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TEXT BY THE PRESERVE THIS PODCAST TEAM

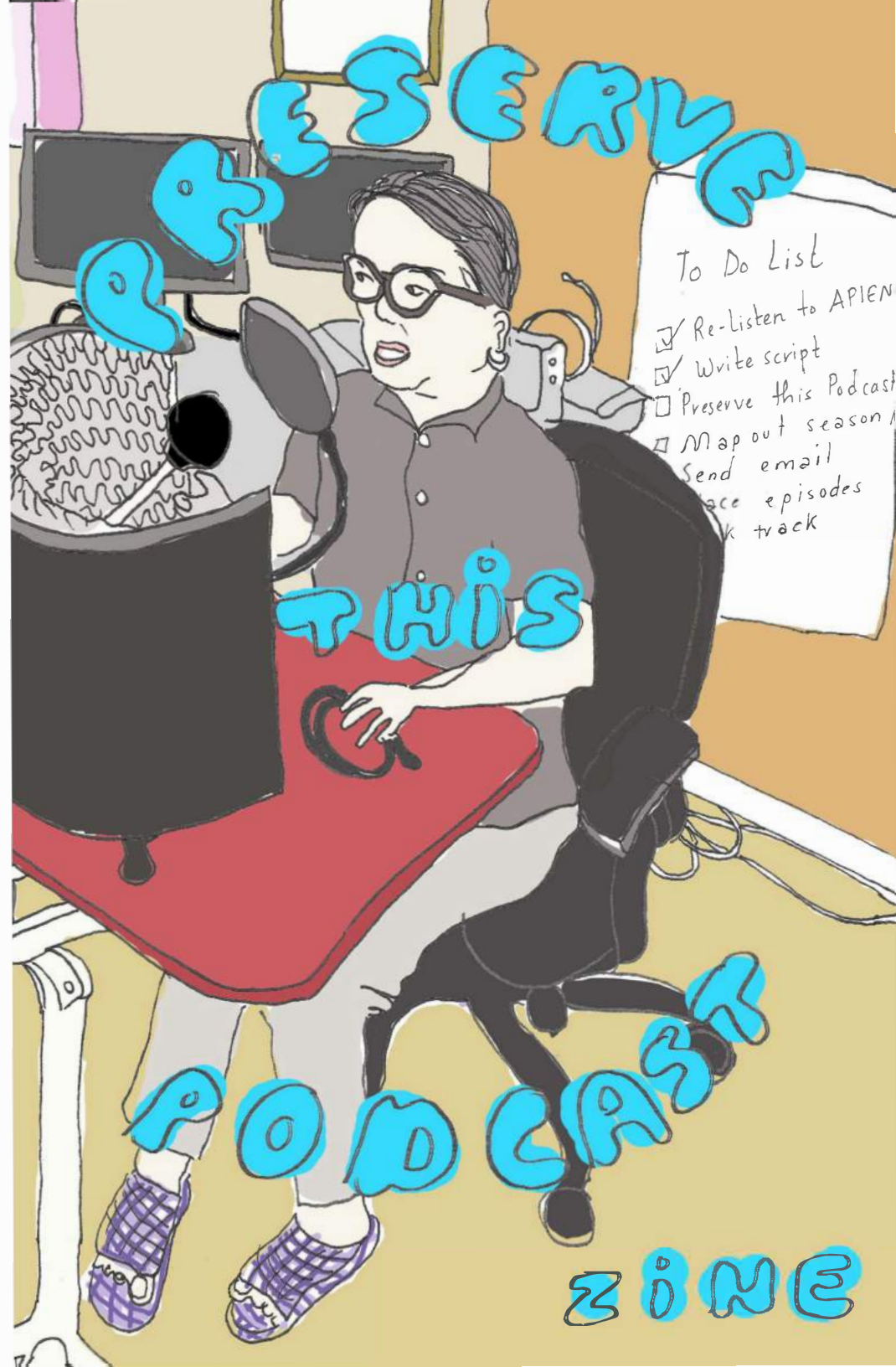DANA GERBER MARGIE

MOLLY SHCWARTZ

SARAH NGUYEN

MARY KIDD

I ALSO DID THE ILLUSTRATIONS!

PUBLISHED IN 2018 IN BROOKLYN, NY

FEATURED ON THE COVER: ALICE Y. HOM, PRODUCER OF THE "HISTORICALLY QUEER" PODCAST.

Share this zine!

