

Episode 68: Stephanie Argy of ISTE

Emily Einolander 00:21

Welcome to the Hybrid Pub Scout podcast with Emily Einolander. remapping the frontier between traditional and indie publishing, and today we're talking with Stephanie Argy.

Corinne Kalasky 00:34

Stephanie Argy (she/her) is an editor at the International Society for Technology and Education, where she manages books that help educators use edtech to incorporate art, creativity and social good into the lives and work of their students. She also freelances as an editor for other publishers and organizations, and especially loves working on books about art drawing and painting, even if they often inspire her to spend her entire fee on art supplies. In addition to being a book editor, she has made award-winning movies written about the art, craft, and technology of filmmaking, an angel invested in women owned social ventures, she has a BA in history from UCLA, and MS in journalism from Columbia University and an MS and writing with a specialization in book publishing from Portland State University.

Emily Einolander 01:22

Welcome, Stephanie.

Stephanie Argy 01:24

Thank you so much. I am very excited to be here following in an very August company of my predecessors on the show, and, and not to mention my interviewers, so

Corinne Kalasky 01:37

We're gonna hire you to do PR for us, that was great. Honestly.

Stephanie Argy 01:46

It's always easier. It's always easy to talk about somebody else, and she prays extravagantly praise the good in them.

Emily Einolander 01:51

Tell me about it. Someone asked me to come on to a podcast, and I panicked, and it's like, I've been doing podcasts forever. I was like, I don't have anything to say. I literally just sit here and ask other people stuff. It's never true. It's never true. But Stephanie, now we're going to focus on you. Nice try. So you have a very eclectic background. How did you decide to get into book publishing?

Stephanie Argy 02:22

Yeah, eclectic is a really good word for it. I've been all over the place. So yeah, I was a journalist, I specialized in film. And that kind of pulled me into filmmaking. So I made a number of movies. And I traveled around a lot with them. And they were all period pieces. They all involved a lot of research. And it was very, very thrilling to interact with audiences, and to tell them more about what lay behind the

movies. But there was always this frustration of I'm telling this to this small group of people. And I want to share it with everybody. And I was really frustrated by the narrow parameters of a movie, you've got this little two hour window. And that's it. There's nothing beyond the edges that I can share, even though I want to. And so I started doing a lot of research on what, what could I do instead? How could I break through those walls and have a lot more information? Like maybe a movie, but it comes with digital books, or I started playing with things and I would learn to code and was thinking about apps. And then I realized that there was actually a device that did exactly what I wanted it to that was let you go all over the place and be really experimental and go down tangents and integrate all kinds of information. And that device was called a book. And at that point, I thought, yeah, I long form storytelling of that nature. It's been around for a really long time. I wonder if there's a program in this not an MFA in creative writing, but really just making books. And so I started doing research. And lo and behold, five miles from where I lived was the program in book publishing at Portland State. And the application deadline was about two weeks away. So I thought that's what I have to lose. I'll apply I pulled my stuff together got in and then but I guess I'm doing this, this would be fun. And once I was in the program, I just I loved everything about it. I loved my colleagues, yourself very much included. And the whole process everything about it was so fulfilling in every way. So it was it was an odd sideways twisting journey, but it popped me right into publishing and it's such a nice match.

Emily Einolander 04:46

And you succeeded me as the digital manager.

Stephanie Argy 04:53

Again, big big boots to fill but I was very well prepared. So

Emily Einolander 05:04

Was it apps or audio books that you worked on after I graduated? Or?

Stephanie Argy 05:10

Well, I tried for apps, I tried to do stuff like that, and nobody was after. And then momentum really started building around audiobooks, right around that time, and that they were among the students. And among the faculty, there was just sort of this bubbling interest. And so I started doing research on well, what would it take to begin an audio book program that's part of the hooligan workflow. And so I did research on that and did kind of tentative contract with another department at PSU that was doing Sonic arts and music production, just to lay the groundwork. And then I left when I graduated as you do it, but I've been keeping an eye on it ever since. And it's it's growing. It's been growing each year. And last term, I was a, you know, an alumni mentor for Paige Zimmerman, who's now there is now a specific audiobook manager, separate from digital so I was really happy that I did that. And I also taught an audiobooks class.

