.

I've been enjoying this conversation, and I'm still eager to a) get someone to admit they are a un-
psychic vampire, and b) get some more live feed web radio station recommendations.

Clearly Channeling Pernicious Force

Jay Allison - July 5, 2002 - #99

Not a recommendation for live feed web radio station, but a comprehensive series of articles about
why you need one, over at Salon - **Radio's Big Bully:** http://www.salon.com/ent/clear_channel/

"A complete guide to Salon's reporting on Clear Channel, the most powerful -- and some would say
pernicious -- force in the music industry."

Reaching Around Corners

Frank V. Coco - July 7, 2002 - #101

Laurel's dad here. I was going through This American Life and stumbled across transom and your
topic. Radio has been the love of my ears life since childhood. The mystery of sound waves
reaching around corners and finding us as we look for them still captivates me. I would rather hear a
scratchy voice or symbolically special music on radio than on a very clear CD or tape, perhaps
because it is being shared by someone else in an invisible bond between us.

The Suspicion of Connection Made Real

John Hodgman - July 10, 2002 - #113

This reference is to my past life as a child in Brookline, Massachusetts, and my friend and Heath
School classmate Ms. Laurel Coco.

Yes, it is that suspicion that someone else is also listening that makes radio so compelling and
reassuring. Listening to recorded sound feels like a much simpler and lonelier transaction.

Earlier we were talking about similarities and differences between radio and the web. Shauna
pointed out that that suspicion of connection with remote souls on radio is made very real and direct
on the web. No better evidence of that exists than your very welcome and surprising note. Thank
you.

A Lazy Question

jonathan menjivar - July 8, 2002 - #102

Since you've had the chance to work with and be both...

What's the difference between radio geeks and literary dorks? is there one? It sounds like a lazy
question and maybe it is but it's also an earnest one. Did anything from Radio Consuelo make it's
way over to that other world of professional literature where people paid you actual dollars for your
knowledge and skill and ability to put funny into words? What sort of adaptations to your writing
have you had to make working for This American Life?

The Skinny On The Sideshow
Rich Alcott - July 8, 2002 - #103

I hope you don't mind if I jump in here and take a crack at this thought-provoking question. Dorks and geeks. A dork can be simply a doofus, an awkward, ungainly person who, perhaps, is unaware of the humorous effect he may have on those around him. I believe term "dork" is solidly male gender specific. There may be no known female dorks and if there are, I am sure there is another term for these individuals. A geek, specifically, is a specialist in a traditional carnival sideshow. The geek was the fellow who would, for a price, bite the head off a live chicken. I swear I'm not making this up. Don't know what he did with the head once he'd bitten it off.

A "radio geek," therefore, refers to an entertainer who does the thing for audio broadcast. Although, as with ventriloquism or magic, what's point to doing it on radio? How do you know the guy isn't faking it?

A "literary dork" does it in writing.

Coached by Marceau
jonathan menjivar - July 8, 2002 - #104

I guess I should stop calling myself a radio geek then. But I'll have to disagree. Ventriloquism and magic do belong on the radio. As does mime as Joe Frank proved some years ago.

Just A Simple Comment
John Hodgman - July 10, 2002 - #114

Answering a question like this requires a great deal of Venn diagramming, which, like sleight of hand and ventriloquism, makes for great radio, but it's difficult for me to do in ASCII on a bulletin board. But as I believe you suspect, there's an awful lot of overlap between these two geek/dork sets. Both love words without pictures, and I leave what to make of that commitment to non-visual artforms to you.

As for your other earnest/lazy questions.

1. "Did anything from Radio Consuelo make it's way over to that other world of professional literature where people paid you actual dollars...?"

Except for my contribution to the briefly published Starbucks literary magazine "Joe," which was sweating dollars for four issues or so, I have never been paid for funny. I suppose in a more general sense the experience of being a DJ allowed me to get used to the sound of my own voice, and this is good because I like to read aloud when I write. I mainly wish that I could drop in clips from old radio serials into my regular conversations. Just a simple comment from a mad scientist on the hypno-metallophone says so much more than I could ever put into words.

