theories and methodologies

Teaching the Novel in the Audio Age

JAMES F. ENGLISH

ACCORDING TO PRACTICALLY EVERY METRIC OF THE PUBLISHING INDUSTRY, AUDIOBOOKS ARE WINNING THE FORMAT WARS. THE CODEX continues its twenty-first-century struggle to maintain market share, and the e-book has plunged into a steep decline, but the audiobook goes from strength to strength. Sales in the United States are up threefold in the last decade and more than fifty percent just in the last two years ("New Survey"; Watson). In the United Kingdom, unit sales have doubled and revenues tripled since 2014 ("Michelle Obama"). Roughly a quarter of adults in the United States, and half of all adult readers, now listen to at least one audiobook a year. To service this swelling customer base, the industry is producing over five thousand new full-length recordings every month, ten times as many as a decade ago. Audible's studio division has become the largest employer of actors in the New York City area (Kozlowski).

For those of us who teach literature, two features of this trend should be of particular interest. First, the market for audiobooks is dominated by literary works, and specifically by novels, which comprise nearly three quarters of all sales. Seven of the top ten best-selling categories of audiobook, as classified by the industry, are genres of fiction. The leading nonfiction genres, "Biography and Memoir" and "Business and Money," trail at some distance behind "Mystery, Thriller, and Suspense," "Science Fiction and Fantasy," "Romance," and the largest of all the categories, the catch-all "Literature and Fiction" (Watson 28). Second, whereas book reading is increasingly concentrated among older people, the rise in book listening is being driven by eighteen- to thirty-five-year-olds. Generations Y and Z now account for more than half of all frequent listeners (those who listen to at least five audiobooks a year), and their number is growing (Anderson).

No one has tried to estimate how much of all this listening is being done by college students to complete reading assignments for their literature classes. But the rapid uptake of a literature-oriented medium among the very age cohorts that populate our higher education system implies that such practice is becoming more common. Whatever

JAMES F. ENGLISH is John Welsh Centennial Professor of English and founding faculty director of the Price Lab for Digital Humanities at the University of Pennsylvania. His books include *The Economy of Prestige* (Harvard UP, 2005) and *The Global Future of English Studies* (Wiley Blackwell, 2012). He is working on a book titled "Beauty by the Numbers," a history of rating and ranking systems in literature and the arts, and "Literary Studies and Human Flourishing," a collection of essays on the contemporary discourses of well-being, edited with Heather Love.

© 2020 JAMES F. ENGLISH
PMLA 135.2 (2020), published by the Modern Language Association of America

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2020.135.2.419 Published online by Cambridge University Press

editions of novels we put on our syllabi, audio versions are increasingly influencing how our students relate to those novels and what they make of them. Even if current publishing trend lines don't herald a true sea change in the dominant medium of literary consumption—even if the codex proves once again its astounding resilience—the audiobook is becoming such a prominent part of the literary media landscape that, as educators, we can no longer ignore it. We need to ask, What are the pedagogical implications of the turn toward audio? What changes might we need to make in our ways of developing and teaching literature classes to include the audiobook in them?

It is not obvious where we can look for help with these questions. Audiobook pedagogy is a well-established field, but it has focused almost exclusively on teaching blind and print-disabled students, second-language learners, adolescent "reluctant readers," and other groups who are unable to "efficiently access the printed page" (Wolfson). Studies are mainly situated in primary schools or public libraries, or in special needs and ESL programs at secondary schools. There is virtually no analysis anywhere of audiobook use in nonremedial college literature classes. Nor is there much at this point to analyze: in college classes, aside from the occasional advanced seminar in book history or media archaeology, audiobooks are almost never assigned or discussed, or even included explicitly as an option on the syllabus. What would it mean if, having revised the curriculum in book history to accommodate the history of sound technologies, we began to revise the much wider curriculum in fiction studies (the marriage plot from Jane Austen to Jeffrey Eugenides, the American bildungsroman, novels of the African diaspora) to accommodate the audio orientation of today's born-listening students, the "earbud generation"?

