
Selecting Audiobooks Towards a Core Collection of Narrators

Bonnie Kunzel, Joyce Saricks, Kaite Mediatore Stover, and Neal Wyatt, Guest Columnists

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Audiobooks seem to fulfill a particular need to make the story experience a portable and multitasking one so that the mundane activities of our lives, such as cleaning, cooking, exercising, and commuting, become story-rich. This need is reflected in the steady, even increasing, focus on audiobook circulation. Given both public and academic libraries' needs to shape and grow collections, how do we ensure that our efforts result in the best selections possible—collections that reflect the particular strengths of audio?

This is a difficult proposition because a large part of audiobook collection development is focused on title selection. Selectors must ensure that they build collections that serve patrons seeking materials in the growing variety of formats they demand. Yet the most critical component of audiobook selection is not the title, but the narrator. The narrator of an audiobook is as important to the experience as the author. Indeed the narrator joins forces with the author to create the audio experience. All avid audiobook listeners know the disappointment of a story ruined by the narrator, or more happily, a story transformed by the deft choices of a skilled reader. Given the performer's importance, collecting the best narrators, as well as key titles, should be a part of any well-developed collection.

This column offers a way to begin this dual work for those new to audiobook selection and serves as a checklist for those more familiar with the particular demands of this facet of collection building. Written by four members of The Listen List: Outstanding Audiobook Narration (the newly created CODES award for audiobooks), it offers a mix of popular authors and titles read by important narrators. The column works towards the creation of a core list of narrators, a must-buy list of top performers, and also offers further reading and resources.

The Listen List highlights the twelve best audiobooks published each year based on the quality of their narration quality. The inaugural list will be announced during the 2012 ALA Midwinter Meeting.—*Editor*

KEY NARRATORS

Josephine Bailey

Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Narrated by Josephine Bailey. Old Saybrook, Conn.: Tantor, 2008 (ISBN: 978-1-4001-3633-9).

Austen's beloved novel, which mediates the temperament of Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy as the two clash and court one another, is brought to life by Josephine Bailey's

extraordinary vocal skills. Bailey's ability to capture the essence of a scene and translate its emotional weight makes each work she reads, be it a classic like Austen's or a more modern tale, an immersive experience. Her steady pace and lovely "home base" voice are compelling and carry listeners through lengthy sections of exposition. Her dramatization of scenes, inflected as they are with deft changes in pace, volume, and tone, makes the works she reads vivid listening experiences.

Scott Brick

Bradbury, Ray. *The Martian Chronicles*. Narrated by Scott Brick. Old Saybrook, Conn.: Tantor, 2010 (ISBN: 978-1-4001-4824-0).

From classics and occasional nonfiction titles to thrillers and science fiction, prolific narrator Scott Brick has read a wide variety of audiobook titles. A popular and critically acclaimed narrator, Brick is known for his ability to allow listeners to make a personal connection with his characters. The clear pleasure he takes in his work enhances and transforms the listening experience. Brick enlivens Bradbury's classic science fiction tale of life on Mars, a reading that makes the most of his talents. He captures all the drama of space exploration, but he also reflects the elegiac tone evoked by this thoughtful examination of the human condition. A treat for listeners new to the work and for those reexperiencing it.

Jim Dale

Rowling, J. K. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. Narrated by Jim Dale. New York: Listening Library, 1999 (ISBN: 978-0-8072-8195-6).

It all began with the Boy Who Lived, whom listeners met in a cupboard under the stairs and followed to Hogwarts School for Witchcraft and Wizardry. Few readers will have missed this delightful tale (which grows grim and dark as the books advance). Its publication in audio was a game changer, a narration that turned readers into listeners. Dale created a new experience of the book through his fabulous characterizations, pacing, emotive sensibility, and vast skill in creating the perfect mood for every scene. Dale, whose reading predates the movie, taught many fans how to pronounce the book's esoteric vocabulary, including some of the proper names. In creating an audio landmark, Dale set a benchmark for what many listeners want in audio—an immersive performance that sweeps them away.