2. "What sort of adaptations to your writing have you had to make working for This American Life?"

I have had to learn how to do something that is very hard for me: get to the point. There is little time in radio for dithering, and as this is true about life as well, this is a very good lesson to have learned.

This Perception Of Community
Susan Jenkins - July 9, 2002 - #108

When I first encountered your LGB series last year, I marveled at the magical ability you seemed to possess, the ability to create something that provides not only reliable entertainment and alcohol in a congenial setting, but also generates a sense of community among writers.

What are your thoughts on this perception of community among writers and artists? And how does community-generating differ between these live, face-to-face situations like LGB and your various experiences with radio?

A Long Night And Too Much Whiskey
John Hodgman - July 12, 2002 - #119

My fear is that it is in fact only a perception of community, in the same way a long night and too much whiskey creates among two strangers a perception of sudden, close friendship, especially if a car chase is involved as well.

When communities spring up, especially among artists, they are organic, natural, undesigned; when you call them communities, they tend to have already disbanded. They are something we remember, perhaps rosily and falsely, or perhaps truly, rather than something we continue to experience.

It is for this reason that we reliably provide alcohol, as you point out--to offset this erosion of intimacy.

Back Through The Misty Waves Of Time
Mark Anderson - July 14, 2002 - #144

I grew up around Boston and my father's been a Car Talk fan from almost the start (and likes to tell people about how he went to the Magliozzi's do-it-yourself garage in Cambridge), so Car Talk was on a lot when I was a kid. In the pre-nationwide-distribution days, I sort of vaguely remember that they did shows where there were no calls. (I don't know whether this was planned or whether they just didn't get any calls that day). I have this extremely dim recollection that once they did an hour-long skit with a main character named Ivan Pullyourpantsov (sp?). I seem also to remember an extended joke about a Yugo-knockoff called a Nogo.

An Hour That Felt Like Three

David Greene - July 15, 2002 - #150

Associate Producer, Car Talk

Yes, back in the early days, "Car Talk" was a lot, uh, looser. There was no Producer, and the guys would pretty much do whatever they felt like, including taking calls, or not. I don't think it was planned, or due to a lack of calls (I filled in engineering a few times, and the phones started ringing, as soon as they opened their mouths), but, simply because they didn't get around to them. You're also correct about the "Ivan" show...I was actually doing an archiving project here last year, and came across it. Truly an hour that felt like three.

Practice, Practice, Practice, And Wrenches

John Hodgman - July 17, 2002 - #168

If it is not a story that everyone already knows by heart, perhaps you can explain to me how those car men became famous broadcasters.

And Vic Didn't Even OWN A Car!

David Greene - July 18, 2002 - #174

Back around 1978, or thereabouts, a guy named Vic Wheatman invited a group of "experts" from different areas to appear on a call-in "advice" show on WBUR. I think there was supposed to be a home repair guy, a stereo repair guy, and others. As it turned out, Tom Magliozzi (for some reason, invited as the auto repair guy) was the only one to actually show up. So, Tom did the show, and, for some reason was invited back. Tom agreed to do it, but, only if Ray would join him. Ray agreed to do it, and, the rest, as they say, is history... or, the beginning of the end, if you'd prefer.

Not If Radio Kills Off Those Newer, Lesser Technologies

John Hodgman - July 20, 2002 - #178

Out of curiosity, who was the stereo repair guy? Can we get him on the air immediately? Does anyone repair stereos anymore? Or TVs? VCRs? Radios? Don't we just sell these on ebay now and buy new ones?

Radio's Greatest Societal Influence

Andy Knight - July 14, 2002 - #139

The thing about radio is that it provides you with an opportunity to go online and post things in the hopes of obtaining free t-shirts. While a bit more time consuming than a simple trip to Target, you can't argue with the results. This is, perhaps, radio's greatest societal influence. If Morning Edition would pick up on this theory I'm sure that they would be nationwide in no time at all.

