SHA Virtual Conference Presenter Access Guide
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SOCIETY FOR HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY
2021 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE:
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL DECAMERON

General Conference Accessibility

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Recordings

All presentations for themed symposia, general sessions, and some forums will be pre-recorded and uploaded to the OpenWater conference platform before the conference dates of January 6-9, 2021.

There is a Guide to Recorded Presentation Submissions available, but in addition to these technical suggestions and guidelines, the SHA Conference Committee would like to share some suggestions and additional resources on creating accessible recorded talks.

Accessibility can mean different things to different people, with many definitions suffering from too narrow a focus and only discussing the ability of one specific group to access materials or resources. It's important to remember that merely putting something online in a digital format does not make something "accessible" -- there are inherent inequities built into many digital formats and services.

The SHA sees accessibility as a necessity for the equal and equitable participation of all its members. This being said, accessibility does not necessarily operate as a binary system, with things either accessible or inaccessible. There are degrees of accessibility, and they involve breaking down existing barriers to access. Your role as presenters at the SHA Conference is to communicate your research to a diverse audience of your colleagues, and one way to ensure you are fulfilling that role is to make sure accessibility is a key aspect of your recorded and live presentations. A later section of this guide will discuss live sessions in more detail, but for now we offer some tips for making sure your pre-recorded presentations are as accessible as possible.

Recording Setup

To ensure the best possible recordings of your conference materials are made available, please consider the following guidelines:

- Use high-quality microphone and camera whenever possible.
- Try to limit background noise, and avoid recording in rooms with an echo.
- Speak clearly and slowly, leaving plenty of pauses between topics.
- Keep your language simple and clear, and explain complex concepts.
- Make sure you are well lighted, so your mouth and facial expressions can be clearly seen.
- Integrate descriptions of visual cues.
    - Instead of saying:
        - "As you can see on this chart, the frequency of cow bones increases over time."
    - Say instead:
        - "This chart shows an increase in cow bone frequency over time, with a 3% increase from 1650-1700, a 12% increase from 1700-1750, and a 20% increase from 1750-1800."

Other Recording Considerations

Please carefully consider the inclusion of any sensitive information in your images and/or discussion, such as:

- Site locations, coordinates, or maps,
- Human remains.
- Personal details of yourself and/or co-authors/collaborators.
- Images of living people without their permission.

While these things are not prohibited, it is up to each author to determine the appropriateness of the images and information they share. SHA does not anticipate any problems or data breaches, and access to conference content will be limited to conference registrants, like any other SHA conference, but we encourage everyone to be mindful of potential issues.

Zoom

The virtual meeting platform we'll be using for the 2021 Conference is Zoom, a virtual meeting interface which has many useful accessibility features built in. Zoom is compliant (with some exceptions) with the following United States and EU accessibility standards:

- [WCAG 2.1 AA Standards](#)
- [Revised Section 508 Standards](#)

- [EN 301 549 Accessibility requirements](#)

For a comprehensive guide to Zoom's accessibility features, please visit their [Accessibility webpage](#). Zoom's integrated closed-captioning function will be used during SHA 2021.

One particularly useful feature of Zoom is the [integrated shortcuts](#), some of which are listed here:

Windows Users
- Ctrl+Alt+Shift: Move focus to Zoom's meeting controls
- Alt+F1: Switch to active speaker view
- Alt+F2: Switch to gallery video view
- Alt+V: Start/stop video
- Alt+A: Mute/unmute audio
- Alt+S: Launch share screen window or stop screen share
- Alt+F: Enter/exit full screen
- Alt+H: Display/hide chat
- Alt+Y: Raise/lower hand

Mac Users
- Command(⌘)+Shift+A: Mute/unmute audio
- Command(⌘)+Shift+V: Start/stop video
- Command(⌘)+Shift+S: Start/stop screen share
- Command(⌘)+Shift+H: Show/hide in-meeting chat panel
- Option+Y: Raise hand/lower hand
- Command(⌘)+Shift+F: Enter or exit full screen

Some other general guidelines to using Zoom for accessible meetings are as follows:

- Use the chat feature sparingly. Having discussions in the chat may be convenient for not interrupting the speaker, but it can be difficult to follow for those with attention disorders, dyslexia, or dyspraxia. It can also be distracting for those using screen readers, as the chat conversation may be read out at the same time the presenter is speaking. Additionally, some conference attendees may be using automated switch devices to navigate the sessions, and the chat can be difficult to enter and exit for those devices.
- If you are using the screen share feature, which many will be, make sure you describe what you are sharing as clearly as possible. Text information in a shared screen can't be read by a screen reader.
- If a discussion session is occurring, please ask participants to speak one at a time.
- Moderators should reiterate key points of discussions at regular intervals, to ensure everyone is able to follow a forum or panel.

