

Description and Rationale

Title

Latin American and Latina/o Radio Broadcasts at the Benson Latin American Collection

Project Description*

This project requests [REDACTED] with the objective of creating the conditions to publish the first 319 episodes of the *Latin American Press Review* (1973–1974) and *Latin American Review* (1976–1984), in addition to 160 episodes of *Latino USA*. These radio programs have already been digitized and preliminary metadata is being created. This grant will fund transcriptions of these recordings that will allow us to publish them in the open-access University of Texas Libraries Collections Portal (<https://collections.lib.utexas.edu/>).

The result will dramatically increase access to perhaps the most well-known Latina/o and Latin American current affairs and culture program in the United States (*Latino USA*) and a lesser-known but important series dedicated specifically to Latin American events and culture (*Latin American Press Review/Latin American Review*). Researchers and students will immediately have access to hundreds of hours of content covering Latin American and Latina/o topics, including interviews with figures ranging from Dolores Huerta and Jorge Luis Borges to anthropologist Roberto DaMatta and cookbook writer Diana Kennedy.

Reasons for Consideration*

This grant requests funding for transcriptions of two seminal radio programs created at The University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin). In each case, original tapes (open reel and DAT) have already been digitized, and we have workflows in place for metadata creation using a combination of existing metadata on detailed archival finding aids, and staff and student labor. However, to post any of this content on platforms managed by UT Austin, we need to obtain transcriptions to comply with institutional accessibility requirements.

The funding request focuses almost exclusively on those transcriptions, understanding that they are the current barrier to publication on an open platform, as well as to access for the hearing impaired or for people who may have better reading than listening knowledge of English. Transcriptions can also provide additional searching and digital scholarship opportunities for researchers, and support additional use of these recordings in instructional settings.

Latin American (Press) Review

Created by UT Austin's Institute of Latin American Studies, the *Latin American Review* radio program was broadcast as part of the Longhorn Radio Network. Covering all of Latin America and the Caribbean, the program aired from 1973 to 1984 (this proposal covers all episodes through the end of 1980). The program was primarily divided into two segments: a news

segment, dealing with reports from different parts of Latin America, and an interview segment, in which an individual or small group was interviewed. Similar interviews may exist elsewhere, but these programs are not available anywhere else.

For most of a decade, the Benson Latin American Collection (“the Benson”) and The University of Texas Libraries (“UTL”) have been working to digitize the original open-reel tapes from the *Latin American Review* for preservation and access purposes. As of the time of submission, 290 programs have been digitized, and an additional 29 will be complete before the end of the year. In the early years of this project, UTL created compact disc (CD) access copies so the programs could be accessed in our Rare Books Reading Room, however, UTL has recently shifted away from this practice under the belief that access to files could instead be provided upon request.

Examples of interviewees and topics covered:

- Writers and artists: Jorge Luis Borges, Carlos Fernando Chamorro, José Roberto Guzzo, Silviano Santiago, Fernando de Szyszlo
- Political and diplomatic figures: Ruben Bonilla, William Colby, Antonio González de León, José Ángel Gutiérrez, George Landau, Orlando Letelier, George Lister, Michael Manley, Richard Rubottom, General Anastasio Somoza
- Religious and cultural figures: Miguel d’Escoto, Patricio Flores, Diana Kennedy
- Academics: Nettie Lee Benson, Jorge Bustamante, Jean Franco, Roberto DaMatta, Emir Rodríguez Monegal, Tom Niehaus, Linda Schele
- Topics: Coup and dictatorship in Chile; Panama Canal; Brazilian “economic miracle” and dictatorship; Mexican politics; Nicaraguan politics; immigration to the U.S.; Peronism; Catholicism including liberation theology

