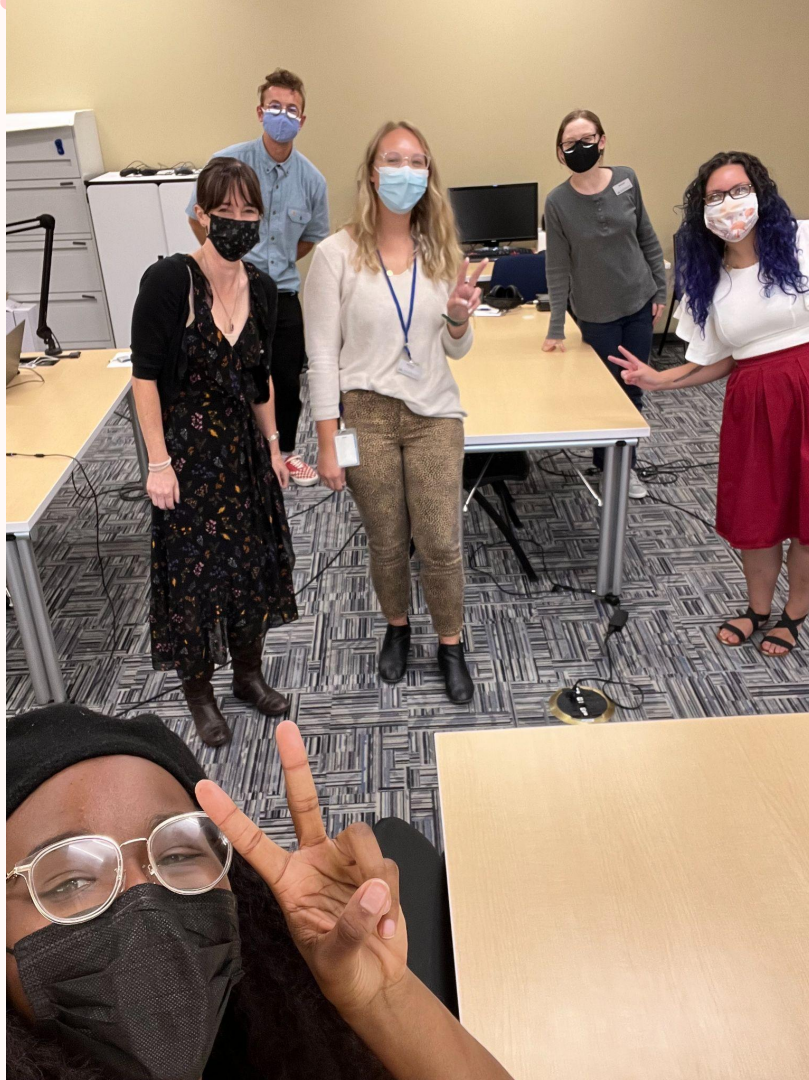




So You Want To Start a Library Podcast... Now What?

**Ella Alonso, Hannah Erickson, Kelsey Hughes,
Heather Jackson & Hawa Jalloh**
Prince George's County Memorial Library System

Hello!
Who are we?



Why podcast at the library?

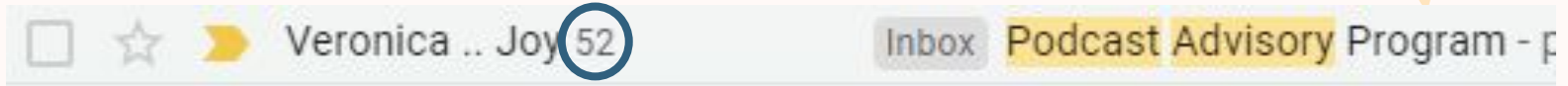
- ▶ Natural transition with virtual programming but will continue
- ▶ Encourage literacy & speak back to the canon
- ▶ Engage a specific audience who is often missed (millennials)
- ▶ Opportunity to highlight different voices in community & library
- ▶ Bring the library into a new space
- ▶ Blog as a companion piece