Corinne Kalasky 06:20

How did you start working at ISTE and what attracted you to work in there?

Stephanie Argy 06:25

But in the program, we were all encouraged to do internships, and I wasn't sure what that would look like for me. But one day, the then director of the program, Per Henningsgard posted a message from ISTE saying there was this internship. And I was very much the digital person. I was really interested in all forms of technology, and really focused on working with Emily and the digital department. And I thought Society of technology does pretty good. I'll try that too. And so I did the internship, I was there for two terms. And another big shout out to Emily again, because I hadn't taken the ebooks course at that point. But Emily had shown me how to make an ebook. And then my second term working with SD one of the things they asked me to do was do a from scratch ebook for something that they need to turn down really quickly. So I said, okay, yeah, I can do that. And that was that. And I took off the last term as I was writing my master's thesis, but right before I graduated, the managing editor, then managing editor now director of books and journals Emily Reed—another Emily. Yeah. You're the best. Emily's are so awesome.

Stephanie Argy

As are Corinnes

Corinne Kalasky

Thank you. Yes. And I'm a fan of Stephanies also.

Stephanie Argy 07:46

So you have great news. But right before I graduated, Emily Reed got in touch and said, we have our annual ISTE conference coming up in Chicago, would you be interested in coming along to work on it, and then maybe doing some freelancing? And this advice, that sounds like fun, I'll do that. And once I got there, I realized that the reason they needed me was Emily was about six months pregnant at that point. And we're hauling boxes of books all over the place and doing all that. So I did that. And it was great. And we all got along really well. So well, that after we got back, Emily said, I'm so I'm going to be going on maternity leave this fall, would you like to take over all my books while I'm away? And I said, Sure. And I was really, I, I was excited. But I also never been on a books team at all, again, a proper books team. Because my first term I was doing right to publish, which was a event team. And then after that, I said, I want to be the manager of the digital department. I want to just shadow Emily from this point on. So I've never actually worked on a book chain. But as a student in the program, every Monday we have those exact meetings and you hear a report, this team is doing this that Kim is doing that every team is at a different phase. And it was just by osmosis. I had it. So when I sat down to do these books while Emily was away, like, oh, I, I needed guidance. I needed the specifics to ISTE. But it was there it was like karate kid or paint the fence, polish the car. And so Emily was off on maternity leave, and I did all that. And as the end of that came up, I was like well, I'm really glad you're coming back soon. I don't want to go. And they didn't want me to go either. And so they created a position for me at the beginning of 2019. And they've been there ever since.

Emily Einolander

Oh, that's fantastic. Awesome.

Stephanie Argy

I feel it's just been an amazing team that we had, we were a team. There were two or three editors. There's Emily Reed, Valerie, witty, and me. And until recently, we also had a senior director of books and journals. Colin, who has since left, but Emily has now taken his place and go and become our director. And we've all kind of inched up a little bit. So it's been just an amazing collaboration, especially with with Emily and Val,

Emily Einolander 10:30

as it should be, you should be able to all grow together at the same time. Yeah. Could you please put a finer definition on the word edtech? For us?

Stephanie Argy 10:41

Yeah, I would, I would call ed tech learning with technology. I think it's it has been around for over 40 years. And so obviously, everybody's relationship with technology has evolved greatly over that time. And I think, at this point, we're trying to separate from a specific term of Ed Tech, we still use it, because it's very handy. But really, we want to think of it like an just an integral, automatic part of education, it's just a tool that you use, it's like, you wouldn't think of a pencil as being a special thing, you're gonna do some pencil work. Now. It's just a tool. So you want to think about more? What can be done with this, rather than about the technology itself? And I think there's also a shift in how we think about the positive or negative edtech of technology in general that, in the past, there were a lot of don'ts, like, oh, how do we keep? How do we keep the students safe? How do we block them from these websites? How do we, you know, a lot of negative connotations of what could happen with technology, whereas I think now, it's more looking at the positive aspects of what can we do with it? What richness can be brought to their lives as students or as people, as communicators, as creators? And that's so edtech, for the technology that we use for learning serves all of those things. And it can be anything, it could be websites, it could be apps, it could be devices of any kind. It's such a broad range.

