Lexivore (The Abington Podcast) episode 1: Transcript

RENEE: This podcast is from the Abington Community library, we will be talking about library programs, book recommendations and explorations, and fun facts.

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RENEE: Hello and welcome to Lexivore, the podcast from the Abington Community Library.

MEGHA: We chose the name Lexivore, it means “The Devourer of Words”[1]. You might be familiar with, for example, the word lexicon, “lex” has to do with words. And vore, like herbivore or carnivore. Those who indulge in words, those who devour them.

[We chose the name “Lexivore”, it means “The Devourer of Words”. You might be familiar with lexicon, vocabulary, or lexical - “lex” has to do with words. And vore, like herbivore or carnivore, means an eater of. So lexivore means those who are voracious in reading, those who devour words.]

RENEE: So we are so excited you are joining us for this podcast, this is our first foray into recording, so we are so thrilled you are here with us! So let’s get started with who we are and what this is…

MEGHA: My name is Megha Baikadi, I am a part time librarian and I work at the circulation desk, and as befits a library job, I’m an avid reader, and I’m interested in all sorts of random things. I grew up in the area, and Abington Community Library was the library of my childhood.

RENEE: That’s awesome. My name is Renee Roberts, I also work at the Abington Community Library - shocker, and I work with our teens and our twenty-somethings, and so I am knee deep in lots of hormones and growing up stuff. Abington was also my childhood library and so, it’s so great to be back here and doing this!

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RENEE: So we both love to read, which is why we have this library podcast, and in each of our episodes we would like to tell you what we are currently reading or what we are looking forward to reading. So, Megha, start us off -

MEGHA: I am currently reading – a lot of books, really, working through a whole stack but right now I’m rereading David Weber’s “Oath of Swords” series[2]. The books are humorous fantasy, they poke a bit at some of the standard fantasy tropes but it’s still a good story with plenty of friendship, drama, and action.

MEGHA: I’m also reading David Friedman and Elizabeth Cook’s “How to Milk an Almond, Stuff an Egg, and Armor a Turnip: a thousand years of recipes”[3]. Its medieval recipes, with a side of historical context – some ingredients and some measurements require translation, and it’s pretty neat (and, as the title suggests, has a bit of humor).

MEGHA: Yes, m’dear, I like humor and I’m willing to admit it.

RENEE: That sounds truly fabulous, so I sincerely hope I get to reap the benefits of whatever you are learning in that cookbook.

RENEE: I am currently just finished Heather the Totality [4] by Matthew Weiner, of “Mad Men” fame, and it was a really short book but it focused on the marriage of Mark and Karen. And then it follows the changes in their marriage and lives as their daughter Heather grows up. So it has a very “Mad Men” feel to it, its very sparse and dark, so if you enjoyed “Mad Men” or if you need a short read to kick off 2018 then this is a really great choice, and it’s in our library system so you can put a hold on it. And what about your books?

MEGHA: There are several of the Oath of Swords series available in our library system, and the first couple through interlibrary loan, and I also went through interlibrary loan for “How to Milk an Almond, Stuff an Egg, and Armor a Turnip”

RENEE: Fabulous, so there’s a good plug for interlibrary loan. And we would love to hear what you are reading, dear listeners, so let us know.

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RENEE: What is this podcast, why are we doing this, what’s the point? Megha, what are your thoughts?

MEGHA: I love to read, and pretty much the only thing that makes reading a good story better is being able to share those choice tidbits. Sometimes I’m all bouncing up and down going “but, but did you notice that the ending has such a twist!” or “did you notice this theme, like how are they talking about it” or even like, “hey, this is neat, c’mon, really!” So a podcast seems to be one way of doing these things, of sharing things I find neat and listening to things other people find interesting and noteworthy.

RENEE: Yes, I think we both just really love books, we love talking about books, sometimes it’s hard to actually get our jobs done because we are chatting about what we’re reading so much.

RENEE: So this podcast is really just an exploration of all things literary. We’re going to be talking about authors, we’re going to be talking to other people, asking them what they’re reading, what got them into reading, why they love reading… why they’re at the library. So there’s a lot of different things that we’ll be covering in this podcast, and a lot of different avenues that we can travel down. We’re librarians, we love reading, we don’t need to paint ourselves into a box, so get ready for a wild ride!

MEGHA: all right!