Stephanie Daniel

Greenwood, Kerry. *Cocaine Blues*. Narrated by Stephanie Daniel. Melbourne, Australia: Bolinda, 2006 (ISBN: 978-1-7416-3548-5).

Daniel has so many voices in her repertoire—she has mastered nearly every accent in the British Empire—that listeners will be pressed to discern her own. Daniel also is keenly aware of pacing, as is apparent in the Phryne Fisher

mysteries. Greenwood's combination of drawing room comedy, suspenseful mystery, and racy bedroom scenes give Daniel room to exercise her impressive vocal skills, pinpointing the drollest joke, tightening the tension, or slowing to a languid rhythm. Greenwood's debut mystery introduces the progressive flapper, born into poverty but raised in wealth. Phryne's relocation to Jazz Age Melbourne, Australia, to work as a private detective brings her into the wide orbit of locals of various backgrounds and societal ills, such as drug use, abortion, and racism.

Jonathan Davis

Diaz, Junot. *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*. Narrated by Jonathan Davis. Westminster, Md.: Books on Tape, 2007 (ISBN: 978-1-4159-4194-2).

Jonathan Davis narrates a wide range of genres, adjusting his voice and cadence to fit each perfectly. He excels at creating colorful characters, and his chameleon voice allows him to disappear into each. Diaz's prize-winning novel requires proficiency in "Spanglish" and in the lilting cadences of the protagonist's Dominican roots, skill at portraying the perspectives of distinctly diverse narrators, and the ability to project the supernatural sensibility that pervades the story. Davis accomplishes all this, revealing the underlining warmth and reflecting the humor touched with irony in this misfit nerd's coming-of-age tale. Davis's convincing and engaging reading helps listeners navigate this language- and allusion-rich multicultural saga.

Emily Grey

Carriger, Gail. *Soulless*. Narrated by Emily Grey. Prince Frederick, Md.: Recorded Books, 2010 (ISBN: 978-1-4407-9497-1).

Like many narrators, Grey possesses a plethora of voices in her vocal trick bag. But her audible strength is comic timing and tone. Grey focuses on the humor and ensures the listener hears it as she precisely sets up scenes for the biggest payoff. She excels at female characters who recognize and embrace their flaws and is equally comfortable with contemporary slapstick or urbane farce. Grey gives a signature performance in this first entry of the Parasol Protectorate series. Victorian conventions, scientific inquiry, and a world populated with vampires, werewolves, and ghosts create an addictive backdrop to this promising debut—a mix of romance, mystery, urban fantasy, and steampunk. Don't look for magic in the story, it's all in the voices.

George Guidall

Deaver, Jeffery. *The Broken Window*. Narrated by George Guidall. Prince Frederick, Md.: Recorded Books, 2008 (ISBN: 978-1-4361-1857-6).

From kindly grandfathers to villains and much in between, George Guidall has played them all and put his own

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inimitable stamp on the audiobooks he narrates. He is a master of pacing, and his interpretation of characters creates indelible pictures in listeners' minds. Many fans listen to every book he records, an activity that takes them across genres. In Deaver's clever—and terrifying—novel of suspense, Guidall demonstrates his skill at creating characters and building tension, as a hacker plays havoc with criminalist Lincoln Rhyme's sophisticated computer set up. Familiar series characters are vividly portrayed, and the villain becomes more and more sinister as Guidall lays out his plan and sets the mood for this chilling nightmare tale.

Edward Herrmann

Hillenbrand, Laura. *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption*. Narrated by Edward Herrmann. New York: Books on Tape, 2010 (ISBN: 978-1-4159-6274-9).