With Baited Breath...

Jay Allison - July 14, 2002 - #142

My question: Do "thank you" gifts make you contribute to public radio?

TAL Ninja Frogs

Andy Knight - July 14, 2002 - #143

For me, thank you gifts determine *when* I contribute. During February, when every gift ranges from Roses, Chocolates, or B&B weekends, there is no chance that my wallet will open. Also, the pledge breaks on weekdays feature pretty lame gifts... coffee mugs, All Songs Considered CDs. TAL has the best stuff-- remember the tattoos and secret decoder wheels? Someday I hope that they come out with some TAL lunchboxes and action figures.

Tote Bags, The Illusion

John Hodgman - July 15, 2002 - #148

I became a member of WNYC many years ago in order to get the mug, and it is a nice mug. But I was mainly moved to call that time because I knew that my friend Sam Potts was volunteering, and that I might get him on the phone. This is exactly what happened, and we had a nice conversation, and I also had the pleasure of surprising Potts, briefly, to silence.

If we all had a personal friend to call during pledge week, I think that would be a more powerful incentive than tote bags, in that that would make real the illusion that the tote bag attempts to achieve: a sense of connection and community; that we are all out here toting things for our friends at public radio.

It is strange, if you are educated in the communistic liberal arts, to accept that merchandise equates with community. But anyone who has a Dokken concert t-shirt understands this, as I now understand it better in possession of these wonderful transom t-shirts.

You can find Little Gray Book T-shirts as well, and I truly make them available only to spread this kind of joy. But do you know that apart from those I've purchased myself, and those I've given away, we have never sold one?

Saturation Point Celine Dion Would Be Worse

cw - July 16, 2002 - #157

t-shirts don't make me give to public radio b/c where i live they don't give t shirts and if they did beethoven would be on them for some reason. i give during shows i think i like more than other people in my town b/c i fear they will take those shows away and run car talk and thistle and shamrock even MORE than they already do and we're at a saturation point w/that here in new orleans.

The Size Of A Wine List

Shauna McKenna – July 16, 2002 - #166

John Hodgman: I have a question for you in your capacity as a Former Professional Literary Agent. If a short story writer is seeking a publisher for his or her collection, is it really worthwhile to find an agent? I hear many disheartening stories from fine, fine writers about agents approaching them, and then deciding the stories aren't cohesive enough for a marketable book.

And that leads to a sub-question: How important is it for a writer to sign his or her first book with a big commercial publisher, as opposed to a quality (but possibly low-profile) independent concern? (These are more hypothetical than they seem. As of today, I'd have a manuscript the size of a wine list. But I'm working to change that.)

Love, Kiss, Dance, Breathe

John Hodgman - July 17, 2002 - #167

Unfortunately, publishers have discovered that publishing a wine list is likely more profitable venture than publishing a book of short stories. Collections very rarely make money, and are usually only published in order to flatter a promising writer into writing a novel. These also rarely make money, but less rarely, and in the blind gamble of publishing, that makes all the difference.

For this reason, agents, who like you also want to be employed, are certainly shy about selling a book of short stories unless a) there is also a novel to sell; b) they can convince someone that the collection of short stories is actually a novel; or c) one or more of the short stories has been published in the *New Yorker*, which apparently makes publishers crazy and compels them to pay 20 year old writers millions and millions of dollars.

Luckily, there are many things you can do without an agent, including:

- submit to the *New Yorker* (though agented material will be read 1st)
 - submit to all sorts of other magazines
 - become a successfully published short story author
 - publish a book with a small, independent press
 - attract the attention of an agent who will perhaps offer to sell your book of stories but will always, secretly hope you will write a novel
- and also
- love, kiss, dance, breathe, and otherwise enjoy life.

But, if you want to sell a book to a publisher, you will enjoy having an agent. It would be unseemly for you to scream into the phone for money money money, and as well, reading contracts is boring.