- If a Q&A session is taking place, consider asking participants to use the "Raise Hand" feature rather than writing "comment" or "question" in the chat. Reserve the chat for those unable to verbally ask a question, for whatever reason.

Conference Code of Conduct

SOCIETY FOR HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY CONFERENCE CODE OF CONDUCT

PREAMBLE

The Society for Historical Archaeology is committed to providing a safe, respectful environment for all attendees at its conferences. To that end, the SHA will work to provide a harassment-free experience for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, race, ethnicity, religion (or lack thereof), or any other category. The SHA will not tolerate harassment in any form at any SHA-sponsored events. This policy applies to all SHA members and non-members who participate in an SHA activity.

DEFINITION AND EXAMPLES OF IMPERMISSIBLE CONDUCT

Harassment includes offensive comments or behavior related to gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, religion, technology choices, sexual images in public space, deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention. Outside of research presentations that include specific considerations of sexuality or sexual representations in the past, sexual language and imagery is not appropriate for any conference venue, including talks, workshops, parties, social media and other online media.

Harassment under this Policy refers to any behavior by an individual or group that contributes to a hostile, intimidating and/or unwelcoming environment. Such conduct is harmful, disrespectful, and unprofessional.

OBLIGATION

All participants and attendees at the conference accept the obligation to treat everyone with respect and civility and to uphold the rights of all participants and attendees, including SHA staff, temporary staff, contractors, volunteers and hotel staff, to be free from harassment.

Attendees are bound by the SHA Ethics Principles, the SHA Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Policy, and this Conference Code of Conduct. Attendees should also be aware that they are also bound by the codes of conduct at their home institution(s). This policy, which is consistent with the professional ethics statement of the SHA, does not supersede institutional codes but is intended to reinforce their message.

By obtaining SHA membership, registering to present or attend SHA meetings, members and participants commit to maintaining respectful and ethical relationships in accordance with this policy. The SHA reserves the right to remove an individual violating this policy from the SHA annual conference without warning or refund and prohibit attendance at future SHA conferences and/or activities.

Should the SHA have concerns regarding an individual's attendance at its conference creating a safety issue, the SHA can bar the individual from registering and attending the conference. In the case of proven violations that took place prior to the annual meeting and that have been reported and documented prior to pre-registration, proven harassers/assailants will be barred from participation. Late and on-site registrations will be rescinded immediately should information be received documenting a proven violation. The SHA will not conduct its own investigation but will accept the investigations of law enforcement agencies, RPA, universities, EEOC and employers. Documented harassers/assailants should be identified to SHA staff or leadership by survivors or other reporters as early as possible. Identification with documentation of adjudication needs to be provided to bar participation in SHA events.

REPORTING AT THE CONFERENCE

Conference attendees, who experience or witness harassment as defined by this policy, or who are aware that a conference participant is currently or has been sanctioned for assault or harassment by an adjudicating body and can provide documentation of the outcome, are encouraged to contact one of the following:

- SHA Executive Director directly at 240-753-4397;
- A member of the SHA Board of Directors; or
- A member of the SHA Code of Conduct Committee, whose name and contact information will be provided.

These individuals will provide appropriate support to those who witnessed or who have experienced harassment or feel unsafe for any reason at the conference. The Executive Director or a member of the SHA Code of Conduct Committee will advise on the formal complaints process and, if requested, forward complaints to the full SHA Code of Conduct Committee for resolution.

Formal complaints should be as specific as possible about how alleged behavior constitutes harassment, as defined in this SHA policy. Any report received will remain confidential to the maximum extent possible when the SHA Code of Conduct Committee considers and investigates the complaint.

Presentations and Posters

Accessible Online Presentations

There are many resources available online that provide in-depth instructions for making accessible presentations in PowerPoint or Google Slides, which are linked in the "Further Reading and Resources" section of this guide.