Emily Einolander 12:37

I love that more positive approach to it. Yeah, the only person who's going to be talking about a pencil is like, a tool that one has to ponder is probably some kind of philosopher.

Stephanie Argy 12:50

Or maybe, or maybe an artist who just draws only in pencil. That's true. But even there, even there it is, it is, it's a medium, that's a medium, just serve that creative vision of the artist. And that happens to be what they're using. So maybe that's the way to think of it here too. But technology happens to be the way that people are learning or expressing themselves. But they could use other tools too.

Emily Einolander 13:18

Not going to talk about McLuhan right now. If you want to do the next...

Corinne Kalasky 13:23

Oh, I do. Who is the client base for the books and resources you create, and what types of institutions and what age groups?

Stephanie Argy 13:33

Our primary audience is educators in pre K through 12. So that could be teachers, it could be classroom teachers, or it could be administrators, a lot of our members are coaches. And so they are people who are working to help other educators use technology in a more fluid and productive way. And they are, they're kind of amazing. We just did our first in person is the conference since 2019. Last week, we were in New Orleans. And it's I know, it's really easy sometimes to get very sad about our world and things that are going on. But it's very hard to be sad when you're at the ISTE conference, because you look around and you say wow, there are over 10,000 educators who are here to do nothing, but learn things to make their students lives and learning better. And that is kind of an amazing privilege to be around and to serve. So that's our primary audience is that group of educators. We've also been trying to reach into the higher ed world just a little bit or not just a little bit but more for especially teacher training programs. And so for the next generation of educators, can we help them learn how to use technology in smart ways from the foundation of what they're doing and what they're learning. And then, interestingly, also just are starting a effort to do some books specifically for kids. So taking some of the themes that are covered in our books for educators, but creating a version that would be for kids to actually use in classrooms, along with materials for the teacher, so it might be something on digital citizenship, how do you conduct yourself? Well, online? How do you treat others? Well, what are the values of doing all this from the perspective of a kid? So that's a brand new venture?

Emily Einolander 15:47

Oh, my God, digital citizenship. We all get that? Yeah.

Stephanie Argy 15:53

Yes, true. It's something that I it's, it's funny, because even though I work for ISTE, and we have so many books on digital citizenship, since basically 2015, I've been very, very scarce on any social media, because it just is so hot, heartbreaking and everything. And yet, I do I do question that in myself, and something I wrestle with a lot about whether, as just a citizen of the country in the world, I should be more of a contributor, do we all have the responsibility or the ability to improve conversation? And if that's the case, if we can do any little bit of good? Is that? Is that something we should feel obliged to take part in? I haven't yet. But I do.

Emily Einolander 16:49

I think it's difficult to find a place as someone who is more forward thinking in terms and optimistic to find a niche online where you're appreciated by people who actually think rather than people who are like not just trying to perform smartness on LinkedIn, sorry. It's like you either have like the doomsayers on most social media platforms. And then you have LinkedIn where people are being quote, unquote, authentic when they're not really being that at all. But I mean, you know, that's why I love podcasts. I feel like that's one of the few places, you know, actual products of people's creativity, I think is a place where someone who is more optimistic about the future and the future of technology and the future of children might have a good, more comfortable, happier time expressing themselves digitally.

Stephanie Argy 17:42

Yes, it's also it's, it's easier to communicate, we're able to have a conversation, and it's normal spoken language back and forth, as opposed to social media where things are so easily misinterpreted, or

conducive to going for the going for the joke going through the thing, you know, we'll get cheap applause.

Corinne Kalasky 18:06

Like snark wins, I feel like, okay, now that's kind of Yeah, it's not a place for authenticity, or it's really not.

Emily Einolander 18:15

Snark is fun, sometimes.