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RENEE: So we’re going to start this episode out by talking about one of those iconic characters that you have grown up with or you know someone has grown up with, and that is - Harry Potter. Megha, give me your immediate thoughts on Harry Potter, go:

MEGHA: I like Harry Potter a lot, I don’t really take it at face value – it’s more fun poking holes in it, than, than, yanno, just believing what it says – but I do have a lot of fun with it.

RENEE: Ah, Alright, this is good, this is good. So I grew up reading Harry Potter, I have a very warm spot in my heart for Hermione, she’s like my BFF. So, in January and February the library is doing tons of things with Harry Potter, it’s kind of like a Harry Potter Extravaganza. And you might be asking yourself, well, why Harry Potter, why are we doing this, it’s so overdone? Actually, no it hasn’t been, it’s the 20th anniversary of its release and so it’s a great time to highlight some universal themes. So, Megha, what’s your favorite thing to poke holes in, about Harry Potter?

MEGHA: I like the, ah, society that it talks about. Because there are certain ways that children's’ books work, that obviously you need to have the adults be useless or the kids can’t do stuff… but actually looking at that society, and going wait - how *would* it be the society it looks like it is?

MEGHA: I found some really interesting essays [5] on how the government would work, because the government isn’t really, yanno, *governing* in the book…

RENEE: Listeners, I wish that you could see my face right now, because my jaw actually just dropped, I’m just going to throw that out there. So, continue

MEGHA: So, actually, especially looking at the justice system, where you have exactly nobody getting in trouble who actually did anything, and nobody getting out of trouble who was innocent. Its’ like, is this, are we sure that they have the concept of guilt, and is murder really a crime in this world?

RENEE: So this is what you’re in for, this is what you’re podcast is going to be about… It’s a lot of us exploring the true inner parts of a book.

RENEE: So lemme just give you some library news, just what we’re doing at the library in terms of Harry Potter events [6]. In January we kick off really early on saturday, January 6th, and we have a Harry Potter trivia and movie day [7], and that’s for adults 18-34. So if you love Harry Potter and think that you know everything about it, then this is a great chance for you to show off your trivia skills. We also have a Harry Potter DIY night for adults[8], on Wednesday January 17th from 7-8:30. That will be for adults to come and drop in, we have some crafts, we have some fun food, so definitely stop by for that.

RENEE: if you have kids or you are a teen you can come to our intergenerational book-club happening on Monday February 12th at 7-8 and we’ll be discussing Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone[9]. So lots of great themes that are in that book, that you can come and talk about and discuss with other Harry Potter fans.

RENEE: And then later in February we have the Festival of Ice [10], and that’s happening all throughout Clarks Summit, it’s from February 16th and 17th and that is for all ages. So you can come and see the great ice sculptures and it is Harry Potter themed as well - it is the Wizarding World of Harry Potter, and I hope you’ll stop by for that. And then we’ll be having a Fantastic Beasts party on Friday, February 16th from 6-7:30 and that’s family friendly. So if you have kids, or you’re a teen, or you are a twenty-something, or you’re an adult or you are in your sixties and seventies, come on for that. We’re going to have some crafts and food and supplies. So those are kind of my library news, Harry Potter related things. Megha, what do you have for us?

MEGHA: Well, so one of the things I find really interesting, well, I like to read things and I like to learn things, so one of the things that really gets me is when there’s neat cross-connections, some interesting story tidbit has historical or informational basis, tying those two together. One of the cross-connections I’d found recently about Harry Potter, was as I was poking around medieval recipes actually[11]…

RENEE: As one does

MEGHA: As one does when one has free time. Butterbeer. Not the butterscotch-soda-ish one actually described in the books, but the historical recipe, a buttered beer[12]. Which involves beer or ale (of course), egg yolks and spices and sugar. And Butter [13]. Sounds odd, it does, but if you think about eggnog, which is egg yolks, sugar and cream, and wine or liquor, its really not that, that different.

RENEE: that’s fair. And what are your thoughts on eggnog in general? Yay or nay?

MEGHA: I like it. It’s tasty.

RENEE: you like it. Okay, continue

MEGHA They’re both kinds of caudel – like thickened drinks, eggs turned up in a lot of drinks, for some reason. Actually, they had a lot of eggs back then

RENEE: really?

MEGHA: yes, it’s be like for a year they’d use like ten oxen, and like a hundred chickens, and like thirty-seven thousand eggs.