To Do List
- ☑ Re-listen to APIEN...
- ☑ Write script
- ☐ Preserve this Podcast
- ☐ Map out season...
- Send email
- ...ce episodes
- ...k track

PRESERVE THIS PODCAST ZINE

ARE YOU A...

...podcaster?

...Very Experienced Audio Professional?

...person who makes stuff using computers?

THEN TAKE THESE ③ STEPS

① Listen to the PTP podcast at **preservethispodcast.org**

② Open* up the exercises sandbox at **bit.ly/2OHCztK**

if you don't have an internet connection ~no worries~ just skip to Step 3!

③ Read this zine and follow the exercises!

Take Action!

Reality check: preservation is not easy. It takes resources (namely: your time, money, brain power). However, it can be manageable, and not only that, has many long-term benefits. Below are some suggested actions you might take in the next month, year, or over the long-term.

listen to the Preserve This Podcast! podcast

Explore some cloud storage options, especially

INTERNET ARCHIVE

Read about the Internet Archive, a place where you can upload your audio files for free. Consider working this into a 3-2-1 plan for backing up your files

Ask your friends/ colleagues who make podcasts what they are doing to ensure their podcasts can be listened to in the future
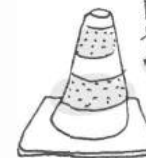
Download a free ID3 metadata editor and try editing/ updating your MP3 metadata

my podcasts

think of a folder-naming convention and put it to action : apply it to last year's podcast files

Establish a "no coffee without a lid" rule for your work station.

Work through the exercises in this zine

#preservethispodcast

leave questions or comments on social media using this hashtag or email podcast @ metro.org.

Purchase a storage device, and schedule regular backups to it.

Mail a copy of your podcast files to a trusted friend or family member
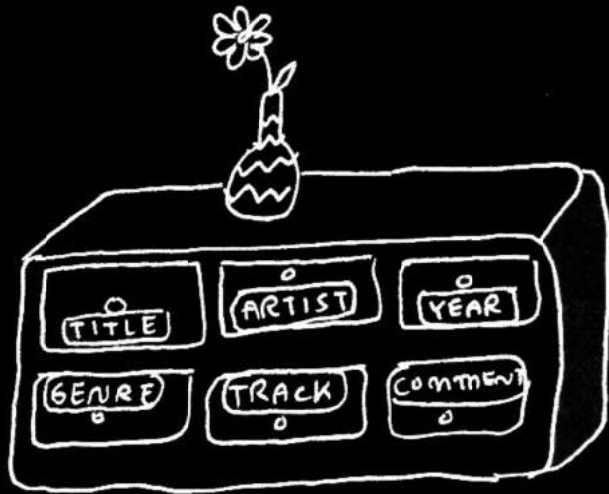
what else?

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More on Metadata

Did you know in every MP3 file, **there is a tiny little bit of space reserved just for metadata fields called ID3 tags**?

You can think of ID3 tags as a bunch of tiny shelves, each which can hold certain information about your podcast.

You can add or edit ID3 tags using popular media software like iTunes, ProTools, and VLC. If you search for "ID3" in your web browser, you can find a complete list of all available ID3 tags, which includes things you should be pretty familiar with like "Title" and "Track".

Why should we care about editing ID3 tags? Let's think about the answer to this in terms of a metaphor. ID3 tags are like address labels on a package you are shipping to the future. **The more information on the label, the better your podcast will make it safely to its destination, wherever that may be.**

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What is Preserve This Podcast?

Preserve This Podcast is a grant-funded education and outreach project led by a team of three professional archivists. The project entails producing a podcast and supplementary zine addressing how podcasters can preserve their work for the future, and hosting a series of promotional and educational workshops and panel talks.

What is this zine?

This zine accompanies the Preserve This Podcast podcast. We encourage you to give that a listen first, then read this zine and follow the exercises. An online version of this zine, and the podcast, can be found at **preservethispodcast.org**.

Why podcasts?

Podcasts are at risk of disappearing in the face of rapid shifts in platform, delivery, and recording technology. These issues are endemic to mass media technologies to date (such as reel-to-reels, VHS tapes and CDs). But born-digital content has received less attention — and it's more at risk. Digital files can be easily erased, corrupted, and are at the mercy of the economic viability of third-party streaming and hosting platforms.