Latino USA

Latino USA is an award-winning weekly English-language radio journal launched on May 5, 1993, to fill a Latina/o-themed void in nationally distributed radio. Radio veterans Maria Martin and Maria Hinojosa joined the staff with the roles of executive producer and host, respectively. Christina Cuevas served as executive director from 1995 to 1998, and also played an instrumental role in the continuing development of the program. *Latino USA* considers itself a diverse group of radio producers, contributors, academics, broadcast professionals, and support personnel who are committed to producing radio that reflects Latina/o issues with the highest production and journalistic standards. As Maria Hinojosa herself notes, the program, established at a time when the U.S. Latina/o population was one-third of what it is today, traces the history of this immense growth, as well as that population’s participation in all aspects of politics, culture, and society. From 2014 to 2015, the Benson and UTL reformatted 160 episodes that previously only existed on DAT masters and audio cassette tapes. The digitized files remain on UTL servers and have never been published online, nor were access CDs created at the time of digitization.

This proposal is particularly timely, as *Latino USA* celebrates its 30th anniversary in 2023. In recognition of this milestone, the Benson has been working to make all 35 episodes from *Latino USA*’s first year of production available, plus an additional 65 episodes requested by *Latino USA* to support their anniversary programming. Transcription of these episodes is complete as of this proposal, and metadata creation is underway. This effort is enabling us to test and refine

workflows for transcription, metadata creation, ingestion, and publication, so that the workflows and tools needed to provide access to the remaining 160 episodes will be in place before the start of the grant, enabling smooth progress toward grant deliverables.

Examples of interviewees and topics covered in the included episodes:

- Topics: Zapatista movement and Chiapas, immigration, healthcare, bilingual education and the English-only movement, Puerto Rican politics and Vieques, Tejano literature and music, Latinas/os in politics, NAFTA, Guatemalan civil war and peace accords, Cuba, Black-Latina/o relations, baseball, Latinas/os in film and television
- Writers and musicians: Julia Álvarez, Rubén Blades, Café Tacuba, Sandra Cisneros, Edwidge Danticat, Martín Espada, Rosie Flores, Francisco Goldman, Lalo Guerrero, Little Joe Hernandez, Manu Chao, Edward James Olmos, Tito Puente, Bobby Sanabria, Mongo Santamaría
- Activists and politicians: Xavier Becerra, George P. Bush, Dolores Huerta, Cecilia Muñoz, Sister Dianna Ortiz, Nydia Velázquez

The Benson is committed to making recordings from the *Latin American Review* and *Latino USA* collections openly accessible. Access to the episodes covered by the project will be provided through the UTL Collections Portal: <https://collections.lib.utexas.edu/>. The Collections Portal is the public-facing interface for UTL's digital collections, and is built with a Blacklight interface framework and Solr enterprise index to facilitate search and discovery. Audio files are served via a Canteloupe IIF server, and are made playable in a custom-built player, which was modified from the source code for the Avalon player. A transcription file in the form of a .txt file is required for publication of audio assets to the Collections Portal, to meet UT Austin accessibility requirements.

Earlier processing of the physical collections of these programs resulted in inventories that include information about the dates associated with most programs and brief written descriptions of the topics of the recorded programs. For the *Latino USA* recordings, this information has already been reformatted into structured metadata suitable for ingestion into the Collections Portal, and the same will be done for the existing metadata for the *Latin American Review* recordings. However, a small number of *Latino USA* programs and a significant portion of the *Latin American Review* materials have no descriptions or summaries. The transcripts created by this grant will be used to identify people, locations, and themes from the recordings that will allow for greater discoverability and reuse of these materials. A workflow using named entity recognition software to speed up this process has already been piloted with a subset of existing *Latino USA* transcriptions.

As part of the proposed project, UTL will write existing and newly created archival .wav and access .mp3 files of *Latino USA* and *Latin American Review* to LTO tape for long-term preservation, alongside the processed metadata and newly created transcription files. UTL has adopted digital preservation practices based on the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) reference model, the standard for digital preservation. Technical metadata is extracted using the File Information Tool Set (FITS), and preservation bags are prepared according to the Library of Congress BagIt specifications. Each validated preservation bag is then written to two separate LTO tapes for preservation purposes, one of which is kept onsite, and the second copy sent to remote, offsite storage.