Our Origin Story



Timeline/Origin Story



- ▶ COVID pandemic = lots of virtual programs and staff on telework
- ▶ Podcast advisory program
- ▶ Wouldn't it be great if there was a pod about girl heroes? Wait, we could make that podcast!
- ▶ Wrote up a proposal
- ▶ Coordinated with our Digital Services team

Timeline/Origin Story

- ▶ Building the team - looked for staff members with interest or skills in the roles we needed to fill



Ella Alonso



Hannah Erickson



Kelsey Hughes



Heather Jackson



Hawa Jalloh



Will Froliklong

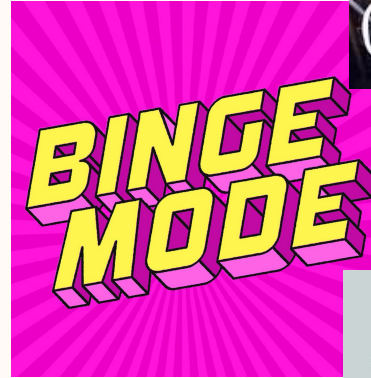
Timeline/Origin Story

- ▶ Met with an expert: author and podcaster, Hannah Hethmon



Timeline/Origin Story

- ▶ Looked into best practices, found a physical space, researched equipment and hosting services
- ▶ Figured out what type of podcast (scripted vs. conversational) we wanted to create



Timeline/Origin Story

- ▶ Developed a vision and sound for the podcast
- ▶ Created governing documents
- ▶ Generated a workflow
- ▶ Plotted out the first season worth of episodes
- ▶ Recorded and tweaked along the way



Vision:

- Discussion of books that were widely beloved, popular, and/or widely considered canonical for girls' reads¹. They are works of fiction written for children and teens, featuring a female or gender non-conforming protagonist.
- Bring in different points of view through research, hosts/guest hosts, and a community expert segment.
- Celebrate the positive parts of nostalgia for a book ("This book made me feel it was ok to be smart/be a tomboy/speak a different language, etc") but also interrogate that as an adult reader. Examine works through a feminist lens and honestly and directly address issues present within each book related to representation of different identities including gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religion, disability.
- Incorporate elements of fun and humor.
- Encourage listeners to re-evaluate these books themselves, for better or for worse.
- Provide tools (suggested readalikes, citations) that encourage listeners to discover modern classics that represent a more diverse group of writers and characters or that tackle some of the same themes or issues in a different way.