[note by Megha: this was an inexact memory, the actual numbers for one (specific) household for one year included, among other things, 14 boars, 14 oxen, 50 swans, 50 capons, 300 marrowbones, and 11,000 dozen eggs [14]. Yes, thousands of dozens - and I thought I was exaggerating! Source is *Fabulous Feasts* by Madeline Pelner Cosman]

RENEE: this is already my favorite thing! Continue, so thirty seven thousand eggs, I’m listening

MEGHA: Well I mean they’d use them in everything, they’d use the egg yolks, they’d use the egg whites, it’s a stable source of protein they were using, well, you know, whatever they can do

RENEE: I love this, I love this

MEGHA: But butter in drinks does sound a bit odd, when you start wondering about it -

RENEE: that’s true

MEGHA: But they’re not really unknown. There’s Tibetan Tea[14], which is salt and butter tea - yak butter, actually - and there’s bulletproof coffee[15] which is very modern and very publicized, to get a boost of energy in the morning to get you up and going. Historically, these sorts of drinks were, they had food value, when it was cold, when you have work to do, it’s just, it’ll just get you up and moving. And they aren’t the only buttered drinks - like, perhaps you’ve heard of hot buttered rum[16],

RENEE: I have

MEGHA: it tastes good.

RENEE: again, viewers, or listeners, I wish you could see my jaw dropping. This is amazing. Continue

MEGHA: There’s also buttered scotch[17] (the drink, not the confection[18]),

RENEE: yes, yes - for all you grandmas out there, we do love the good butterscotch hard candies

MEGHA: Yes, so they’re lovely

RENEE: they’re tasty.

MEGHA So these alcoholic drinks brings us right back around to buttered beer, so it does seem to make more sense as a drink in this broader context.

RENEE: What do you think JK Rowling was thinking when she was writing this?

MEGHA: I wonder if she might have come across a, a reference to buttered beer? Especially, there’s this other kind of interesting tidbit I found out: one of the descriptions[12], from someone who was looking at these recipes is that a lot of recipes have the same spices, that give a similar flavor profile to pumpkin pie – cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, ginger – so yanno, I can see that cross-connection happening

RENEE: I definitely, well, yeah!

MEGHA: so there’s a pumpkin juice, and how many people really know what pumpkin tastes like when it’s not sweetened and spiced?

RENEE: that’s a great point as well. I could also see this podcast turning into just Megha and Renee talking about cooking, so if that happens, readers

MEGHA: poke us with a stick?

RENEE: yes. Just let us know - or listeners, I keep saying readers, ah it’s a literary podcast, it’s fine - but maybe at some point in the future we will be talking a bit more about recipes, though, get excited!

MEGHA: That’ll be hilarious.

RENEE: Alright! Well, listeners, we would love to hear you thoughts on butterbeer historically, but then also the Harry Potter kind if you have any thoughts on that, if you’ve made it, I know some people have done some cooking and Harry Potter baking so that’s pretty exciting as well

MEGHA: Book recipes are lots of fun

RENEE: Yes. They make great gifts for the holidays too, so valentine’s day - coming up, get ready.

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RENEE: So I think that now we’re going to talk about our next episode, cause this episode has been so great and fun and we want to get you excited for our next one! So when we are releasing again its going to be in march, which is women's history month. And part of what this podcast is is we want to give a voice to different perspectives, and there’s so many different voices and people’s thoughts out there and we want to highlight all of those. So during women’s history month we will be doing that. Megha, get us started:

MEGHA: Ok, one of the things we were talking about for next time was maybe doing one of the books by Tamora Pierce[19], we’d been thinking Terrier[20], perhaps. We have some quotes and excerpts, not all from that same book, but just to get you interested. Because she’s a really good author, she does a lot of strong female characters and quite a few times she will explicitly poke at gender roles and how that sort of fits together.

RENEE: yeah, yes, perfect for women’s history month. Do you have a good quote or excerpt that you wanna read to us?

MEGHA: Let’s try this one:

“You are a terrifying creature," the Voice told her solemnly. "You do not take your place in your father's tent, letting men make your decisions for you. You ride as a man, you fight as a man, and you think as a man --"  
  
"I think as a human being," she retorted hotly. "Men don't think any differently from women -- they just make more fuss about being able to.”   
― [**Tamora Pierce**](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/8596.Tamora_Pierce), [**The Woman Who Rides Like a Man**](https://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/1123089) [21]

RENEE: Ooh, that is fabulous. So, listeners, if that gets you excited, I hope that peaks your interest and that maybe that you’ll do a little bit of research on Tamora so you’ll have some context but we’ll definitely make sure to give you context in our next episode!

