

The Sound of Public Humanities & its Oscillatory Accessibility

Setsuko Yokoyama

PhD Candidate | UMD Department of English
[@setsukoyokoyama](https://twitter.com/setsukoyokoyama)

MITH Digital Dialogue
1 October 2019

Outline

1. Digital Frost Project
 2. The Sound of Public Humanities
 3. Editorial Rationale
-

1. Digital Frost Project

PROGRAM ARCHIVE

Viewing convention Program information from 2014

Session Details



618. FrostBytes: Archival Scholarship in the Digital Age

Saturday, 11 January, 3:30–4:45 p.m., Grace, Chicago Marriott

Program arranged by the Robert Frost Society

Presiding: Mark Steed Richardson, Doshisha Univ.; Donald Sheehy, Edinboro Univ. of Pennsylvania

Session Description:

The workshop will share information about Frost collections and about the status of digitization and electronic cataloging at major collections. Tools and procedures for locating and acquiring materials will be discussed. Our purpose is to plan the creation, development, and maintenance of a comprehensive digital resource—under the aegis of the Frost Society—for Frost scholarship.

MLA 2014 “FrostBytes” Session



continuous reformatting of audio recordings & sound migration...

RF speaking in Johnson Chapel, with view of Deer Lick and some of audience.

PH2:143

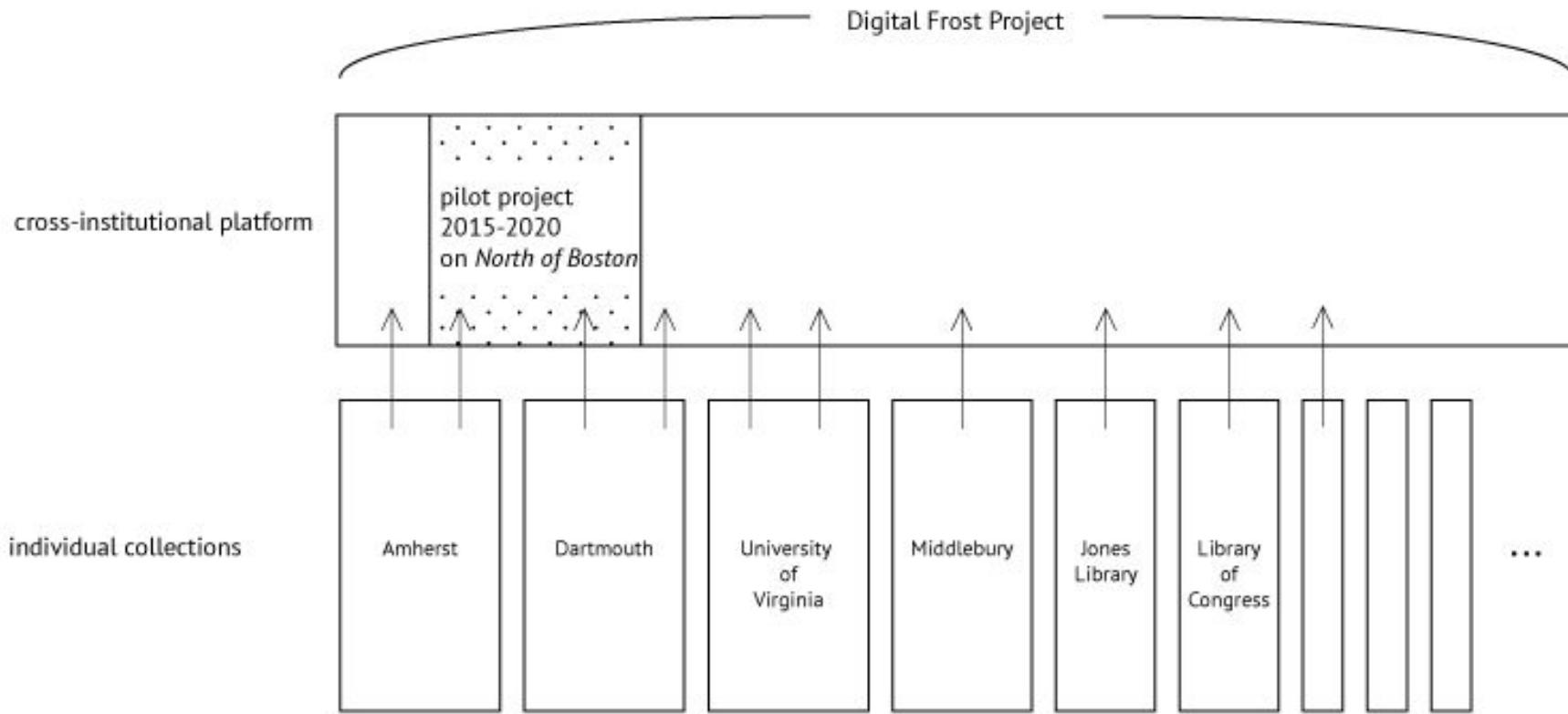
Robert Frost Collection



Frost speaking in Johnson Chapel, Amherst College (1957)

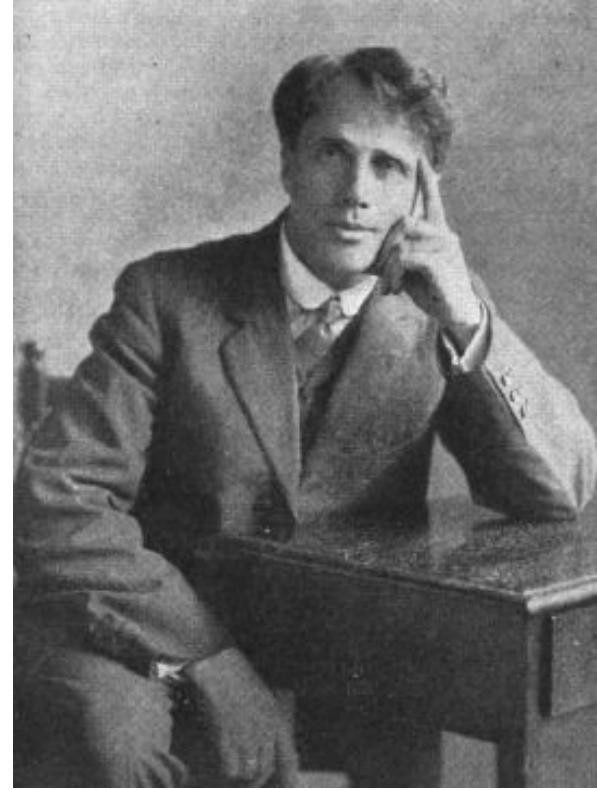
Home		Layout		Tables		Charts		SmartArt		Formulas		Data		Review																			
Edit		Font		Alignment		Number		Format		Cells		Themes																					
Paste	Clear	Fill	Calibri (Body)	12	A A	abc	Wrap Text	General	%	Conditional Formatting	Normal	Bad	Good	Neutral	Calculation	Check Cell	Insert	Delete	Format	Themes													
O401																																	
1	Q1	A	Q2	B	Q3	C	Q4	D	Q5	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	Q1	Q2	Q3	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC
2	Serial No.	Source Name	Source Page No.	Talk Title	Talk Date	Talk Venue	Talk Location	Series?	Crowd Size	Talk Length	Admission Fee	Talk Payment	Notes	Was poetry read? (Yes =1, No=0)	Were multiple poems read? (Yes =1, No=0)	Which poem was read? 1	Which poem was read? 2	Which poem was read? 3	Which poem was read? 4	Which poem was read? 5	Which poem was read? 6	Which poem was read? 7	Which poem was read? 8	Which poem was read? 9	Which poem was read? 10	Which poem was read? 11	Which poem was read? 12	Which poem was read? 13	Which poem was read? 14				
3	155	Smythe, RF Speaks	21	the Phi Beta Kappa poem reading	1915	Tufts College	Medford, Massachusetts																										
4	3 CPPP	689	The Imagining Ear	5/10/15	the Browne and Nichols School	Cambridge, Massachusetts	Browne and Nichols School Lecture							from notes of George H. Browne																			
5	153 Barry, RF on Writing	142	Lecture to the Browne and Nichols School	5/10/15	the Browne and Nichols School	Cambridge, Massachusetts	Browne and Nichols School Lecture							transcription by George Browne; reference to "the imagining ear"	1	1	1	The Pasture	Mending Wall														
6	198 Letters of RF Vol. 1	316	The Sound of Poetry	9/6/15	Woman's Club	St. Johnsbury, Vermont																											
7	4 CPPP	697	The Unmade Word	3/13/18	the Browne and Nichols School	Cambridge, Massachusetts	Browne and Nichols School Lecture							1				Birches															
8	154 Barry, RF on Writing	144	The Unmade Word or Fetching and Far-fetched	3/13/18	the Browne and Nichols School	Cambridge, Massachusetts								transcription by George Browne	1				Birches														
9	175 Richardson, Checklist	55		11/7/19	Amherst College	Amherst, Massachusetts								for the Language and Literature Group; later published in Proceedings of the Alumni Council of Amherst College at the Meeting Held in Amherst, November 7-9, 1919.																			
10	Richardson, The Poetry Collection titles	56	Manuscript Poems	17/1/1976	Wesleyan University	Middletown																											
11	sortByDate(preCleanUp)	publishedTalks(CIndData)	keys + notes	NoBReading(CIndData)	SelectedPublishedTalk(CIndData)	PublishedWorksSelectionAdjstmnt	Amherst Digitization Requests																										