Metadata is important!
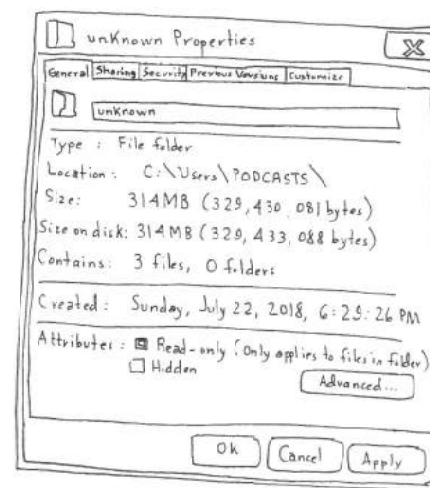
Operating systems auto-create and update metadata fields to do with size, location, creation date, and other file attributes. Pictured above is the Windows "Properties" window, showing various metadata fields to do with a single file.

Metadata is data about files. Metadata helps humans and computers distinguish between, sort and locate files. How? Metadata front-loads information about a file's contents, and other information about it (like its creator, or the year it was made, or what season it belongs to). That way, you, or your listeners, computers, software, or streaming platforms can know what is on your file immediately, without having to open and play it back.

There are many different flavors of metadata. **Keywords** you add to a show you upload to a distribution platform are one example: they allow current and future listeners to find your show by title, topic, etc. **Audio transcripts** are another kind of metadata that allow people to search words said during a podcast at certain times. You could also consider **file and folder names** to be a kind of metadata, as well. Can you think of other types of metadata?
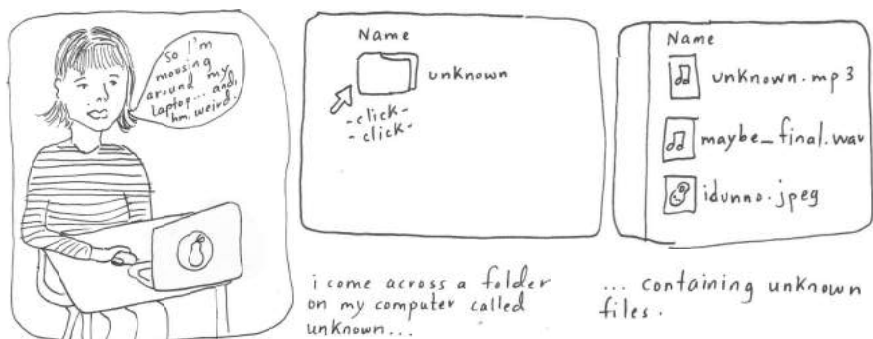
What is a file without metadata? a ghost ship floating in a digital sea unknown.mp3
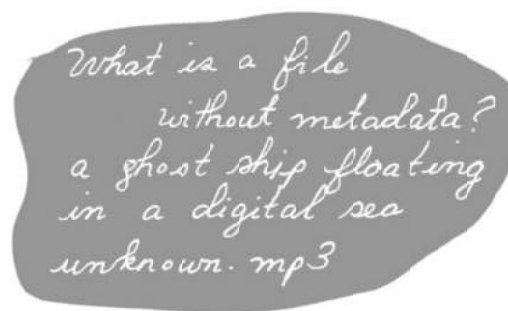
Exercise 3: Metadata Archaeology

This exercise helps us understand what metadata is and why it's helpful for preserving podcasts.

Tools/steps* needed to complete this exercise:
- a computer with internet/WiFi connection
- Navigate to this URL to play Metadata Archaeology: `bit.ly/2NsJkhs`

*If you don't have a computer or internet connection handy, that's perfectly okay. Read on!

So I'm moosing around my laptop... and, hm, weird.

Name — unknown
-click- -click-

i come across a folder on my computer called unknown...

Name
unknown.mp3
maybe_final.wav
idunno.jpeg

... containing unknown files.

crap...

What are some steps Mary can take to figure out what this mysterious folder's contents holds? WRite some ideas below:

ideas:
- play back the files

hint: she is not doomed!

What is preservation?

Preservation describes any activity performed to prevent damage to either a thing, or to the content a thing holds, to prolong its usable life. Identifying risk is a good first step to understanding what preservation actions to take, and in what order to take them.

Exhibit A.

A PRESERVATION CONUNDRUM IN 4 FRAMES

an old mix cd my friend made for me is covered in scratches... but hey, no problem I'll just rip it to my...

...TRUSTY NEW LAPTOP!

BUT WAIT...

IT'S 2018...

NOPE!

LAPTOPS DON'T COME WITH CD DRIVES ANYMORE!

Warm up exercise: There are a number of actions the protagonist can take to get content off the CD. Can you think of any?

