Hannah Hethmon. *Your Museum Needs a Podcast: A Step-By-Step Guide to Podcasting on a Budget for Museums, History Organizations, and Cultural Nonprofits.* Self-published, 2018. 101 pp. $13.99, paper, ISBN 978-1-72393-102-4.

Reviewed by Holly Baker (Brevard Museum of History and Natural Science)

In recent years, podcasts have become an increasingly popular medium. Podcasting has transformed the way we consume information. At the same time, podcasting liberates producers and consumers from the constraints of traditional mediums. Essentially, anyone anywhere can make a podcast about anything they want. For that reason, podcasts hold much power and offer endless possibilities. Hannah Hethmon is a museum communications consultant. She produced an award-winning podcast of her own called *Museums in Strange Places.* Hethmon's book, *Your Museum Needs a Podcast: A Step-By-Step Guide to Podcasting on a Budget for Museums, History Organizations, and Cultural Nonprofits* offers a comprehensive yet concise guide that walks beginners through the process of starting a podcast.

Hethmon's book includes an introduction followed by five chapters. Each chapter takes the reader through various aspects of podcasting. In chapter 1, the author discusses the importance of planning, visualizing the premise of the podcast, and identifying the potential audience for it. Chapter 2 offers recommendations for equipment and software, including microphones, audio recorders, and accessories. Chapter 3 focuses on editing and production topics, such as audio editing and recording software, script writing, back-

ground music, and sound effects. Chapter 4 delves into the art of storytelling through podcasts. As Hethmon points out in her book, almost all podcasts require some sort of story. She explains the importance of capturing the attention of the listener in the podcast's introduction and keeping the listener engaged. Finally, chapter 5 explains how to officially market and launch your podcast. The book also includes an appendix that discusses several alternatives to producing podcasts "in-house."

While the book is concise at just over one hundred pages long, the author offers detailed podcasting tips and suggestions, touching on nearly everything a potential producer would want to know about the podcasting process. Throughout the book, the author includes examples from her personal podcasting journey. Hethmon's "can-do" attitude gives the book a positive tone that new podcasters will appreciate. The beginning stage of podcasting can be frustrating and overwhelming, and Hethmon offers a helpful balance of guidance and motivation.

Though *Your Museum Needs a Podcast* was written in 2018, before the COVID-19 pandemic, the book is even more relevant today. Nonprofit organizations, including museums, currently struggle to connect with audiences while experiencing a decline in "in person" interactions due to

social distancing restrictions. Podcasts offer opportunities for museums, history organizations, and nonprofits to distribute information to large audiences in innovative and creative ways and to keep in touch with their supporters and members.

The book is primarily intended for cultural organizations, but it would be useful to anyone interested in launching their own podcast. People with podcasting experience may also gain some insight from the book. I am a public historian who has produced podcasts for a nonprofit history organization for more than five years. I make podcasts for the Florida Historical Society's weekly radio program *Florida Frontiers* that airs on National Public Radio stations throughout the state of Florida. I also produce podcasts for the University of Central Florida's History Department, and I coproduce the official podcast of the Zora Neale Hurston Festival of the Arts and Humanities. Even though I have produced hundreds of podcasts at this point, I still discovered several valuable tips from Hethmon's book.

For example, I had not heard of Auphonic prior to reading this book. Auphonic is an audio optimization software that Hethmon recommends for podcasters to enhance and improve their audio recordings. I have long used Audacity to edit my podcasts, a free, open-source audio engineering software. Hethmon's book recommends using Auphonic in conjunction with Audacity to improve audio quality. Her book is full of guidance like this, advice that she herself only discovered after making dozens of podcasts.

While reading the book, I could not help wishing it had been published when I first started the podcasting process in 2015. Back then, I did not know where to begin. At the time, there were not a lot of resources available about podcasting. Hethmon's book streamlines the learning process while offering detailed, budget-friendly, and practical advice. I would recommend Hethmon's informative and cheerful guide to anyone who wants to delve into the world of podcasting.

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at
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