Edward Herrmann is no stranger to the challenges of narrating audiobooks, particularly nonfiction. His expressive baritone and impeccable interpretation always create an irresistible listening experience. He brings these impressive skills to this compelling, inspirational account of Louis Zamperini, an Olympic athlete turned soldier who survived a shipwreck followed by captivity and torture in one of Japan's worst prisoner of war camps. Herrmann's deep, rich voice resonates in this gritty, heartwrenching account as he reveals both physical and psychological trauma that would have defeated a lesser man—and almost beat down Zamperini. Herrmann's portrayal of characters and events adds a note of authenticity to this compelling tale of adventure and survival.

Dick Hill

Child, Lee. *61 Hours*. Narrated by Dick Hill. New York: Books on Tape, 2010 (ISBN: 978-0-3077-3503-4).

Child's insanely competent Jack Reacher is a solitary ex-MP who stumbles into trouble and always fights his way out. The perfect series for adrenaline fans, Child does not just deliver action, he offers GPS-detailed landscapes and plenty of intriguing detail. Hill reads a great range of works with a clean and clear (if slightly rough) voice and a restrained sensibility, making him a perfect match for Reacher. His greatest skill is his superb sense of timing, which he uses to enhance tone and character. Adding to his delivery skills is his manner of creating subtly distinct voices that keep the characters clear while keeping the focus on the story rather than the dramatization. Collectively, these traits make for a great listen, one where the narrator seems to slip behind the reading, leaving the listener with the sheer experience of story and description.

Stephen Hoye

Shaara, Michael. *The Killer Angels*. Narrated by Stephen Hoye. New York: Books on Tape, 2011 (ISBN: 978-0-3079-3289-1).

Versatile narrator Stephen Hoye brings an understated elegance to his performances, whether reading zany crime

novels, classic fantasy and science fiction, heartfelt historical fiction, or historical accounts. He excels at becoming invisible, at disappearing into characters and allowing their voices to establish the mood and drive the story. Shaara's classic novel of the battle of Gettysburg is the perfect platform for his talents. Individual accents and voices for the famous and lesser-known enliven characters and make listeners privy to their thoughts and fears. Hoye's polished reading perfectly suits the lyrical prose and memorable, heartbreaking scenes, and showcases unforgettable characters and events.

Katherine Kellgren

Willis, Connie. *Blackout*. Narrated by Katherine Kellgren. Grand Haven, Mich.: Brilliance Audio, 2010 (ISBN: 978-1-4418-7517-4).

———. *All Clear*. Narrated by Katherine Kellgren. Grand Haven, Mich.: Brilliance Audio, 2010 (ISBN: 978-1-4418-7576-1).

Kellgren's superb ability to handle any accent is the result of careful preparation and a lot of hard work, undertaking speech and dialect training while studying acting at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts. Her goal was to learn how to use her voice properly as an actor, which her numerous award-winning audiobook performances show she has more than achieved. Men and women, boys and girls—she inhabits them all, and her spot-on narration brings them to life, in particular the Cockney street urchins and posh shopkeepers in the London Blitz who interact with mid-twenty-first-century time travelers in this Nebula Award Winning two-book story. With more than 85 voices carried over from the first book to the second, her stellar narration throughout is masterful.

Rosalyn Landor

Quinn, Julia. *What Happens in London*. Narrated by Rosalyn Landor. New York: Books on Tape, 2009 (ISBN: 978-0-3075-7832-7).

Quinn's best novel since *It's In His Kiss* follows the comic courtship of two completely likeable Regency-era characters. When Lady Olivia Bevelstoke (who makes lists) starts to spy on Sir Harry Valentine (who translates Russian), little does she know that he would have cause to worry about spies. Not because, as Olivia has heard from gossips, he killed his fiancée, but because he works for the War Office. Landor narrates titles from a wide range of periods with ease because of her amazing skill in creating accents infused with emotion—and upper-class British characters (and a possible Russian spy) are no exception.

Patrick Lawlor

Egan, Timothy. *The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl*. Narrated by Patrick Lawlor. Old Saybrook, Conn.: Tantor Media, 2006 (ISBN: 978-1-4001-3220-1).