Why digital files are at risk

If you make podcasts, you are likely creating lots of digital files. Without taking proper preservation action, these files will be at risk of becoming unplayable, disappearing, or both. Why? Because they are dependent on certain things to work, like

software to create, edit, and play them back

services to distribute and promote their content

data to make them findable/recognizable
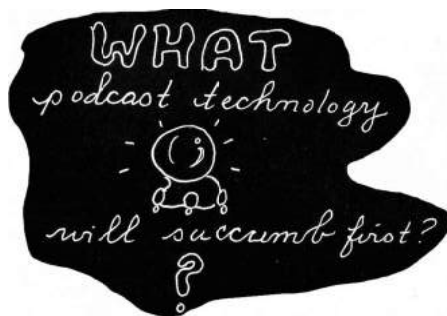
storage devices to store them

electricity and $ to power/run all of the above

In an instant these things can succumb to failure (power outage), damage (coffee spill), loss (hard drive dies), economic hardship (streaming platform folds), and trends (MP3s go out of fashion)

What can you do to combat risk? Keep reading!

FOR A SCINTILLATING READ RE: BACKUP ALMOST- DISASTER, SEARCH FOR "TOY STORY 2 BACKUP" IN YOUR BROWSER!

WHAT podcast technology will succumb first?

That software you use to make project files?

The MP3 or WAV file format?

RSS feeds?

Smart phones???!!! (yeah, you laugh now, but, remember that thing called the iPod shuffle?)

That streaming platform you've uploaded all your podcast files to?

An example of what a 3-2-1 backup looks like

HEY IT'S ME, MARY, HERE'S HOW i back up my FILES AT HOME

It's NOT A perfect System BUT works

in terms of my budget and available time

① So this is my desktop computer where the bulk of my files live in folders. cb keep scans, music files, backups of my phone, and all sorts of other things on here

② This is my little 2 Terabyte portable hard drive cb keep in a metal box on a shelf. I run monthly backups onto it.

③ cb have been known to mail / travel with a clone of my hard drive! My mom + brother live in Oregon so if anything were to happen in NY, my bi-coastal files would stand a chance.

FRA GILE To: MoM

④ Technically cb follow a 4-3-2-1 rule since cb subscribe to an annual Dropbox cloud storage service.

**Can you think of a 3-2-1 backup plan that could work for you? What would that look like?**

Exercise 2:
Store, Backup or Lose

Tools/steps* needed to complete this exercise:
- a computer
- internet/WiFi connection
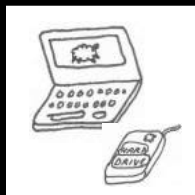- Navigate to this URL to play Store, Backup or Lose: **preservethispodcast.org/adventure**

If you don't have a computer or internet connection handy, that's perfectly okay. Keep reading to learn more about backing your stuff up!
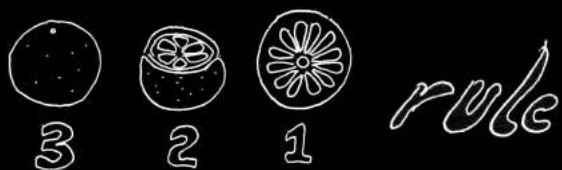
3 2 1 rule

The **3-2-1 Rule** refers to a file backup strategy. Here's what it means:
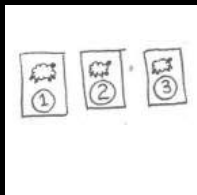
| Keep at least **3 copies** of your files. | Store your file copies on at least **2 separate devices**. | Store **1 copy** far from where you live. |

Exercise 1: Get organized!

The first step to take to get started preserving your podcasts is to **get organized**. To do this, we have to have a basic understanding of the common **files types** we create whenever we make a podcast.

Tools/steps needed to complete this exercise:
- Think about the steps you take to create a single show in terms of files created.
- Write these steps down on a separate piece of paper, or use the Google doc provided in the Exercise 1 sandbox: **bit.ly/2I6KI8t**
- Using a pen or pencil, draw circles around file types. Unsure what to write/circle? Check out the sampler sentence!