You might worry that making a presentation or poster "accessible" may be difficult or take too much time, but we would ask you to consider that making your research as accessible as possible is an integral part of archaeology, and makes us all better scholars, educators, and communicators. Including our fellow archaeologists in the work we do should be considered equally as important as including stakeholders, community members, government entities, and the general public. If we are making our work inaccessible to our fellow archaeologists, we do our entire discipline a disservice.

That being said, some of the best advice for creating an accessible poster or presentation is rooted in simplicity. Some of the top recommendations we have are as follows:

- Make an effort to include **content warnings** at the beginning of your presentations, especially when dealing with potentially traumatic subjects. Many historical archaeologists work on sites of violence and oppression, as well as with human remains, and we strongly urge you to question whether an image is strictly necessary before you include it in your presentation.

- Take a moment at the beginning of your presentation to let the audience know if they can **livetweet** or otherwise post online about your research.

- Consider including a **stable link** to a digital document containing your slide notes or paper on your first slide, and read out the link.

- **Limit words** on presentation slides and posters; instead of writing out paragraphs of complex information, think critically about the most important components of the slide/section and use short, descriptive sentences that can be expanded upon in your verbal discussion and written resources you may make available.

- Use **sans serif fonts**, which do not include the decorative lines called "serifs" seen on the end of letters like T or F. The most common (and free) sans serif fonts are Arial (which this document is typed in), Verdana, Calibri, and Tahoma.

- Selectively use **bold** and *italics* when writing out long portions of text.

- **Left-align** text wherever possible.

- When creating figures and designing your presentation slides, ensure that the colors you use are part of a **color blind friendly palette** (How to Use Color Blind Friendly Palettes to Make Your Charts Accessible).

- **Describe all figures** used in presentations -- charts, graphs, photos, etc. Do not assume everyone can see the details of the images you are using to communicate your research. Try to use captions for images as much as possible.

- **Avoid video clips** embedded into the presentation, or be sure to describe the video if it is absolutely necessary. Please ensure these video clips have captions.

- **Avoid flashing images or videos.** Run your clips through the Photo-sensitive Epilepsy Analysis Tool (PEAT) to check whether there will be any issues.

Accessible Posters

Poster presentations will be a little different this year, with everyone producing digital posters. We suggest dividing your poster into four quadrants, and assigning each quadrant to a PowerPoint or Google slide. This way you will be able to show zoomed-in views of your poster.

For your poster please consider the following suggestions, many of which are the same as those for presentations:

- Use **sans serif fonts**, which do not include the decorative lines called "serifs" seen on the end of letters like T or F. The most common (and free) sans serif fonts are Arial (which this document is typed in), Verdana, Calibri, and Tahoma.

- Selectively use **bold** and *italics* when writing out long portions of text.

- **Left-align** text wherever possible.

- When creating figures ensure that the colors you use are part of a **color blind friendly palette** (How to Use Color Blind Friendly Palettes to Make Your Charts Accessible)

- **Describe all figures**-- charts, graphs, photos, etc. Do not assume everyone can see the details of the images you are using to communicate your research. Try to use captions for images as much as possible.

- **Do not place text over images**.

- Use more **white space** to increase readability.

- Use a **linear and logical** layout, without complex or cluttered visual effects.

- Make sure color is not the only means of conveying information in figures -- **use different shapes AND colors for plots and charts**.

- Consider filming or typing up a short (under 5 minute) version of your poster presentation and making that available via a **clearly marked QR code**.

Further Reading and Resources

Links

Recordings and Videos

- SHA Recorded Presentation Submission Instructions
- Making Audio and Video Media Accessible
- 8 Steps to Creating Accessible Video
- Video Accessibility: How to Make Videos Everyone Can Enjoy

Zoom

- General Zoom Accessibility webpage
- Managing Closed Captioning with Third Party Captioning Services
- Hot Keys and Keyboard Shortcuts

Presentations

- How to Make Your Presentations Accessible To All
- Instructions on WCAG 2 Presentation Formats
- University of Kent: Make Documents and Presentations Accessible
- Microsoft PowerPoint Accessible Presentation Guide

Posters

- GOV.UK Dos and Don'ts on Designing for Accessibility
- Guidelines for Creating Accessible Printed Posters