Podcast Workflow



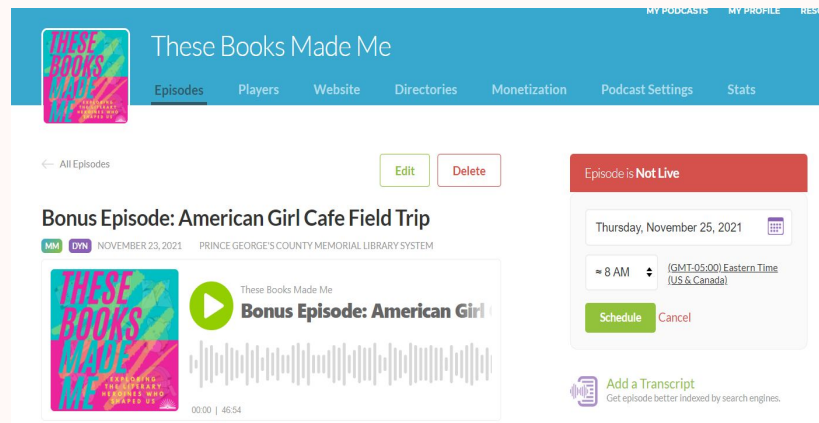
General Structure

- ▶ Monthly meetings
- ▶ 10-12 episode seasons, books planned before launch
- ▶ Live on every other Thursday, promote on social
- ▶ Bonus episodes in between seasons, a little more sporadic but generally the same schedule.
- ▶ Break in December to catch up this year.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Planned Release	Recording deadline	Planning Deadline	Book/IP	Hosts	Guests	Local Expert	Ephemera	Blog Posts
August 12th	end of june (June 21??)	mid june	American Girl - Samantha	Heather, Hawa, Hannah	Kelsey	Laurie Lemieux - Proteus Bicycles	mixed/blurred era values	August 12 + August 19
August 26th			American Girl - Molly	Heather, Hannah, Kelsey	Storm Carman	Lauren Deutsch the education manager at CPAM	glasses as fashion	August 26 + September 2
September 9th	beginning of august	end of july	Matilda	Kelsey, Hannah	Sarah Garifo	Backup - educators Heather knows	Matilda at 30	September 9 + September 16
September 23rd			American Girl - Felicity	Kelsey, Hannah, Heather	Maria Vivar-Guzman	Tara confirmed.	first without bangs	September 23 + September 30
October 7th	beginning of september	end of august	American Girl - Addy	Hawa, Heather, Kelsey	Candice Washington	Janet Sims Wood (on advisory panel, maybe currently @ PGCC???) as a backup, Avis Matthews or someone else from the Advisory panel	first with earrings	October 7 + October 14
October 21st			American Girl - Josefina	Heather, Hawa, Hannah	Ella	Tey Diana Rebolledo (advisory commission), possibly Lynnika Butler - sociolinguistics prof	translation in "antique" Spanish	October 21 + October 28
Bonus episodes (season 1.5)								Blog Posts
October 28	mid october	early october	spooky special: book talking the books that scared us growing up, very special mysteries (hopefully tangentially girl related)	Hannah, Heather, Kelsey, Hawa	"man on the street" interviews with staff and/or teens about the book that scared them			October 31
November 4	mid-late october	mid october	Matilda interview					November 4
November 18	early November	late october	American Girl Cafe field trip	Hannah, Heather, Kelsey, Hawa	All AG episode guests invited			November 18
Dec 3??????	mid November	early November	Manga heroines side series kickoff????	Darlene, Maria, Vilma, Dulce				December ???

Episode Planning/Creation

- ▶ When2meet poll with guest to plan scripting meeting & recording date for each episode
- ▶ Google Docs to plan research & tag Ella for research help
- ▶ Heather first pass edit, Will for fine tuning and sound engineering
- ▶ Schedule in Buzzsprout a few days ahead of time, edit the transcript.



American Girl: Felicity

HANNAH Intro:

"Hi I'm [Each person says name] and this is our podcast "These Books Made Me."
Today we're going to be continuing our American Girl series of episodes with Felicity and her original 6 books. Friendly warning as always: this podcast contains spoilers. If you don't yet know whose tooth fell into her teacup.

HANNAH Introduction of Guest: We have a special guest today joining us - would you like to introduce yourself?

MARIA: Hi I'm Maria! I work at the library. [talk about felicity]

MARIA What did this book mean to you?:

Was this everyone's first time reading? If not, how'd this reread compare to your memories of reading it when you were younger?

KELSEY Author/History info:

Valerie Tripp, author of the Felicity books as well as many other American Girl series, was born in 1951 and grew up with her three sisters in Mount Kisco, New York. She was part of the first coed class at Yale, graduating in 1973. As a student, she helped found a daycare center, the stories from which inspired her senior thesis.

After college she wrote for the Addison-Wesley Reading Program, which appears to be a series of textbooks and activity books for K-6 students of which Pleasant Rowland (American Girl founder) is listed as the author. Tripp and Rowland continued to work on this series, now called "The Superkids" as recently as 2015.

Blogging

- ▶ provide additional resources
 - ▶ hyperlinks, external materials, pictures
- ▶ explore subjects more deeply
 - ▶ reader's advisory, similar book recommendations
 - ▶ deep dives into tangential subjects
 - ▶ discuss complex subjects
- ▶ highlight community partners
- ▶ include accessibility resources
 - ▶ transcripts

Sep 23

Felicity, American Girl: Recommended Readalikes



These Books Made Me

These Books Made Me is a podcast about the literary heroines who shaped our childhoods. @PGCMLS

Follow



Photo by [Tom Hermans](#) on [Unsplash](#)

This blog is created in conjunction with the These Books Made Me podcast. Check out the corresponding episode, American Girl — Felicity, on Apple