As for your sub-question, there are wonderful rewards to publishing with a small, independent house--they offer care, attention, and a small but typically active readership that they know well. What they don't offer is those huge Bertelsmann dollars. Whether it's your first or your ninth book, this will always tempt you.

Harnessed Ambrosia

Dave Barber - July 18, 2002 - #176

What do you think about the current state of public radio?

What do you like/dislike about the current nationally distributed shows? Local shows? Can/does Big (national) public radio harness the energy of cool local shows without blandifying them? What kind of experiences did you have with This American Life? Some people on this board don't like TAL and others probably prefer it to ambrosia; what do you think about it?

Magic And String

John Hodgman – July 20, 2002 - #180

Professionally speaking, I am primarily a public radio listener. My experiences with This Am. Life amounts to several phone conferences, and then some hours spent in a tiny linen-closet-turned-recording-studio in an upper west side apartment. This is not very different from my ordinary life, except when I sit in the closet with a microphone there is typically no recording equipment, and only the cats are listening.

So I am not really any more qualified to comment on this matter than you are. I am not exactly an "insider," and hesitate to critique radio programs as though I know how they are made. As far as I know, they are made of magic and string.

That said, I don't think that local shows suffer when brought to a larger audience; what's lost is a sense of local nuance, and the local listenership will occasionally feel sad, as Mark A and I do to no longer have the loose and local Boston-only-era Car Talk.

But these losses, I think, are negligible and not measurable by most scientific instruments. I enjoy Car Talk. I would rather have it here in New York than the satisfaction that Tom and Ray never sold out and went to some AM station in Boston in order to keep their shit real.

An original voice, I think, will typically carry farther than an imitation. And in this regard, if I were to make any critique, I might just say that I think I hear a lot of Tom and Ray in a number of new-ish public radio programs--the ha ha and the forced boisterousness and the elegantly scripted off the cuff cheer--and it does not ever feel as elegant or effortless or natural or right as it does coming out of Tom and Ray's respective marble mouths.

I understand: Car Talk is where the money is. And that's just one example. But, whatever the style of program, I'd much rather listen to different voices revealing a new sensibility than a carefully crafted, professional imitation of something that's already good.

I admire WBUR for being willing to capture those voices all those years ago, and this site for attempting to do the same now.

As for your final question, *This American Life*, of which I am a great fan, as you might imagine, is also an example of something that was just undeniably new and compelling when you first heard it, and it retains its freshness by constantly seeking out new contributors, viewpoints, stories. I find them to be relentless in this, and I like it, for obvious reasons.

E-ing and Seeding

Cindy Closkey – July 17, 2002 - #171

I've been lurking on this discussion for some time...I now have some knowledge to share: It's startlingly easy to host a literary event, at least a small one...The key: Send several advance emails to people who like to read and to listen (and who don't mind receiving email). Also, seed the audience with friends, including those from out of state who are overdue to visit you anyway.

Cooking With John

John Hodgman – July 20, 2002 - #177

on readings, your recipe for success is absolutely correct. Whether on stage, on page, or on the radio, it is best to presume first that only your friends or your enemies are listening. Intimacy results, and should non-interested parties then show up, that is (to carry on the culinary metaphor) delicious gravy.

A Newborn Mammal

whitney pastorek - July 22, 2002 - #182

My theory on hosting readings is simple: always assume that the audience has the attention span of a small newborn mammal. That way, the stories that are being read will be the appropriate length to entertain, but not lull the audience to sleep. I also feel that there is certain material, no matter how brilliant when seen on the page, that should not be read aloud.

Don't Forget The Parsley

Cindy Closkey - July 22, 2002 - #183

These strike me as fine and practical guidelines for ensuring a fun reading/event. They also remind me of the submission guidelines for *This American Life*, which I understand to be:

- 1) Be surprising.
 - 2) Punctuate anecdotes with moments of reflection or punchlines, preferably every 45 seconds.
 - 3) Add music to everything.
- (I'm summarizing of course.)