SAMPLER SENTENCE

i record interviews using my zoom recorder and transfer over the resulting raw WAV files to my laptop. i use audacity to edit the interviews with narrative and music tracks into a 30-min master edit file. i have all interviewees sign a release form that i scan to PDF. i also create a GIF thumbnail image to accompany what i upload to Soundcloud. to upload my finished podcast i convert the master edit file to an MP3 file.
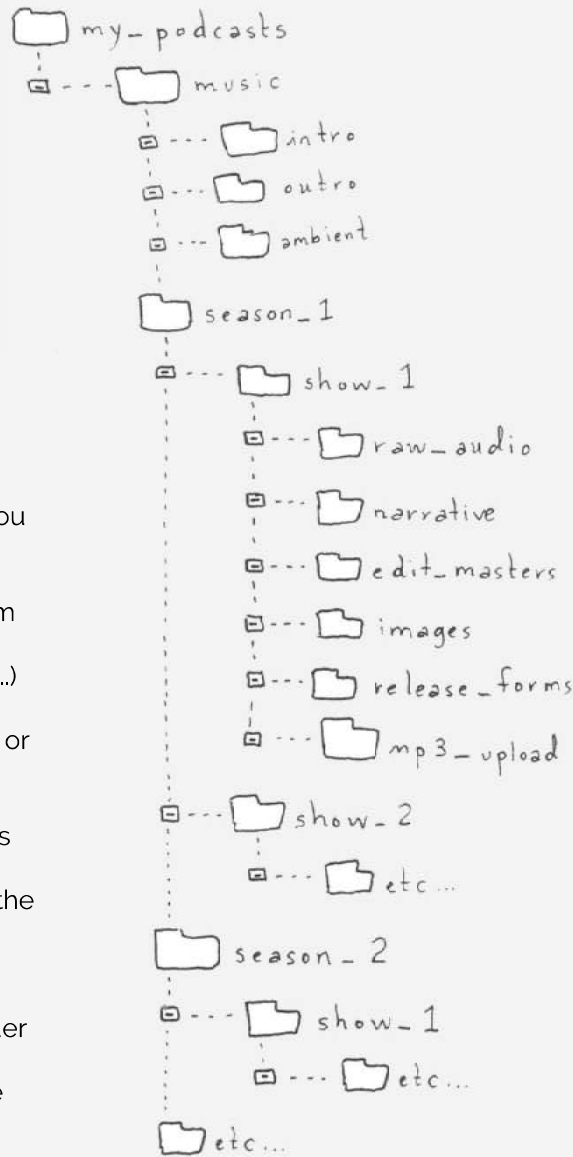
Folders are helpful for getting organized

Folders are helpful for two reasons.

One, you can give them names. Folder names tell you what they contain.

Two, you can structure them hierarchically (i.e. storing a folder in a folder in a folder...) Structures can express relationships between files, or groups of files.

The illustration to the right is just one way we might structure folders based on the sampler sentence on the previous page.

Notice how the "music" folder is nested under "my_podcasts" on the same level as "season_1" and "season_2". **Can you guess why it was structured in this way?** (upside-down answer is below!)

ANSWER: The preferred podcaster in this example uses the same music across all seasons. Therefore they structure the music folder on the same level as the season folders.



```
📁 my_podcasts
  📁 music
    📁 intro
    📁 outro
    📁 ambient
  📁 season_1
    📁 show_1
      📁 raw_audio
      📁 narrative
      📁 edit_masters
      📁 images
      📁 release_forms
      📁 mp3_upload
    📁 show_2
      📁 etc...
  📁 season_2
    📁 show_1
      📁 etc...
  📁 etc...
```

How would you organize your own folders, based on the sentence you wrote?

Naming your files

There are lots of approaches to naming your files so that they are findable and sortable. Suggestions:

- **Start the name with a date** like 2018-08-25. Leading with a date allows you to easily sort your files chronologically.
- **After the date, add some descriptive keywords,** like the title of a show, or the name of an interviewee.
- Decide on a few key words to **describe versions** and stick with them. i.e. "final" or "raw".
- **Try to avoid using spaces.** Use underscores or camelCase instead.
- Above all else, **try and be consistent.**

HOT TIP! Write your filenaming convention on a piece of paper / sticky note and tape / stick it near your workstation so you never forget it!

YYYY-mm-DD
keywords
version
file extension
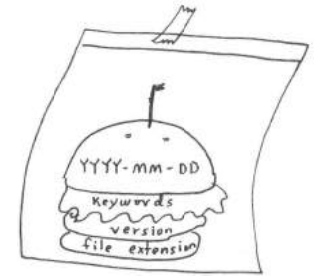
Example filename:
2018-08-25_hamburger_show-final.wav

cautious cone

Be careful when renaming or refoldering project files! Project files often contain internal references to other files. If it cannot reference a file (because you renamed it or moved it) it can render itself unplayable! So, play it cautious: always test play a sample of files.