A narrator noted for reading a wide range of books, Lawlor is praised for his clear and focused reading and the enthusiasm he brings to every topic, from science and history to adventure and even romance. In *The Worst Hard Time* Lawlor performs this oral history of the Great Depression and Dust Bowl with convincing authority, drawing listeners into the personal stories of this catastrophic weather disaster. Myriad individual characters share their stories, each given distinctive accents, pitch, and cadence. The dark tone and evocative reading convincingly portray the impact of this disaster on individuals as well as the country.

Lisette Lecat

McCall Smith, Alexander. *The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency*. Narrated by Lisette Lecat. Prince Frederick, Md.: Recorded Books, 2003 (ISBN: 978-1-4025-4594-8).

Even though she has made her mark with a wide range of recordings, Lisette Lecat is best known as Mma. Precious Ramotswe and the cast of Alexander McCall Smith's popular *No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency*. A native South African, Lecat smoothly captures the distinctive, lilting cadence of the charming Botswanan characters and leads listeners fearlessly through the correct pronunciations of the characters' names. Lecat's measured pacing allows listeners time to appreciate the leisurely rhythms of life in these mysteries that explore the culture and traditions of the land as well as human nature. Having heard Lecat's performance of titles in the series, it is hard to imagine "reading" them in any other way.

John Lee

Harris, Robert. *Pompeii*. Narrated by John Lee. Santa Ana, Calif.: Books on Tape, 2003 (ISBN: 978-0-7366-9598-5).

In a rich baritone, coupled with precise enunciation and pacing, John Lee consistently sets the stage and establishes the mood in everything he narrates. He excels in narrating novels of epic length, and he skillfully develops personae for a wide range of characters, drawing on his repertoire of diverse accents. In *Pompeii* he personalizes the catastrophic eruption of Mt. Vesuvius. Told primarily from the point of view of the water engineer who suspects something is amiss, the novel offers fascinating geological details and insightful glimpses into Roman life, history, and culture, as well as a range of characters. Lee keeps the tone somber, meticulously building suspense as the calamity looms.

Bronson Pinchot

Marlantes, Karl. *Matterhorn*. Narrated by Bronson Pinchot. Ashland, Ore.: Blackstone Audiobooks, 2010 (ISBN: 978-1-4417-4228-5).

Relatively new on the audiobook scene, Bronson Pinchot brings an "everyman" voice to his mesmerizing performances and draws listeners in as willing participants in every story he narrates. In the award-winning *Matterhorn*, Pinchot navigates

both the dangers and tedium faced by a Marine platoon in Vietnam. Characters come to life through his deft vocal portrayals; battle scenes teem with authentic details and dangers; but he is even more effective in establishing mood. Listeners face hardships and exhaustion along with the soldiers, as the tension and peril contrast with the daily frustrations of slogging through a hostile landscape and following orders that seldom seem to make sense. His meticulous reading underlines the authenticity of both story and mood.

Simon Prebble

Clarke, Susanna. *Jonathan Strange and Mr. Norrell*. Narrated by Simon Prebble. Hampton, N.H.: BBC Audiobooks America, 2004 (ISBN: 978-0-7927-3531-1).

Prebble's skills are numerous, but key are his ability to create unique accents and speech patterns, the way he infuses his voice with the most subtle of tones, and his fine ear for the best pacing and rhythm to deliver an author's story. While he is a wide-ranging reader, one of his greatest performances is Clarke's elegant and glorious novel, which sets two radically different types of gentlemen wizards against one another and against a darkly enticing and malevolent being from Faerie. Supported by a mythical background explaining English magic (details of which are often related via footnotes), this involving and richly layered work is perhaps even better as an audiobook, as Prebble masterfully reads the novel and the footnotes in such a way as to create an experience not possible in print.

Kate Reading

Willig, Lauren. *The Secret History of the Pink Carnation*. Narrated by Kate Reading. Santa Ana, Calif.: Books on Tape, 2005 (ISBN: 978-1-4159-1692-6).