My question for everyone: Does the 45-second rule apply to readings, and maybe film and video? Or does seeing someone standing at a microphone or moving around on a screen extend the attention span a little (or shorten it)? Is the overall length of an individual story more important?

My other question: What material should not be read aloud?

Humor And Other Matters

Shauna McKenna - July 22, 2002 - #184

Well, I'm wondering about that last one, too, because I've seen some pretty amazing readings of serious material. I think humor works well because, if it's done right, the reader gets reinforcement from the audience. I think it's critical that the reader is comfortable.

Some of the best readings I've ever seen:

(1) Fred Leebron, at the KGB bar, reading a short story called "When It's You" about a spouse's diagnosis and demise of cancer. Amazing.

(2) Zadie Smith at the Housing Works bookstore, reading "Bangs" with They Might Be Giants accompanying her on acoustic guitars.

(3) Mike Daisey at the McSweeney's store in Brooklyn, describing severed fingers and being struck by lightning.

The Community of Separated Listeners

Jay Allison - July 23, 2002 - #186

Shauna, do you think those great reading moments would have worked on the radio? Can the blind, imagined community of separated listeners substitute for the energy of people in a room? Do the two audiences have fundamentally different needs?

Notes Snap To Attention

John Hodgman - July 23, 2002 - #188

I do not think it is fair to presume that all listeners of the radio are blind. I have read that some of them are merely mute.

That said, and having witnessed numbers two and three of Shauna's "Top 3" list, I think both would have worked on the radio. Indeed, I think the reason they worked so well was because they had, in effect, been radio-fied through the addition of music in one case and the performative nature of both.

Music really does help an audience snap to attention. And while it's true Daisey had the aid of his powerful, hypnotic, eye-to-eye gaze, I think he engaged the audience more through modulation of voice and vocal mood. As well, Daisey does not work from a script. Thus, he was not mumbling, eyes downcast, from a limp paperback in a dreary B&N as though he had never seen the words he had written ever before, which is a shameful practice made only more infuriating by its unforgivable frequency.

While I agree that brevity, drunkenness, frequent laugh breaks, and the use of guitars in various ways tends to make literary readings a more enjoyable show, I would hesitate to codify any rules lest it become as ritualized and kabuki like as writing a sit com.

Boring Mumbly, Happy Fun — You Pick
whitney pastorek - July 23, 2002 - #189

Yes, I agree with John, that there are no hard and fast rules. But, you know, to all the readers and writers and organizers out there: think about what you would want to hear, were you in the audience, and then read that. We've all been to boring mumbly readings, and we've all been to happy fun exciting ones. So figure out what the difference is, for you, and do that.

Now Add A Smidge Of Grunt, A Pinch Of Crashing Mallet
Shauna McKenna -July 24, 2002 - #190

I think all three of the readers I mentioned could do really wonderful things with radio -- Zadie Smith with TMBG without modification because (as others have mentioned) the music adds a really engaging layer to the fiction. Heck, I'd say throw in some chilling music at intervals in Fred Leebron's piece and that'd do it, and sound effects to Mike Daisey (you know, grunts and crashing mallets) and there you go.

I think the intimacy of the audience depends a lot on where the reading is taking place. John mentioned the publicity tour travesties that are so commonplace at B&N, and from what I've seen of readings at the Free Library in Philadelphia (a great big auditorium) the reader has to be three times as good for about half the reciprocated energy. I really love how Neal Pollack has dissected the practice of literary performance, and has worked his kiester off trying to capture the spirit of hip-hop and now, rock, in his (there's no other word for it) sets. And we've heard over and over how John's featured the bizarre and gleeful in LGB, along with his dead-on deadpan self. There's a reason you don't go to rock shows at, say, Virgin records. It's hard to put spirit and bizarreness and glee into a retail chain. Publicists: Take note.

I think the magical connection between all the mentioned individuals and live performance and radio possibility is the willingness to entertain. It can translate, sure, with some effort and creativity.