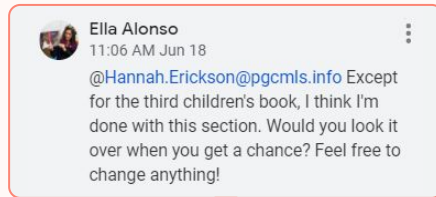
Blog Workflow

- ▶ Deadlines:
 - a. rough draft
 - b. Hannah's edits
 - c. Ella's edits
 - d. final edits, scheduling
 - e. publication

M	T	W	T	F
a			b	
	c	d	e	



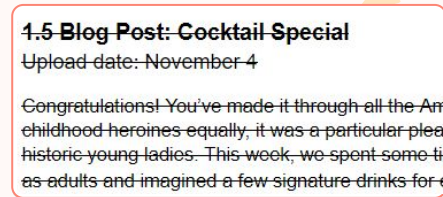
Tag, You're It



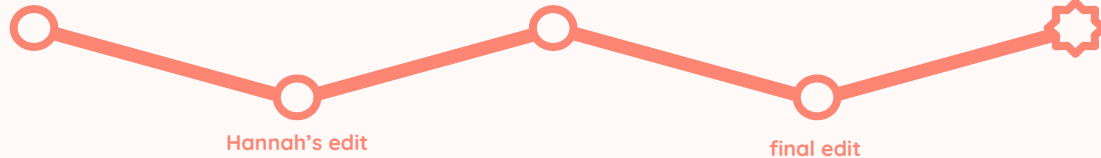
rough draft



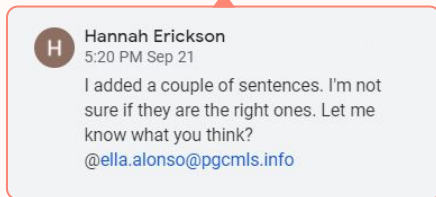
Ella's edit



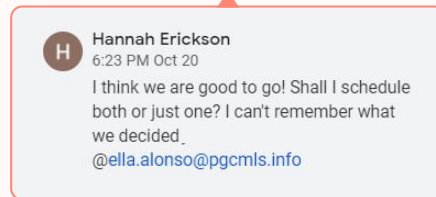
publish



Hannah's edit



final edit



Keepin' It Consistent

<u>Title</u>	<u>Layout</u>	<u>Schedule</u>
Primary Post	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Title▶ Heading Photo▶ Connection▶ Introduction▶ Body▶ Conclusion	Primary Post <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Episode Launch▶ 9:00 AM
Secondary Post:		Secondary Post <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Off Week▶ 9:00 AM
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Book: Deep Dive		
Tertiary Post:		Tertiary Post <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Off Week▶ 2:00 PM
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Book: Bonus		

Tools for Effective Podcasting



Tools for Effective Podcasting

- ▶ **Podcast platform:** we use and recommend Buzzsprout* for publishing and pushing out episodes.
 - ▶ It has a auto generated, editable transcript.
 - ▶ And soundbites!
- ▶ **Blog:** we use Medium.* We suggest Wordpress.
- ▶ **Microphones:** [Shure MV7 USB Podcast Microphone](#)
- ▶ **Editing software:** Adobe Audition & Audacity

*Recommended only for if you have one podcast

Transcript Before & After

Speaker 3 ▶ 00:57

Okay. So Maggie, we are talking about the book Matilda today, and I know you have some background with this book personally, so I thought we'd start there. If you could tell us a little bit about your history with the book.

Speaker 2 ▶ 01:10

So I'm a huge **rowel doll** fan. I have my own personal attachment to **Charlie and the chocolate factory** and that was one of the books I remember reading as a kid and just, **um**, it being this sort of gateway to literature because **Ra** **ll doll** does something in the worlds that he creates that I think is if not unique, it was different to me at the time. And it's a, I'm going to call it satire for want of a better word, but it was the first time I think, I remember thinking this book i
How did we do on your transcript? ☆☆☆☆☆

Heather ▶ 00:57

Okay. So Maggie, we are talking about the book Matilda today, and I know you have some background with this book personally, so I thought we'd start there. If you could tell us a little bit about your history with the book.