Reading's ability to create three-dimensional characters, through her accents, speech patterns, and subtle inflection, is reason alone to listen to her narration. However, in addition to her deft vocal qualities, Reading also has a lovely sense of timing. She keeps stories swiftly moving along but allows an author's lines all the weight they need for impact. Here she reads Willig's charmingly fun mystery-romance mixing modern times and the Napoleonic era as Eloise Kelly, a PhD candidate seeking the identity of an Regency-era English spy, dives into a cache of letters and diaries in her attempt to unmask the Pink Carnation (in the same ilk as the Scarlet Pimpernel). Her research leads listeners into the past—into the delightful company of Amy Balcourt and Richard Selwick as they take on the French.

Barbara Rosenblatt

Peters, Elizabeth. *Crocodile on the Sandbank*. Narrated by Barbara Rosenblatt. Prince Frederick, Md.: Recorded Books, 2001 (ISBN: 978-1-4025-6687-5).

That Barbara Rosenblatt is a voice artist is evident in the

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wide range of characters and accents that inhabit her narration of the Amelia Peabody series, beginning with this first title. Trained in England and the United States, Rosenblatt has brought her legendary skill and imagination to her recordings of a wide range of audiobooks, but her award-winning interpretation of the adventures of the Victorian Egyptologist are particular fan favorites and demonstrate her talent for drama as well as her incredible gift for dialects and accents. As the characters in these books age, so does her voice, providing further proof of just how perfect the match between narrator and author is in this popular series.

Tom Stechschulte

McCarthy, Cormac. *No Country for Old Men*. Narrated by Tom Stechschulte. Prince Frederick, Md.: Recorded Books, 2005 (ISBN: 978-1-4193-4458-9).

No one can create audible menace better than Stechschulte. Whether it's a gravelly growl or a threatening whisper, he can scare listeners right out of their earbuds. Stechschulte has an abundance of voices at the ready, but he shines especially with characters from the West. Out of many outstanding performances, McCarthy's quietly vicious novel of a working man's ill-fated choice is a stand out. Stechschulte's command of pacing keeps listeners riveted to the story through detailed exposition and description, terse dialogue, and carefully built suspense that explodes in the listener's ear.

Juliet Stevenson

Eliot, George. *Middlemarch*. Narrated by Juliet Stevenson. Franklin, Tenn.: NAXOS Audiobooks, 2011 (ISBN: 978-1-8437-9439-4).

Stevenson reads with a crisp clarity and lovely tonal quality. This skill, combined with her impeccable timing—moving listeners through works while giving enough time to appreciate the language and its layered import—results in an enveloping listening experience perfect for the classic works she so often narrates. An insightful reader, Stevenson is always worth listening to for her interpretations of the works, made clear by inflections of voice and the subtle pauses she uses to great effect. Skills she employs masterfully in George Eliot's study of provincial life and personal, and societal, obligation. Even listeners who think they don't like classics will be drawn into the story of Dorothea Brooke and the other citizens of Middlemarch.

Suzanne Toren

Ackerman, Diane. *The Zookeeper's Wife*. Narrated by Suzanne Toren. North Kingstown, R.I.: BBC Audiobooks America, 2007 (ISBN: 978-0-7927-5018-5).

Known for her expressive performances, often heartwarming and thoughtful, Suzanne Toren is a popular narrator of series and stand-alone titles. In *The Zookeeper's Wife*, she brings passion and compassion to Diane Ackerman's inspiring account of a little known event during World

War II: the decision by the director of the Warsaw zoo and his wife to store arms for insurgents at the zoo and to house refugees among the remaining animals. In convincing Eastern European accents she recounts this true story of selfless humanitarianism, reflecting Ackerman's lyrical writing. Rich in danger as well as humor, this is a fascinating and satisfying exploration of personalities, both human and animal.

