



The Sound of Science: Engaging the Public with Big Ideas

Anne Strainchamps and Steve Paulson

Creators and Hosts of “To the Best of Our Knowledge”
Wisconsin Public Radio

Anne Strainchamps and Steve Paulson have spent decades fostering curiosity and conversation in a rapidly changing world. Currently, they are collaborating with the “Island of Knowledge” think tank in Tuscany to produce a series of interviews with leading international biologists, physicists and philosophers. Their recent radio shows have covered topics ranging from astrobiology and neuroplasticity to whale communication.



This talk offers a behind-the-scenes look at the art of using dialogue and the power of story to illuminate complex thinking across multiple scientific disciplines. Anne and Steve will discuss some of the methods they use to help scientists and engineers connect their work with broader audiences. They will also share some of the common traits and abilities they have discovered in scientists who are also prolific scientific communicators.

ABOUT the SPEAKERS

Anne Strainchamps and Steve Paulson are best known for their thoughtful, wide-ranging conversations that bridge science, philosophy, and the arts. They created “To the Best of Our Knowledge”, the nationally syndicated, Peabody Award-winning public radio program from Wisconsin Public Radio that explores big ideas through lively, deeply human storytelling. The show just completed its run of 35 years.

Steve Paulson has interviewed hundreds of leading scientific thinkers, including Jane Goodall, E.O. Wilson, Francis Collins, Carlo Rovelli, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Neil deGrasse Tyson, Freeman Dyson, and James Watson—on topics ranging from cosmology to consciousness. He also hosts the podcast Luminous, which explores the scientific, cultural, and philosophical implications of psychedelics.

Anne Strainchamps, the show’s longtime host, is an award-winning journalist who brings literary depth and emotional resonance to complex topics. Her work has been recognized for its craft, curiosity, and ability to connect abstract ideas to the lived experience. She recently produced the series Deep Time, which examined various aspects of time – from biological and cosmic time to ancestral time.

Monday, December 1 at Noon
1003 Engineering Centers (Tong Auditorium)