Corinne Kalasky 18:21

I'm into someone who's really got a more optimistic perspective, which I have to say, I appreciate very much. It's, yeah, it's, I think it's a lonely place to be sometimes on social media. So yeah, but kudos to you for being able to be optimistic in this current, you know, state of the world that we find ourselves in. So, yeah, please help us all.

Emily Einolander 18:40

Okay, so tell me tell us about some of the books and resources you've worked on? How do you as an editorial department decide which ones to work on? For example, do authors approach you? Or do you seek out the authors based on topics you've predetermined? And then what are your favorites?

Stephanie Argy 19:07

Some of my favorite topics, so I'll start with acquisitions because it kind of flows into it. So we have a really fun and open acquisitions process. Valerie really is our acquisitions editor. And so the proposals and ideas tend to come first to her. And some people she reaches out to directly for instance, at the ISTE conference, she might go to a session and say, Oh, that person had a really interesting thing to say they pray that they will maybe they'd make a really good as the author. And we also do get proposals sent to us. So she screens everything. And then she brings it to the book team. And we talk about it as a group and say, Well, you debate it, think about what it could be, give feedback. She'll often work with a prospective author to polish their proposal. And then if we think it has promised, it goes through peer review, everything that we do gets Peer Reviewed. And we trust our educators because they are the people who are there are researchers, there are people in the field, we try to match them really well to whatever the topic is so that they can bring their expertise in. If it gets through the peer review process and gets pretty good remarks, then we'll acquire it. And at that point it goes to its forever editor. We divide them up and give our projects depending on our interests and skills and abilities. And how favorites, favorites is a harder question acquisitions was easy, because that's the process favorites there. They're all so wonderful. I'm working on a book now, which I'm so proud of. It's called bringing history and civics to life. And this was this was an unusual acquisition for us. We have as I mentioned, we have a lot of books on digital citizenship. We have a lot of books on coding, we have a lot of books on using the ISTE standards to integrate technology into a classroom. Well, we didn't have a lot on history. And my original major was a history major. So in this press pause Okay, man, I but we got it. Oh, let's do this one. Let's do this one. But it was one that we really had to do talk our head of the learning division into a little bit because it's an unusual, different audience history teacher don't necessarily see themselves as an ISTE audience. They don't see themselves as people

who use technology, which is all the more reason to have the book. But the two authors are just brilliant. They're these two women who are both have a background as history teachers. Both have been, you know, have gotten so many awards as teachers and are just dazzling and brilliant and funny. Cara Lee Wong. Mecca Touka and Laurel Aguila Kirchoff. So that's what I'm working on right now. And it's just went back to its designer for final round of corrections that will be coming out in fall. So I'm very excited about that one. I've done a couple bucks, not surprising based on my background on movie making. So one called *Movie Making in the Classroom*, was for teachers to help their students tell their own stories, so express their own lives and their talk about what's important to them. And again, just really wonderful author, great storyteller. I felt as an editor, it barely had anything to do with the book because it was so well crafted. And then we had the complement of that one was a book called *Awesome Sauce*. And that was by a teacher in Kansas, teaching other teachers how to make videos for their students, for their colleagues, for parents. And he's just a rollicking and funny guy that was great to work with. He does things like bring in films showing his evil twin villain brother creating like, an airplane out of his classroom and welcoming students in as the steward. And so it's a it's super fun, and

Emily Einolander 23:13

Almost sounds like a cooking show. Like how to make a cooking show sort of thing.

Stephanie Argy 23:18

It is, it's *Awesome Sauce*. So each of his little videos that he talks about how to make is in the form of a recipe. So the list of ingredients you need, and you know, how hard is this recipe in there, we use the metaphor, that cooking metaphor for that one, as fun. And then the other thing I've done quite a bit. Because we're a larger nonprofit, we have other departments that can give us information. So our membership department had told us the members about what would be helpful to them. And they were interested in little short pieces of information, things that they could use really quickly. So we started a line of jumpstart guides, which are basically just six paid laminated guides. And some of them are associated with existing books. And some of them are standalone topics that we think, Oh, this could be, could be fun. Just maybe it doesn't need an entire book. But let's do a jumpstart guide until we actually have one on podcasting. Not that you need it.