RENEE: We’re also going to be highlighting the amazing Carla Hayden[22], who is our current Librarian of Congress, and she is the first woman and the first African-American to hold the position. She is one of my favorites, I am so excited to talk about her, and what she is doing for libraries across America. So that’s that!

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RENEE: So we want to make sure we include other voices in our podcast, with guest speakers and/or book recommendations, questions, comments, or suggestions for topics.

MEGHA: If any of you are interested, if you have a question or suggestion for what we might cover in future episodes or if you have a topic you want to be a guest speaker for on our podcast, you should get in touch with us through our library website, lclshome.org, there’s a “contact us” form[23], or you can leave a message at the library circulation desk. And in either case you can have the subject “Lexivore”, or “Abington Podcast”, or even “Attention: Megha or Renee” - it’ll get to us somehow.

RENEE: Absolutely, so get in contact with us. If you are on Twitter, we would love to hear from you. Our twitter handle is @abingtoncomlib that’s a-b-i-n-g-t-o-n c-o-m l-i-b [24]. Tweet at us, let us know what you are listening to, what you are reading, and we can’t wait to hear from you!

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MEGHA: We hope you’ve enjoyed our first podcast, we certainly had a lot of fun making it. We plan to have episodes every other month, released on the first Sunday of the month - so our next episode is set for March 4th, we hope you’ll join us for it. You can find us on our website, lclshome.org or on itunes, and if we can figure it out, on Google Play. Thanks for listening!

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Our theme music is provided by podcasthemes.com, we used free theme # 5. Many thanks to Mr. Blasco!

Notes - for further reading. Or citations.

[1]: <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Lexivore>

[2]: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oath_of_Swords>

[3]: Friedman, David and Cook, Elizabeth. How to milk and almond, Stuff an Egg, and Armor a Turnip: A Thousand Years of Recipes. 2011. Available at <http://www.daviddfriedman.com/Medieval/To_Milk_an_Almond.pdf> or possibly requested through interlibrary loan, through Lackawanna County library system.

[4]:<http://lackawanna.sparkpa.org/eg/opac/record/7866095?query=heather%20the%20totality;qtype=title;fi%3Asearch_format=book;locg=332;detail_record_view=0> or else <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/31933063-heather-the-totality>

[5]: <http://hp-essays.livejournal.com/7250.html> or else <https://nerdist.com/why-harry-potters-wizarding-world-and-hogwarts-are-actually-horrible-places/>

[6]:<http://lclshome.org/calendar/action~agenda/page_offset~1/cat_ids~301/request_format~html/>

[7]: <http://lclshome.org/event/harry-potter-movie-and-trivia/?instance_id=107785>

[8]: <http://lclshome.org/event/harry-potter-diy-night/?instance_id=110503>

[9]:<http://lclshome.org/event/intergenerational-book-club-harry-potter-and-the-sorcerers-stone/?instance_id=109929>

[10]: <https://www.facebook.com/csfestivalofice/> or else <http://www.festivalsinpa.com/clarks-summit-festival-of-ice/>

[11]: The Accomplisht cook - electronic resource available through the library:

Buttered beer: take beer or ale and boil it, then scum it, and put to it some liquorish and anniseeds, boil them well together; then have in a clean flaggon or quart pot some yolks of eggs well beaten with some of the foresaid beer, and some good butter, strain your buttere'd beer, put it in the flaggon, and brew it with the butter and eggs.

buttered beer or ale otherways: boil beer or ale and scum it, then have six eggs, whites and all, and beat them in a flaggon or quart pot with the shells, some butter, sugar, and nutmeg, put them together, and being well brewed, drink it when you go to bed.

Otherways: take three pints of beer or ale, put five yolks of eggs to it, strain them together, and set it in a pewter pot to the fire, put to it a half a pound of sugar, a penniworth of beaten nutmeg, as much beaten cloves, half an ounce of beaten ginger, and bread it.

[12]: <http://medievalcookery.com/recipes/butterbeer.html>

*Recipe by Daniel Myers*

This is an odd recipe that I suspect evolved from the medieval drink called "caudel". It's flavor is something of a cross between beer and pumpkin pie. Note that this doesn't get cooked long enough to boil off the alcohol, so if you desire it to be non-alcoholic then you should use a non-alcoholic beer.