Hodgman, As You Were
Jay Allison - July 24, 2002 - #191

I hope someone might steer these good readers and others to Transom where we could explore the translation to radio.

I want to say thank you to John Hodgman for all the clever and wise answers he has provided to date. He is welcome to remain here with us in this topic for all eternity waiting, hopefully, for vampires.

That Is All...For Now
John Hodgman – July 25, 2002 - #193

Thank you, Jay, and all. I will remain here mumbling to myself in the dark, should any visitor come to hear me.

Postscript to Ponder:
Ed Page - July 23, 2002 - #185

The opening two paragraphs of an essay written by Robert Benchley in 1929. The essay is called "The Mysteries of Radio."

"I wouldn't be surprised if I knew less about radio than any one in the world, and that is no faint praise. There may be some things, like horseshoeing and putting little ships in bottles, which are closed books to me, but I have a feeling that if someone were to be very patient and explain the principles to me I might be able to get the hang of it. But I don't have any such feeling about radio. A radio expert could come and live with me for two years, and be just as kind and gentle and explicit as a radio expert could be, and yet it would do no good. I simply never could understand it; so there is no good in teasing me to try.

As a matter of fact, I was still wrestling with the principle of the telephone when radio came along, and was still a long way from having mastered it. I knew that I could go to a mouthpiece and say a number into it and get another number, but I was not privy to the means by which this miracle was accomplished. Finally I gave up trying to figure it out, as the telephone company seemed to be getting along all right with it, and it was evident from the condition my own affairs were getting in that there were other things about which I had much better be worrying. And then came radio to confuse me further."

About Transom

What We're Trying To Do

Here's the short form: Transom.org is an experiment in channeling new work and voices to public radio through the Internet, and for discussing that work, and encouraging more. We've designed Transom.org as a performance space, an open editorial session, an audition stage, a library, and a hangout. Our purpose is to create a worthy Internet site and make public radio better.



Submissions can be stories, essays, home recordings, sound portraits, interviews, found sound, non-fiction pieces, audio art, whatever, as long as it's good listening. Material may be submitted by anyone, anywhere -- by citizens with stories to tell, by radio producers trying new styles, by writers and artists wanting to experiment with radio.

We contract with Special Guests to come write about work here. We like this idea, because it 1) keeps the perspective changing so we're not stuck in one way of hearing, 2) lets us in on the thoughts of creative minds, and 3) fosters a critical and editorial dialog about radio work, a rare thing.

Our Discussion Boards give us a place to talk it all over. Occasionally, we award a Transom.org t-shirt to especially helpful users, and/or invite them to become Special Guests.

Staff

Producer/Editor - *Jay Allison*

Web Director/Designer - *Joshua T. Barlow*

Editors – *Sydney Lewis, Viki Merrick, Chelsea Merz, Paul Tough, Jeff Towne, Helen Woodward*

Web Developers - *Josef Verbanac, Barrett Golding*

Advisors

Scott Carrier, Nikki Silva, Davia Nelson, Ira Glass, Doug Mitchell, Larry Massett, Sara Vowell, Skip Pizzi, Susan Stamberg, Flawn Williams, Paul Tough, Bruce Drake, Bill McKibben, Bob Lyons, Tony Kahn, Ellin O'Leary, Marita Rivero, Alex Chadwick, Claire Holman, Larry Josephson, Dmae Roberts, Dave Isay, Stacy Abramson, Gregg McVicar, Ellen Weiss, Ellen McDonnell, Robin White, Joe Richman, Steve Rowland, Johanna Zorn, Elizabeth Meister



ATLANTIC PUBLIC MEDIA

Atlantic Public Media administers Transom.org. APM is a non-profit organization based in Woods Hole, Massachusetts which has as its mission "to serve public broadcasting through training and mentorship, and through support for creative and experimental approaches to program production and distribution." APM is also the founding group for *WCAI & WNAN*, a new public radio service for Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket under the management of *WGBH*-Boston.

This project has received lead funding from the Florence and John Schumann Foundation. We get technical support from RealImpact.