Emily Einolander 24:13

Oh, it's always good to learn more.

Stephanie Argy 24:18

It's to help, you know, okay to help kids demonstrate their learning and express themselves through podcasting, which is so awesome. Yeah, so those are some of the things that I've worked on. They've been so much fun.

Emily Einolander 24:30

Oh, man, if I had been given permission to like, record my voice for reports as a child, it would have been a nightmare for everyone.

Corinne Kalasky

But a dream come true for you.

Emily Einolander

Exactly.

Stephanie Argy 24:48

When I was in...I hated my voice when I was growing up. And when I went to journalism school for my masters, we had to do a radio, one day radio workshop, and I thought, I'm going to put this off as long as I can Because Maybe I'll get lucky it'll die before it has to happen out there. And I didn't, I didn't die. So I had to do this workshop. Thank you. It was these two, it was these two women and they were just, they were just powerhouses. And they were like, you have to have it down to this time limit that has to be two minutes or less need to come over and say, Okay, here it is, it's four minutes, no good. And by the time we got through this whole process of chopping it down, chopping it down, and editing and trying to make it still make sense. After you've cut so much out of it, I completely forgot about my voice, because it just so focused on what the material was. And it was probably the best editing class I've ever taken. Because I had to be so economical, and cut out everything that was extraneous, and make it all flow smoothly. So that was my, my befriending my voice moment.

Emily Einolander 25:54

Oh, yeah, when you have no time to think about yourself is when you make the best work.

Stephanie Argy 26:00

Exactly.

Corinne Kalasky 26:01

Alright, so ISTE has some progressive values and its approach to creating educational materials. For example, one of the books you've worked on is called *Teach Boldly: Using ed tech for Social Good*. Can you talk about what some of those are and how they're expressed in the actual materials and the approach to the work?

Stephanie Argy 26:18

Absolutely. Yeah, I'm really happy that you, you mentioned *Teach Boldly*, I kind of saved that one for this question. Because it's, that's really special book for me was when I was still filling in for maternity leave. And we were doing acquisitions processes. This proposal came in. And I just absolutely fell in love with the idea. And had we, we have to do this book, this is such a great book. And it was acquired, and I was so happy. And I was also so sad, because my time with se was about to end. And I wasn't going to be the one to be able to escort it through the rest of his life. And then I got hired. And so I did get to have it. So this change will be was the first book that I was there for from its acquisition all the way through its completion. And it again, our authors are just so amazing. But Jennifer Williams is the author of this one. And she tells a story about being eight years old, and hearing about starvation in Africa. And I have to do something and raising all the enormous amount of money for an eight year old that she'd been shared. And she's been that person ever since. And they're just so engaged. She founded. She teaches, she has a classroom background. But she's also done all kinds of things with climate change with helping found classrooms and schools in Africa in all kinds of just so much work. She, the UN has a set of guidelines, the sustainable development goals, and she created a movement, teach SDGs, which uses those in the classroom. So in the context of *Teach Boldly*, her book, that's one

of the things that that she presents, is this idea of kids want to find their purpose. So maybe you can give them a framework, maybe something like the ISTE's can inspire them. Oh, is it? Is it learning that you're interested in? Is it climate change? Is it hunger? All of these things are problems that need to be addressed? So what of these are you passionate about? And then in the center? The next step in the book is okay, so how do you narrow your options? This is a huge topic, what can you do when your environment? And then how do you organize your time in order to do it. So there's all sorts of good focusing exercises, but also practical ideas of how kids can use their abilities and their time. She's very global in her perspective. So she has lots of tips on organizations that put classrooms together. So a classroom here could be partnered with a classroom in Japan or I think the goal with a lot of our books is to make things accessible to make them non-intimidating. And that's a great example of how that works. Then we have other other books, some of which I have worked on, some of which I have, and we have one on environmental science, and that one lets kids examine environmental science issues through projects. So a lot of what we do is very project based. So it gives teachers the ability to say, oh, okay, I'm interested in this topic. My kids are interested in this topic. Here's a project. Here's a lesson, boom, I can just do that right now.