***Ingredients***

12 oz. beer

1 egg yolk

1/4 cup sugar

1/16 tsp. nutmeg

1/16 tsp. cloves

1/16 tsp. ginger

2 Tbsp. butter

***Method***

Put the egg yolk into a saucepan and slowly whisk in beer. Add sugar and spices and heat over medium-high heat until mixture just starts to come to a boil. Remove from heat, add butter, and whisk until mixed. Serve hot.

Source [[The Good Housewife's Jewell](https://mail.vcoresystems.com/owa/redir.aspx?C=mpzASySQ4HoBLeAcqfSx-fncVxjm4oPGSOjyZkmEIpBnHCQE2U7VCA..&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.harvestfields.ca%2fCookBooks%2findex.htm), T. Dawson]: *To make Buttered Beere. Take three pintes of Beere, put five yolkes of Egges to it, straine them together, and set it in a pewter pot to the fyre, and put to it halfe a pound of Sugar, one penniworth of Nutmegs beaten, one penniworth of Cloves beaten, and a halfepenniworth of Ginger beaten, and when it is all in, take another pewter pot and brewe them together, and set it to the fire againe, and when it is readie to boyle, take it from the fire, and put a dish of sweet butter into it, and brewe them together out of one pot into an other.*

*Published: March 7, 2011*

[13]: <http://backyardbartender.blogspot.com/2011/02/buttered-beerea-little-taste-of-history.html>or else <http://oakden.co.uk/buttered-beere-1588/> or else <https://gastronomyarchaeology.wordpress.com/2012/08/01/buttered-beer-cooking-and-the-recipe/>

[14]: <https://www.eater.com/2016/8/25/12624068/butter-coffee-tea-tibet-yak>

[15]: <https://blog.bulletproof.com/how-to-make-butter-coffee-bulletproof/> or else <https://www.ketoconnect.net/recipe/bulletproof-coffee/> or else <https://www.tasteaholics.com/recipes/drinks/how-to-make-butter-coffee/>

[16]: <https://www.thespruce.com/hot-buttered-rum-recipe-759309>

[17]:<http://www.onthebar.com/drinks/hot-buttered-scotch> or else <https://www.thespruce.com/hot-buttered-whiskey-winter-favorite-4119061> or else <https://karanewman.wordpress.com/2011/01/18/buttered-yum-4-spirits-to-butter-besides-rum/>

[18]:<https://dinersjournal.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/02/24/wheres-the-scotch-in-my-butterscotch/?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=3C3B2629E1EF620E5AEF6B11EE327F9B&gwt=pay> or else <http://www.boyercandies.com/butterscotch-history.aspx> or else <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/06/AR2007030600264.html>

[19]: <http://www.tamora-pierce.net/>

[20]: <http://www.tamora-pierce.net/series/beka-cooper-a-tortall-legend/>

[21]: <https://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/1123089> or else <http://www.tamora-pierce.net/series/the-song-of-the-lioness/>

[22]: <https://www.loc.gov/about/about-the-librarian/>

[23]: <http://lclshome.org/contact-us/>

[24]: <https://twitter.com/abingtoncomlib>

[25]: <http://www.podcastthemes.com/> - specifically <http://www.podcastthemes.com/audio/freetheme3.mp3> or else <http://www.podcastthemes.com/audio/freetheme5.mp3>

[26] Cosman, Madeleine Pelner. Fabulous Feasts: Medieval Cookery and Ceremony. Page 42. Published by George Brazilier, inc, United States, 1976. Available at Scranton Public Library or in any Lackawanna County public library by request [ie, by putting on hold].

“Eggs in medieval cookery are best appreciated via one statistic in an awesome list of provisions for King Richard II’s london larder in 1387. Among other foods for retinue and guests, it enumerates 14 boars, 14 salted oxen, 50 swans, 50 capons, 300 marrowbones, and 11,000 dozen eggs. Though medieval eggs doubtlessly were smaller than the modern, 132,000 eggs in one household in one year suggests the magnitude of the requisite hen coops. Not only chicken eggs were cultivated; other bird eggs, particularly the sparrow’s, were thought to have aphrodisiac effects and were gathered in quantity. Medieval recipes call for egg raw, whole, white, yolk, beaten, whisked, soft-boiled, hard-boiled, chopped, crumbed, flaked, shaved, poached, “dropped”, fried, baked, broiled, roasted, blown, and stuffed.”