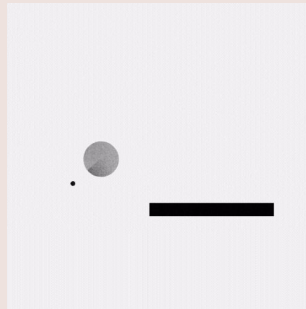
Maggie ▶ 01:10

So I'm a huge **Roald Dahl** fan. I have my own personal attachment to **Charlie and the Chocolate Factory** and that was one of the books I remember reading as a kid and just, um, it being this sort of gateway to literature because **Ra** **l Dahl** does something in the worlds that he creates that I think is if not unique, it was different to me at the time. And it's a, I'm going to call it satire for want of a better word, but it was the first time I think, I remember thinking this book is doing something there's some trick happening here or some double meaning. And, um, it was specifically ar
How did we do on your transcript? ☆☆☆☆☆



Tools for Effective Podcasting

- ▶ Tascam recorder - handheld field recorder great for capturing audio on the go for interviews/field trips
- ▶ Zoom F6 Multi Track field recorder
- ▶ Artlist
- ▶ SquadCast
- ▶ Canva



The Podcast Price is Right: Come on Down!

GAME: The Price is Right - These Books Made Me Style



Shure Microphone

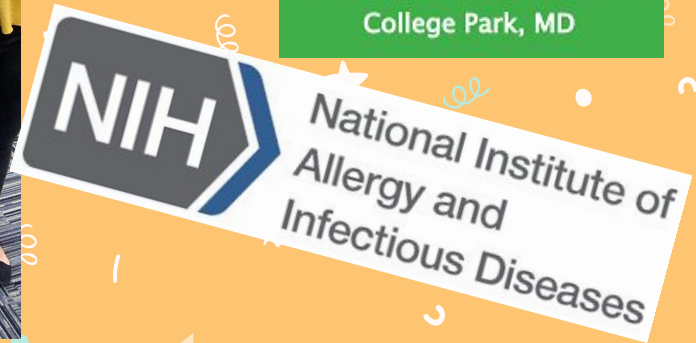


Adobe Audition
(soft)



Tascam

Working with Guests & Experts



Working with Guests

- ▶ We invite a guest with a special interest in the book in question to join us each episode. Currently we are pulling guests from the staff pool but may expand outside our library system in the future.
- ▶ Generally the guest read the book as a child and it meant a lot to them. All who are recording in the episode reread the title and meet to establish the bones of the episode with a script.
- ▶ Usually there is just one guest but sometimes we invite two and the regular hosts rotate off the episode if needed to free up a mic for another guest.
- ▶ Best Practices/What to Expect Guide for guests entitled “Everything You Need to Know About Guesting on TBMM” - setting expectations and dispelling anxiety and confusion about the process.

Working with Guests

Goals:

- ▶ Create structure and clarity to make each episode come together smoothly
- ▶ Make guests comfortable and able to enjoy their time in the recording studio
- ▶ Create a space to think critically about the IP in question
- ▶ Have fun!

Working with Community Experts



For each episode, we pull out a topic from the book and look for an expert to discuss it with

- ▶ E.g. the women in cycling theme from the Samantha American Girl books led us to an interview with the owner of Proteus Bicycles, a local, women-owned bike shop.

Working with Community Experts

- ▶ Plan as far in advance as possible to keep from scrambling and give people time to find space in their schedule.
- ▶ Be creative in finding experts and connecting with them. Use your networks
- ▶ Be flexible around their time and make it mutually beneficial: e.g. give them an ad spot (vet them before agreeing to promote though)

Lessons Learned



Challenges Faced & Lessons Learned

- ▶ Content
- ▶ Staffing
- ▶ Technical Stuff



Content

- ▶ Scripting vs. free flowing conversation
- ▶ Approaching difficult topics while keeping lighthearted tone
- ▶ Length
 - ▶ Experts with a lot to say
 - ▶ American Girl - too many books in one episode
- ▶ Lack of diversity in titles & how to be intentional about discussing that
- ▶ Not having the books in our library system