Emily Einolander 29:44

Yeah, it sounds like breaking things down into manageable chunks. So these big problems that we all face in the world every day aren't just, you know, staring all the kids in the face.

Stephanie Argy 29:57

The other thing that I think I feel a lot I'm more optimistic as a person working at ISTE than I than I would if I didn't. Two of our very, very best selling books are by the same two authors. Their first book was called fact versus fiction. And the second is a follow up even little more hands on and practical called Developing digital detectives. And they're both about media literacy and spotting fake news and evaluating sources. And they are hugely popular, these two books are so so in demand. And that makes me really happy because kids are learning this stuff. This is so valuable. Again, it's that mix of grounding and practicality and activities,

Emily Einolander 30:44

and critical thinking in the heightened way that we need right now.

Stephanie Argy 30:49

Exactly. Yeah, critical thinking runs through a lot of our books.

Emily Einolander 30:55

How can the books you create support educators? And how can educators get the most out of them?

Stephanie Argy 31:04

Well, as I kind of hinted at earlier, we really strive for a balance between theory and practicality. So all of our books have a really solid grounding in pedagogy. As I mentioned, we do a peer review process for the proposal, we do another one once the first draft of the manuscript comes in. So they're actually peer reviewed twice. So are the peer reviewers will give a lot of feedback on here's, here's some EDUC educational principles that are here, some of you may have thought and not have thought about that,

maybe could also be useful. So there's that grounding, always. And that's very important to us that they're not just superficial books. There. There are books on education that are a little more superficial. We try not to be that. And then there's that blend of practicality. There was a moment we did to take an online conference during the pandemic pretty early on. And one of my authors, Tim Needles, who has a really fantastic book called *Steam Power*, was doing a workshop on integrating art into STEM subjects. And this one teacher who was in the conference just said something like, just give me just tell me what to do. Just give me one simple thing I can do. And you could hear the desperation in his voice in that really extraordinary and awful moment that teachers were going through. And I like to think that the books offer that, that I think there needs to be a little bit of bravery on the teachers part to not be afraid to, to be learners themselves, and to try things that might be a little bit uncomfortable or a little bit unfamiliar, and be blunt with their students and say, Hey, we're doing this together. I think that helps. But the goal is, for any use of technology, to not be one more thing, there's this dreaded notion for teachers, they're already doing 10,000 things all day, every day, there's so overburdened, we don't want this to be one more thing that they have to deal with. We want it to really integrate into what they're already doing. And serve the curriculum that they have. The book I mentioned, *Bringing History and Civics to Life* has a lovely section on how all teachers are innovators, they're already doing that every day. You've got a new student, you don't know how to teach that student, you're going to innovate, to try and reach them. And so it's a mindset that already exists, it just needs to be translated to these other approaches and welcomed into whatever is already going on. And I think the other value teachers can bring is the interaction with their colleagues. And that's definitely encouraged. All of the authors are very available and open. They're on like me, they're all on social media, and they're really accessible. And they welcome conversations with other educators, and they give hints and they give help, but beyond them coalescing around them, is often a community of like minded teachers and administrators and librarians. And those people can be a support system as well. So I think that's important to, for people to let the books let their own development, connect them to others, without ever having the same problems.

Corinne Kalasky 34:41

So what sorts of topics are you curious or excited about when it comes to publishing and technology in general?

Stephanie Argy 34:49

So many, so many,

Emily Einolander 34:51

I just wanted to give you that open ended question because I knew you'd have something to say.