Simon Vance

Larsson, Stieg. *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*. Narrated by Simon Vance. Westminster, Md.: Books on Tape, 2008 (ISBN: 978-1-4159-5778-3).

Award-winning British-born Vance is masterful at finding the right feel for a wide range of characters and creating unique voices, young and old, male and female, in any accent. His ability to immediately capture the listener's attention and bring the characters to life is evident in his compelling narration of this first book in the Millennium Trilogy. Vance smoothly untangles the threads of an extremely complex plot and perfectly depicts a large cast of characters engaged in plenty of conversations, which Vance navigates with his trademark natural-sounding dialogues.

AWARDS AND BEST-OF LISTS

Amazing Audiobooks for Young Adults
www.ala.org/yalsa/audiobooks

A list of notable recordings for 12–18 year olds. The 2011 list includes 31 titles with 10 chosen as particularly notable. YALSA administers the list and announces the winners during ALA's Midwinter Meeting.

Audible's Narrator and Audiobook of the Year
www.audible.com/int/Best_of_2010

The editors at Audible, the online audiobook downloading service from Amazon.com, select the Narrator of the Year (as well as a list of Top Performances) and the Audiobook of the Year. In addition, they select the best titles in a large number of categories, including fiction, biographies and memoirs, history, and nonfiction. Audible's yearly wrap-up also includes the top picks by individual editors as well as customer's favorites. This is an extensive list of "best of" choices, which can be accessed even by nonmembers.

The Audies
www.audiopub.org/audies-gala.asp

Proclaimed as the industry's version of the Oscars, the Audies are announced each May and are particularly important for their industrywide standing and large number of categories considered. A complete list of past winners and nominees is available on the website.

AudioFile Magazine, Earphone Awards, and Golden Voice
www.audiofilemagazine.com

An important audiobook-only review source. Includes hundreds of reviews in each issue, written by professionals in the information, education, and performance fields. The focus of these reviews is on audio presentation rather than a critique of the written material. Monthly Earphones Awards are given to note exceptional performances. A list of the very best narrators in the field, designated as Golden Voices, also is provided. Each issue contains featured articles, an extensive list of new releases, and information for buying and locating audiobooks. Available in print and in enhanced digital format.

Booklist's Editor's Choice, Top of the List, and Voice of Choice
<http://booklistonline.com/Booklist-Top-of-the-List/pid=4596356>

<http://booklistonline.com/Booklist-Editors-Choice/pid=4630208>

<http://booklistonline.com/Voice-of-Choice-Katherine-Kellgren-Joyce-Saricks/pid=4846630>

Each January *Booklist* designates an Editor's Choice list for Audio for Adults and a list of the ten top titles reviewed that year. The Top of the List, the best audiobook of the year, is chosen from the Adult and Youth lists by the *Booklist* media editor. *Booklist* also names a Voice of Choice, its audiobook reader of the year, in the June issue.

The Grammy Awards

www.grammy.com/nominees?genre=32

The Spoken Word Album is the Grammy category that includes audiobooks. A winner, as well as several nominees, is selected each year. The award recognizes outstanding achievement and is announced in February.

Library Journal Best Audiobooks

http://64.94.90.36/lj/collectiondevelopment/bestbooks/888116-476/lj_best_audiobooks_2010.html.csp

LJ staff annually select the most memorable audio titles of the year. The list is chosen by *LJ* media editors based on nominations by *LJ's* audio reviewers. The list includes both fiction and nonfiction.

The Listen List: Outstanding Audiobook Narration

www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/awards/listenlist/index.cfm

A juried list of the twelve best audiobooks published each year. Selection, by a committee of librarians, is based on the skill of the narrator's performance. The award is administered by CODES and is announced during ALA's Midwinter Meeting.

The Odyssey Awards

www.ala.org/yalsa/odyssey

A yearly award given to the producer of the best audiobook for children or young adults. One winner is selected and a number of honor books may be included. A joint venture between YALSA and ALSC, the award is announced during ALA's Midwinter Meeting.