It would not of course mean a wholesale replacement of books with audiobooks, a clearing of the codex from the classroom. The aim would only be to ensure that listeners as well as readers of novels can participate fully in our classes; that they can access the assigned books in quality audio editions; that they are able to "quote" from those editions, presenting audio passages as appropriate in the course of class discussions; and that some of what Charles Bernstein has referred to as the "additional . . . and incommensurable textual layers" that aural literature brings into play are acknowledged as proper matters of concern for the course (281). Students who listen to the works being studied should not be made to feel lazy or unrigorous, obliged to hide their preference for listening from the instructor and their fellow students. The idea is to allow curricular book listening to come out of the closet.

This shift of pedagogical posture would impose a burden of practical challenges and require us to rethink some old assumptions about literariness and mediation. But I believe it could also provide a positive boost for the discipline, promoting a mode of teaching that encourages more students to connect deeply with literature during their college years. This is something we seem not to have done very well of late, except perhaps through our creative writing programs. As Leah Price has described, a whole industry has emerged offering forms of "bibliotherapy" to help people recover from the joy-killing pedagogy of college English studies and revive their healthy attachments to literature ("Bibliotherapy"; *What*). There are reasons to be skeptical about this agenda of reading for wellness. But many of us also recognize that our own agenda could stand some retooling. The last decade has seen a lively interest in reworking the discipline's established scales and habits of practice, setting new defaults less anchored to a hermeneutics of critique, more attuned to the complex pleasures and reparative potentialities of reading, and inclining us as teachers to engage our students in an enterprise of wonder as well as suspicion (Felski, "After Suspicion"). Embracing

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2020.135.2.419 Published online by Cambridge University Press

audiobooks, crediting the millennial taste for novel listening, could be part of that wider project of revision and renewal.

The practical challenges of the undertaking begin with availability and choice. As Christina Lupton observes in her review of Matthew Rubery's *Untold Story of the Talking Book*, the control of audiobooks' distribution by governmental and charitable organizations for most of their history makes them an exemplary case of the struggle between reading publics and empowered curators over the choice of reading material. We might imagine that today, when the audiobook market is dominated by Amazon, the largest and most "customer-centric" retailer on earth (Lenzner; see also McGurl), the problem of choice has been rendered moot. But even with tens of thousands of newly recorded novels released each year, whole swaths of the fiction taught in college-level literature classes are missing from the audio catalog. Major works that belong to the public domain (works published before 1924), from Aphra Behn to Henry James, are easy to find in audio format, often in several editions. Commercially successful and critically esteemed novels of the last twenty years, when audio rights have been routinely addressed in publishers' contracts, are likewise nearly all available as audiobooks. But in between—in the period subfields of modernism, late modernism, postcolonialism, postwar British, and post-1945 American—pickings can be slim. In some cases, such as J. D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*, no recording was ever made; in others, an audiobook was once published in cassette or CD format but is now to be found only as a collector's item on *eBay*. A few of these rare editions—for example, Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Doris Lessing's *The Grass Is Singing*—have been digitized and made available as MP3s, but access to them is restricted to qualifying print-disabled listeners through charities such as Learning Ally, in the United States, and the United Kingdom's Calibre Audio Library.

The decision to tilt our teaching toward novels that are available in audio format thus risks stacking the curriculum even more than usual against works that fall between the classic and the contemporary. An audio-option class on black British fiction, for example, would need to be strongly oriented toward work published in this century by critically respected and commercially viable writers like Zadie Smith, Caryl Phillips, and Monica Ali. Of earlier works, only the most hypercanonical exist in audio form. Most of V. S. Naipaul is available—several of his novels having been performed by the voice-actor superstar Simon Vance for Blackstone Audio—and Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981) is available in more than one high-quality edition. But a search of vendors and libraries comes up blank for most of the other writers of Naipaul's Windrush generation: there are no audio versions of George Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin* (1953), Sam Selvon's *Lonely Londoners* (1956), Andrew Salkey's *A Quality of Violence* (1959), or Wilson Harris's *Palace of the Peacock* (1960). Ditto for most of Rushdie's fellow black and Asian British writers from the 1970s to the 1990s: novels such as Buchi Emecheta's *Joys of Motherhood* (1979), Ben Okri's *The Famished Road* (1991), and David Dabydeen's *Intended* (1991) are published only in print. Adding audio availability to our principles of selection can only exacerbate the tendency to elide important moments and movements in the middle distance of literary history.