Stephanie Argy 34:56

Another three hours of our work. We're so lucky to be in a profession where everything is just so interesting. But at times, I feel like the dog is like chasing a squirrel squirrel squirrel. Is it everything, what draws my attention? I think top of my immediate list right now, I am really interested in international rights and translation, especially in the context of STS, you've got that International, the first word of my name, and I would really like for us to broaden what we're doing internationally. And just I think, in general, for all publishing books, going back and forth between countries is just a marvelous,

important thing. Because we can see our commonalities and we can gain so much just from that communication. So I'm very interested in doing something more international. A lot of our books deal with accessibility in the classroom. And I think accessibility in publishing is something else that we can all do a little bit better just to make it part of the process. And maybe even in editorial, I think there are, we should just be always integrating our alt text, whenever there's an image, we can just do that so easily. It takes a little bit of forethought, it takes a little bit of change to the pipeline. But that's the important thing that I'm very interested in right now. I think, again, connection and collaboration among authors. When we were at ISTE. Last week, we had a gathering for all of our authors who were on hand and there were a lot of them, those least 30 of our authors were there. So we have them get together when they and it was so much fun to see them communicate with each other, and they never get to meet there. They never even meet us and see them discover their common interests, and common experiences was really delightful. And so I think there are a few publishers, I think the creative community among their authors, I think there are Koehler does something like that. That's really interesting to me of how authors can support one another within a publishing company and then even just in the broader world. As far as technology my infatuation with audiobooks, grew greatly over the course of the pandemic.

Emily Einolander 37:42

That happened with a lot of people.

Stephanie Argy 37:44

Yeah, it was, ya know, it's pretty cliché. I did the sourdough starter as well still have it going.

Emily Einolander 37:50

Good for you.

Stephanie Argy 37:54

Today, so, but I, it's as you know, I'm really fascinated by different forms different we make real assumptions about what a book is or what a book can be. And I want to play more with the edges of that. What does it mean then? Audiobooks, some things in audiobooks that have happened that I found so fascinating. I don't know if you ever heard the audio book, the only plane in the sky? No, it's *An Oral History of 9/11*. And it's, it's personalized, it's intense. It's really intense to listen to. But what's really fascinating is it includes a lot of performed pieces of actors reading commentary from those who are there, but it also includes recordings. From that day, on from later those like, Obama talking later on, there's George W. Bush talking closer to that time. There's I didn't realize it till after I had just heard it. There is a stewardess, there's a bit from a stewardess speaking. And only after I read it, I realized, Oh, that was a real recording of that person who was. And I don't even know how to describe something like that. It's like it's its own art form. To have that realism combined with something that's performative, but transports you in this way. that's mind blowing. And this also talking to strangers by Malcolm Gladwell does some of that as well, where there's real footage that's incorporated or real audio that's incorporated into it. So I find that really inspiring and I would like to see how else we can build on that whether it's, you know, again, filmic elements because we'll go back to my my heritage, or other kinds of literary presentation But, but books, books or big books are

Emily Einolander 40:04

expansive, expansive.

Stephanie Argy 40:06

And what we what we think of as a book can be really surprising.

Emily Einolander 40:11

I would be very interested in listening to more nonfiction that has more of that artistic kind of expansive element that you're talking about, because what you're describing, I'm like, Yeah, I listen to audio dramas and, you know, full cast recordings of, you know, good omens or whatever. But to have something that's actually about a real occurrence, be presented in that way. Sounds like something I need to dive into more of.

Stephanie Argy 40:43

Yeah, yeah. And I think we're in such an interesting time, where so much does get recorded in different ways. It's cool. There's a lot of material to draw on, that represents this historic moment in which we live, which is

Emily Einolander 41:02

every day is definitely so historical.

Stephanie Argy 41:05

Yes, it's, yeah. Like the the classic curse we do live in interesting times. And if we all just remember that there's room to play and room to experiment and not let ourselves get baked into narrow definitions of, of what, what books are, what literature is, what story is, there's so much room for inspiration, that I would encourage people to visit the website and explore, especially if people are educators or know, or even if they're not, there's a lot to be gathered from, from all of the books, a lot of inspiration.

Emily Einolander 41:53

And I'm, you have mentioned that you're not on social media so much, but do you have a website or a place where people can find you?

Stephanie Argy 42:01

I do have Stephanieargy.com, which is totally neglected, but I'm inspired now two. I've been I've been chipping away at it.

Emily Einolander 42:09

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