identifying relevant audio recordings...



2. The Sound of Public Humanities





the Frost children at the Derry Farm (1907), Frost's author photo (1913-4)

“There is no denying that his insistent monosyllabic monotony is irritating, but it may be questioned whether any less drab monotony of rhythm would have been so successful in conveying the particular aspect of life presented.”

“[Frost’s] people are left-over of the old stock, morbid, pursued by phantoms, slowly sinking to insanity.”

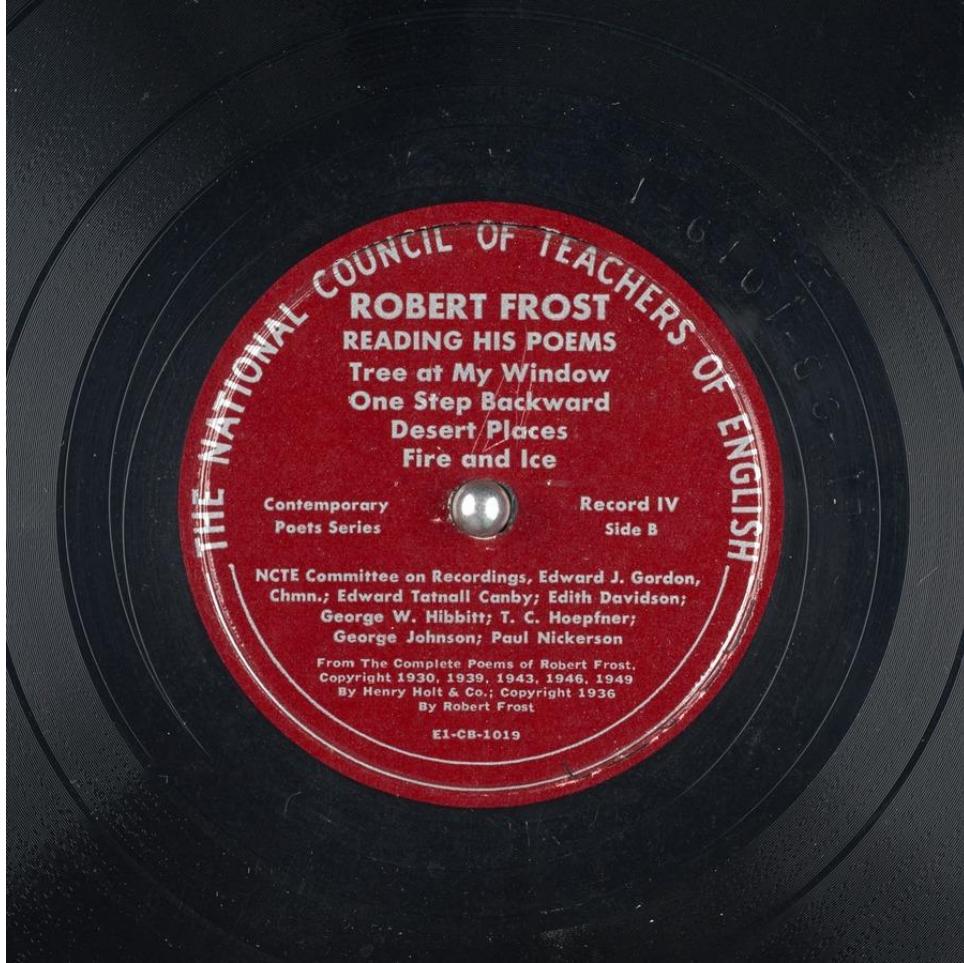
[And of the corresponding meter used in the poems]:
“halting and maimed, like the life it portrays,
unyielding in substance, and broken in effect.”