Staffing

- ▶ Staffing changes
- ▶ Coordinating schedules
- ▶ Finding staff that are interested and ensuring that they have an understanding of the podcast's goal/scope

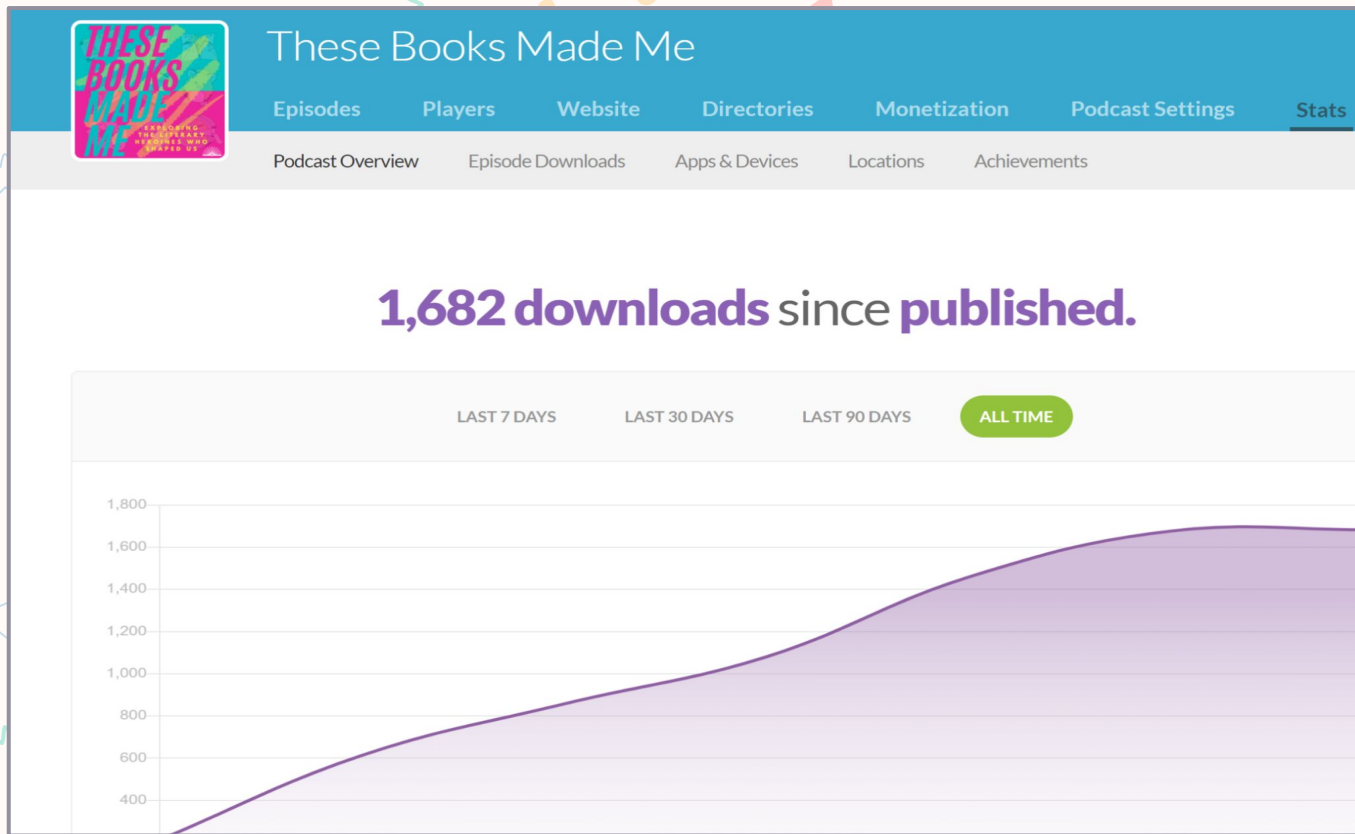


Technical Stuff

- ▶ Marketing - DIY approach
- ▶ Audio difficulties, retrofitting the space, lack of proper equipment, mask muffling
- ▶ Copyright issues
- ▶ “Episode 0” did not work



We're doing numbers!





Questions?

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