Following completion of the project, the project team will publicize the project through a blog post in UTL's TexLibris blog: <https://texlibris.lib.utexas.edu/>. Additional dissemination of the project outcomes will be conducted using the Benson and UTL's social media accounts and the listserv and social media outlets managed by the Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials (SALALM). All publicity will credit the Latin Americanist Research Resources Project for their support, and a publicly visible note field in the UTL Collections Portal metadata display will include the following credit line: "Made available with funds from the Latin Americanist Research Resources Project (LARRP), Center for Research Libraries." In addition, Benson staff will conduct targeted outreach to faculty in the Teresa Lozano Long Institute for Latin American Studies, Center for Mexican American Studies, and other affiliated departments that may be interested in using the collections in classroom instruction.

The grant will result in the publication of 479 radio programs, totaling approximately 14,370 minutes, with accompanying metadata and transcription files. Along the way, it will also enable the Benson to continue to refine workflows for more streamlined processing for audiovisual collection material, and the tools developed and lessons learned will be immediately applicable to furthering access to additional collections. Following publication of the *Latin American Review* and *Latino USA* episodes to the UTL Collections Portal, and subsequent dissemination activities, we will monitor usage statistics on the Collections Portal to assess whether online access has succeeded in increasing awareness and use of these important collections.

Project Timeline

July 2023–September 2025: Transcription.

In-house transcription services can transcribe about 2.5 hours of audio (5 programs) each week for this project. To account for school breaks and busy times, we have added 3 months. We have well-established workflows in place to add materials to the queue.

March–December 2023: Ongoing digitization.

Reformatting of 29 remaining *Latin American Review* episodes included in totals listed below.

May–December 2023: Metadata planning.

Metadata Librarian will scrape metadata from finding aids and populate metadata templates for all relevant episodes. Metadata Librarian will refine workflows and guidelines to support additional metadata creation by Benson staff and student workers.

January 2024–September 2025: Metadata creation.

Metadata Librarian will oversee metadata creation work to be carried out by Benson staff and student workers.

September–December 2025: Quality control, ingestion, and publication.

Metadata Librarian will conduct quality control, processing, and reformatting of metadata to meet repository requirements. Head of Digital Initiatives will conduct quality control on the transcription files, and prepare materials for ingest to UTL's

digital repository. Once ingestion is complete, Head of Digital Initiatives will conduct a final quality assurance check and publish the files to the UTL Collections Portal.

December 2025–ongoing: Dissemination and assessment.

Dissemination of the project outcomes through blogs, social media, and targeted outreach. Monitor usage statistics on Collections Portal.

Previous LARRP project “Illuminating the Genaro García Collection through Digitization, Metadata Development, Access, and Preservation” was completed in 2019, with over 1000 new [broadsides](#), [circulars](#), [imprints](#), and [images](#) from the Genaro García collection made available through the UTL Collections Portal. In addition, “Digitizing Four Hundred Years of Indigenous Justice: The Fondo Real de Cholula” in collaboration with the Archivo Judicial del Estado de Puebla was completed in 2022, and is now fully available online through the [Latin American Digital Initiatives](#) repository.

Authors

N/A

Publishers

All materials were produced by The University of Texas at Austin. Control of rights lies with the Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS) and the Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies (LLILAS).

Proposal Contributors

Ryan Sullivant, Metadata Librarian, Benson Latin American Collection (**project lead**)

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D Ryan Lynch, Head of Special Collections, Benson Latin American Collection

Theresa Polk, Head of Digital Initiatives, Benson Latin American Collection

Details and Sources

Resource Types*

Archival Materials

Regions*

- Latin America and Caribbean
- North America (U.S. Latinos)
- Minimal East Asia content

Countries of Origin*

United States

Major Languages

English (Some original raw interviews were conducted in Spanish or Portuguese, but the final produced programs are in English. The original source interviews are out of the scope of the current project.)

Source Format*

This is a transcription/access project, not a reformatting project; that work has largely been done. A final 29 programs of *Latin American Review* will be digitized over the course of 2023.