If we can live with these kinds of compromise, we face a further problem of access and acquisition. We can make the print books on our syllabus available for purchase at the local independent bookseller and place them on reserve at the university library. But if we include an audiobook option, neither buying nor borrowing is straightforward. The subscription and membership business model favored by retailers of digital content creates particular problems. Sam Dastor's performance of Naipaul's *A House for Mr. Biswas* costs a

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2020.135.2.419 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Platinum member of Audible just $9.50, but it costs a nonmember $39; at Libro.fm the prices are $15 for a member and $70 for a nonmember. The à la carte prices of membership-based retailers are so high that unless all the books on a syllabus are available from nonmembership shops like *Google Play*, *Apple Books*, and *Nook*, students will need to become members somewhere. Many of us will be uncomfortable encouraging our students to sign up as new members of the Amazon subsidiary Audible, their recurring payments going into the coffers of a megacorporation bent on shifting global income from labor to capital and destroying the ecosystem of independent booksellers (Lowrey). We may also object to the Digital Rights Management (DRM) encoding that Audible imposes on its files. DRM code is designed to permanently tether a customer's audiobooks to the Audible servers, and it renders the files less amenable to editing and excerpting for classroom use. The trouble is that Audible's main competitors all have higher prices and smaller libraries. None besides Libro.fm carries *A House for Mr. Biswas*, for example. Libro.fm is in many ways the best alternative platform. Though it follows Audible's recurring-payment model by setting prices for nonmembers artificially high, the company rejects DRM encryption and donates a portion of each sale to a local independent bookstore designated by the customer, giving these bookstores a way to participate at last in the boom of audiobook downloads. If Libro.fm can expand its library[1] and work with higher education instructors and college-town bookstores to develop a special academic form of membership or a system of discounted credits for students such that the per-book cost for them matches the cost for Audible's Gold members (currently $12.50), I believe it could corner the classroom market, at least for literary studies.[2] But in the meantime, given the already unaffordable expenses college students are facing, it will be difficult to steer around the price and selection leader, Amazon.

Academic libraries could help here by at least making some frequently taught titles available for simultaneous borrowing in audio format. It is common practice for public libraries to lend audiobooks through Rakuten's OverDrive, the leading digital-book distributor. For many public libraries, access to OverDrive audiobook collections has become the most powerful magnet for attracting new patrons. But university libraries have generally been unwilling to absorb the costs of OverDrive subscriptions to serve what they may perceive, according to a venerable though spurious distinction, to be the purpose of leisure rather than learning (Brookbank et al.). Nor is Rakuten offering its cost-per-circulation or simultaneous-use packages—which would be needed for books assigned to a whole group of students—in a form that is attractive to academic institutions. Because its OverDrive audiobook subcollections are defined by publisher or imprint rather than subject or genre, they provide no means of lending small curated lists to support the syllabi of specific courses or academic degree programs. Like Libro.fm, OverDrive could form a productive partnership with universities, but in the meantime our audio-oriented students will have to add the costs of retail downloads to their already overextended higher educational budgets.

These problems of choice and access become even more difficult when we consider that many audiobooks, while readily available, may disrupt our pedagogical aims. Every vocal performance of a novel is an interpretation, a *reading* as well as a reading out loud. None stands outside what Rubery calls the "politics of narration" (99). Should we avoid a performance of Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* by a white reader from Michigan who, though a multiple Audie Award winner, is prone to mispronouncing the book's Indian words (Gigante)?[3] Should we avoid white actors' performances of work by writers of color generally? What about vice versa? How should