Publishers Weekly's Listen-Up Awards

www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/new-titles/audio/article/45651-the-2010-listen-up-awards.html

PW's take on the best audiobooks of the year in a number of very useful categories. Winners and several runner-ups are given. *PW* also lists their top "Audio Book Reader of the Year" and "Audio Book of the Year." Winners are announced in January.

WEBSITES, BLOGS, AND TWITTER FEEDS

Many publishers maintain extremely useful websites, blogs, and Twitter feeds, and selection librarians should consider all publishing houses a primary source for information. Beyond publishers, this list represents a sample of some of the most unique and useful sites to track.

@audiobkjbxb

<https://twitter.com/#!/audiobkjbxb>

The feed for audiojukebox.squarespace.com, a website that gathers links to reviews of audiobooks. Links and reviews are submitted by reviewers.

Audiobooker

<http://audiobooker.booklistonline.com>

A *Booklist* blog maintained by Mary Burkey. It includes a range of audiobook news.

@AudioBookFans

<https://twitter.com/#!/AudioBookFans>

The feed for www.audiobookfans.com, a site that posts reviews, publisher's summaries, and comments on narrators as well as hot news and top picks.

@AudioFileMag and @audiofilerobin,

<https://twitter.com/#!/AudioFileMag>

<https://twitter.com/#!/audiofilerobin>

Feeds from *AudioFile* and its editor and founder. News, reviews, and comments on the audiobook publishing industry.

Audiopolis

<http://audiofilemagazineaudiopolis.blogspot.com>

A blog from *Audiofile* that highlights their top picks. Each entry includes an audio sample and the *AudioFile* review. Also consider AudiobookCommunity <http://www.audiobookcommunity.com>, an open forum hosted by *AudioFile*.

Listen Up

<http://blogs.publishersweekly.com/blogs/ListenUp>

A new entry on the scene, this blog by *Publishers Weekly* tracks breaking news, reviews, and industry buzz.

FURTHER READING

Burkey, Mary. "Sounds Good to Me: Listening to Audiobooks with a Critical Ear." *Booklist* 103, no. 19/20 (June 1 & 15, 2007): 104.

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Suggests methods of evaluating audiobooks based on a number of attributes of the narrator and the recording's production values.

Kuzyk, Raya. "Now Hear This." *Library Journal* 136, no. 9 (May 15, 2011): 34–35.

Library Journal's outgoing Media Editor provides a State of the Union look at audiobook publishing, including comments on accessibility, formats, and future challenges.

———. "Audio Paradiso." *Library Journal* 136, no. 7 (Apr. 15, 2011): 20–30.

Views current trends in audiobook publishing through the lens of the Audie awards.

Mediatore, Katie. "Reading with Your Ears: Readers' Advisory and Audio Books." *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 42, no. 4 (Summer 2003): 318–23.

An early publication on audiobook advisory services that explores appeal elements and outlines a method to skim an audiobook for listening advisory purposes.

Saricks, Joyce G. *Read On . . . Audiobooks*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Libraries Unlimited, 2011 (ISBN: 9-781-5915-8804-7).

Gathers more than three hundred titles into themed lists based on the appeal elements of story, setting, language, character, and tone. Annotated entries include plot, appeal, and narrator skill. An indication of award winners also is provided.

———. "LA: Essentials of Listening Advisory." *Booklist* 104, no. 21 (July 2008): 16.

Part of her "At Leisure" column, here Saricks offers an encouraging stance on beginning audiobook advisory services by connecting the skills used in readers' advisory work to listening advisory.

Stern, Catherine. "The Role of Audiobooks in Academic Libraries." *College & Undergraduate Libraries* 18, no. 1 (Jan./Mar., 2011): 77–91.

Considers the role and use of audiobooks in academic libraries based on the results of a survey (with 217 respondents). The survey sheds light on audiobook circulation, delivery, marketing, and collection development. A literature survey also is included.