The *Latin American Review* programs covered by this grant were all originally on quarter-inch open-reel tape and have been transferred to .wav files or are currently being transferred. Most of these tapes are from the 1970s–1980s and must therefore be baked in order to be digitized. We are currently able to bake up to two tapes per week from all sources including this project, which explains the slow progress.

The *Latino USA* episode masters were all on quarter-inch tape or DAT masters. Many of them were transferred to CD by the original radio station in the 2000s. Episodes 242–401 were digitized from DAT master by UTL from 2014 to 2015.

In all cases, transcriptionists and metadata creators will be working with previously created digital files.

Target Format

This is a transcription/access project for previously digitized materials to enable open access publication of digital files. Transcriptions will be produced as .txt files, and also saved as PDFs.

Identifiers

Latin American Radio Programs of the Longhorn Radio Network (OCLC 768426768)

Latino USA Records

Links

https://txarchives.org/utlac/finding_aids/00317.xml

https://txarchives.org/utlac/finding_aids/00344.xml

Source and Holdings

Latin American (Press) Review

Location	Format	Holdings/Range	Notes
Benson Latin American Collection	¼" tape reformatted to .wav	319 episodes from 1973 to 1974; January 1976–December 1980	UTL/Benson has already digitized these materials and has a metadata plan in development. Grant will enable transcription to allow for publication.

Latino USA

Location	Format	Holdings/Range	Notes
Benson Latin American Collection	DAT and ¼" tape reformatted to .wav	160 episodes reformatted from DAT and quarter-inch tape: programs 242–401.	UTL/Benson previously reformatted the DATS; small gaps were filled in March 2023. Metadata guidelines and template are developed and ready to be deployed. Grant will enable transcription to allow for publication.

Source and Holdings Notes

This proposal covers existing backlog of previously digitized recordings for *Latino USA* and *Latin American Review*. Additional programs that are digitized in the future will be incorporated into existing budgets and workflows, and be added to the Collections Portal as they are available.

Physical Details

Latin American Review: approximately 159.5 hours of audio in English

Latino USA: approximately 80 hours of audio in English

Existing Reformatted Materials

This grant covers materials that have already been reformatted but are not available due to the considerable time and expense of transcription.

In early 2023, the Benson worked with UT Austin's Captioning and Transcription Services team to transcribe all 35 *Latino USA* episodes from 1993 (the first year), plus 65 other episodes requested by *Latino USA* producers as part of a plan to commemorate the program's 30th anniversary. These 100 episodes will be published in the UTL Collections Portal in late 2023.

Four episodes from the first year of *Latino USA* were also published in the American Archive of Public Broadcasting:

[https://americanarchive.org/catalog?f\[series_titles\]\[\]=Latino+USA&f\[access_types\]\[\]=all](https://americanarchive.org/catalog?f[series_titles][]=Latino+USA&f[access_types][]=all)

A separate set of programs produced by Longhorn Radio Network/Center for Mexican American Studies, *The Mexican American Experience* and *A esta hora conversamos* (1976–1982) was previously published online as [Onda Latina](#). In the last two years, the Benson has worked to obtain transcriptions and create improved metadata to publish these programs in the UTL Collections Portal, which we expect to do in 2023. This is related to *Latino USA* and *Latin American Review* due to themes, occasional repeated interview subjects, format, and origin, but there is no content overlap.

Intellectual Property Considerations

We believe that these can be published for nonprofit educational purposes only without permissions.

However, we will obtain formal permission from the rights holders (Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies - LLILAS, Center for Mexican American Studies - CMAS) and have verbal assurance that this will not be a hurdle. We are confident of these verbal assurances given the Benson's formal partnership with LLILAS and longstanding close relationship with the CMAS. In addition, all content published will also be accompanied by a takedown notice in the event that holders of copyright to specific elements of the programs (such as poems read on *Latino USA*) feel that publication is in violation of their copyright. In those cases, we will continue to make metadata and transcripts (or redacted transcripts) available. In some instances, we may be able to have redacted episodes available.