in the New England temper. Characters and situations impress him, speech does not. It is probably for this reason that he uses no dialect in these poems. New England turns of speech would lose much of their raciness without the peculiar pronunciation which accompanies them.

Mr. Frost gives us no such delicious bits of humour as James Russell Lowell's :

We're curus critters: Now ain't jes' the minute
That ever fits us easy while we're in it.

or Alice Brown's: "I tried to do all I could for them that was in need. But I never lived my life with 'em, even when I was tendin' upon 'em and gettin' kind of achey trottin' up an' down stairs."



"Robert Frost Reading His Poems," the National Council of Teachers of English (1951)

May

Eco. 1953]

May 6 - Leave Northampton 1:07 pm
 arrive W. Va River 3:40 pm
 Leave 4:20 pm
 Arrive Essex Jctn 6:47 pm

Baird Whitlock
 913 University Hous.
 Burlington Vt.

Burlington 8:30 p.m.
 party afterwards

May 7 - Return to Amherst

May 11 - Leave for New York dinner - Pierre Hotel 8 p.m.
 It will let you know where stay
 Please

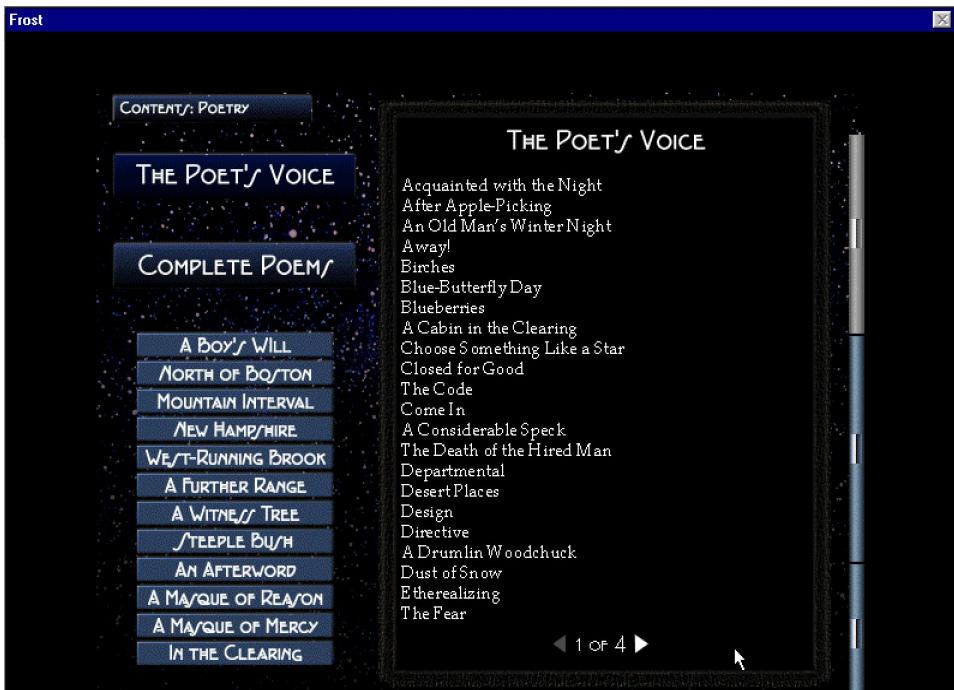
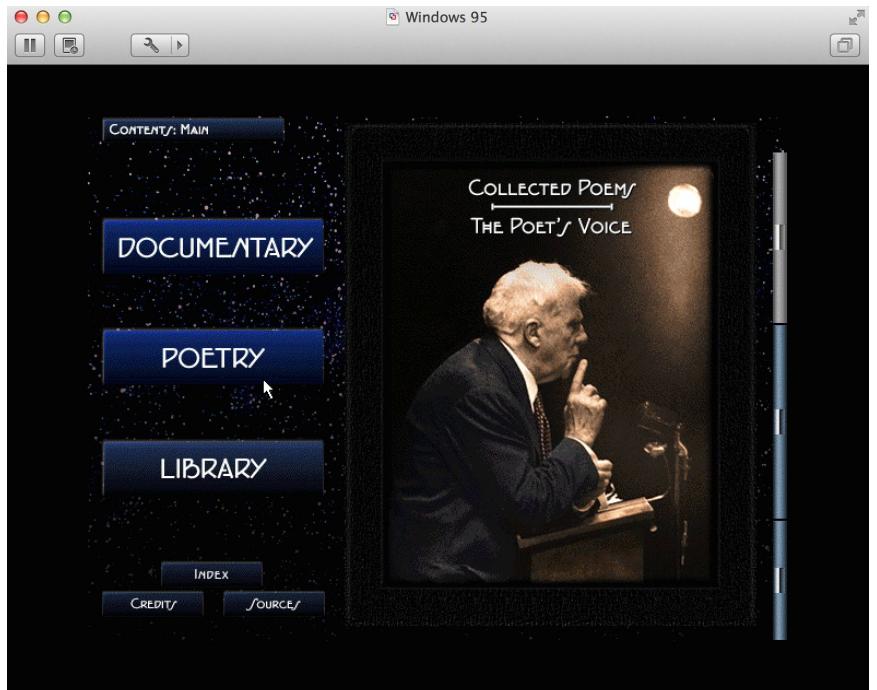
May 12 - Yale -
 touch - Arnold Wolfson -
 426 Prospect St.
 New Haven
 Pierson College - Evening -
 Rev. Sydney Lovett new head

May 13 Back to Amherst quick

		May		June		July		Aug.		Sept.		Oct.		Nov.		Dec.	
		Sun.	Mon.	Sun.	Mon.	Sun.	Mon.	Sun.	Mon.	Sun.	Mon.	Sun.	Mon.	Sun.	Mon.	Sun.	Mon.
Sun.		2 Sun.		7 Sun.		16 Sun.		23 Sun.		30 Sun.							
Mon.			10 Mon.		17 Mon.		24 Mon.			31 Mon.							
Tues.		4 Tues.		11 Tues.		18 Tues.		25 Tues.									
Wed.		5 Wed.		12 Wed.		19 Wed.		26 Wed.									
Thurs.		6 Thurs.		13 Thurs.		20 Thurs.		27 Thurs.									
Fri.		7 Fri.		14 Fri.		21 Fri.		28 Fri.									
Sat.		8 Sat.		15 Sat.		22 Sat.		29 Sat.									

Robert Frost appointment calendars housed in Dartmouth College

3. Editorial Rationale



Robert Frost: Poems, Life, Legacy. Edited by Donald Sheehy, created by Joe Matazzoni, and narrated by Richard Wilbur, Henry Holt, 1997. (CD-ROM edition)

Inside PennSound[Authors](#)[Series](#)[Anthologies/Collections/Groups](#)[PennSound Daily archive](#)[Singles](#)[Close Listening](#)[PennSound Cinema](#)[PennSound Radio](#)[Classics](#)[Medialinks](#)[Podcasts](#)[Featured resources archive](#) [PennSound on Facebook](#) [PennSound on Twitter](#) [PennSound on YouTube](#)[Al Filreis page](#)[INFinestreak](#)**PennSound Manifesto****1. It must be free and downloadable.**

Ideally, all the sound material we put on the web should be cleared for copyright to be distributed free for noncommercial and educational purposes. Users of the site will be able to download the MP3s to their own computers or players or play them in a streaming fashion. Teachers could make course CDs or add the MP3s to their on-line syllabi. Other web sites and libraries could recollect the material. Credits for digitalization and copyright release would also be embedded into each file. One of the advantages of working with poetry sound files is that we don't anticipate a problem with rights. At present and in the conceivable future, there is no profit to be gained by the sale of recorded poetry. There is, however, considerable expense involved in preserving, cataloging, and distributing such material.

2. It must be MP3 or better.

RealAudio is a proprietary format with sound quality that will not stand the test of time. We need to use open formats that reproduce reasonably high quality sound, for a listenership that is used to astoundingly good sound quality from commercial sources.

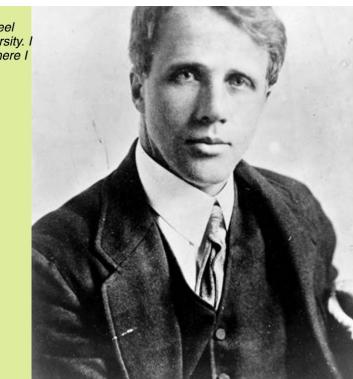
3. It must be singles.

At present, the vast majority of poetry recordings are for entire readings, typically thirty or more minutes, with no tracking of individual cuts or poems. While these full readings have great literary and archival value taken as a whole, few but the most devoted listen to full recordings of readings or, if they do, fewer still listen more than once. The more useful format is to break readings up into individual poems and to make MP3s of each poem available. MP3s of song-length poems could become a very appealing format for poetry. The implications for audience, listenership, critical thinking, poetics, and poetic production are great.

4. It must be named.

Presently, downloaded poetry sound files tend not to have informative names. Looking at a directory of such files, it is impossible to determine what the file contains from the visual information available. File sharing for music employs a simple system of the name of the singer and the song, but the p2p system is not compatible with FTP, especially in terms of blank spaces between words, which

they were subsequently dubbed to reel-to-reel reels, which are stored at Columbia University. I bered the aluminum platters, except for where I numbers, as well as record numbers, are

[LIVE at the Writers House](#)[PoemTalk](#)[Writers House webcasts](#)[PEPC Library](#)[Live at the Ear](#)[About PennSound](#)[Praise for PennSound](#)[PennSound in the news](#)[Contact us](#)[Search PennSound](#)[Google Custom](#)[12. Birches \(3:07\)](#)**Recordings made on October 24, 1934**

1. □ The Grindstone (4:34)
2. □ The Runaway (1:09)
3. □ An Old Man's Winter Night (1:43)
4. □ The Road Not Taken (1:07)
5. □ Mending Wall (2:30)
6. □ Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening (0:57)
7. □ Dust of Snow (0:21)
8. □ Birches (3:15)
9. □ Mowing (1:01)

Speech at 1937 Pulitzer Prize Dinner - recorded from the radio by W. Cabell Greet[On the Heart's Beginning to Cloud the Mind \(4:13\)](#)

These sound recordings are being made available for noncommercial and educational use only. © 2016 Estate of Robert Frost and Henry Holt and Company. Distributed by [PennSound](#).

“PennSound Manifesto,” *PennSound*.

talks
NOT lectures

saying poems
NOT reading poems