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2020.135.2.419 Published online by Cambridge University Press

characters' gender and sexuality be vocalized? In online discussion threads about audiobooks, a common complaint is that a gay character sounds too gay, like "a caricature of . . . a gay queen" (Jude), or that a woman character sounds too "girlish" because the narrator "tries too hard to make [the voice] sound feminine" (Donttakethebait111). Even Juliet Stevenson, one of the most accomplished actors in the audiobook industry, performs the accents of female Americans in a way that makes the key characters in, for example, James's *Portrait of a Lady* seem essentially comical, figures of fun (Stevenson). Accents rendered as working class, northern (in the United Kingdom), or southern (in the United States) have a similar tendency to default toward comedy and caricature. Disability is another trouble spot for the politics of narration. How "different" should a cognitively disabled character sound? How, for example, should a reader voice Faulkner's "idiot" Benjy in *The Sound and the Fury*, the adolescent narrator of Mark Haddon's *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* (whom Haddon has described as "a mathematician with some behavioral difficulties" ["Mark Haddon"]), or the young paraplegic Teddy in Susan Nussbaum's *Good Kings, Bad Kings* (who doesn't "feel retarded" but says, "I guess I am but don't notice it" [43])? One of the main characters in Richard Powers's *Overstory*, a girl who becomes a leading arborist and tree advocate, is deaf. The performer of the audio recording lays on a heavy deaf accent when delivering this character's speech (Toren), a decision that some listeners find objectionable, out of keeping with Powers's presumed aim of including disability in narratives of human history without exaggeration, stereotype, or stigma.[4]

This is not the same problem we are familiar with from debates over casting and identity in theater and film. In those media, hardline authenticists like the film director Ken Loach, who insists that class is so embedded in the body and the voice that "you can't really act it, and you can't act a dialect" (Hattenstone), may cast local nonprofessionals, whose backgrounds match those of the characters they play. Audiobook producers don't have this option. The novel is a dialogic form, and even those written in the first person (a distinct minority, by the reckoning of Ted Underwood and his collaborators) incorporate lots of reported speech. Except in the rare case of full-cast audio dramatizations, audiobooks require a vocal performer capable of rendering multiple voices. Conveying social distinctions between characters through faked accents and other tricks of the voice is a skill fundamental to performative work in the medium. Some degree of stereotyping is inescapable.

The issues around vocal stereotyping can of course be embraced as teachable controversies. But that shifts time and attention away from other interpretative concerns, other teaching that we might have in mind for a class. It also requires of us some new proficiencies with classroom technology. In discussing interpretative matters, we are adept at focusing a class's attention on specific passages of a text, by writing them, for example, on a whiteboard or projecting them on a slide. The analogous practice with an audio text is to play (pause, replay) a clip through the classroom sound system. That presents no great technical difficulty, but both students and instructors need to have their clips extracted, or at least queued up in advance, and accessibly archived for reference in subsequent class discussions or individual projects. Best practice here would involve providing our students, or arranging with a librarian or technologist to provide them, with a common platform and protocol that would make it possible to extract short audio passages without having to strip away DRM encryption or otherwise violate copyright laws or university policies. Some kind of tutorial would be needed to get students up to speed, along with a functioning help line or help desk for when things go wrong.

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2020.135.2.419 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Though not unmanageable, these kinds of difficulties add up. I know from experience that the extra instructional planning and labor that teaching with audiobooks entails can be off-putting. And while this disincentive might be offset by the felt need, in a period of contracting enrollments, to meet potential literature students on their own preferred platforms, any move to develop an audio-friendly pedagogy must also contend with our discipline's entrenched anti-audio prejudices. These intertwined and mutually reinforcing prejudices are (1) that listening is a shortcut, a timesaving hack, a lazy way to get through a book while performing other tasks such as shopping or working out at the gym; (2) that listening is superficial, a kind of skimming by ear that limits comprehension and undermines the pedagogy of close reading; and (3) that listening is an impediment to genuine literary experience, that its specific attractions—having mainly to do with the skills of a performer—are ancillary to the text itself and hence represent a distracting detour away from authentically literary response.

Whether taken separately or as the coordinated elements of a disciplinary common sense, these antipathies are unwarranted. To begin with, unless you have a long commute by car, the audiobook makes a lousy time-saving device. Aside from listening done while driving, barely twenty percent of audiobook listening is done outside the home (Kozlowski). A typical college student can read a book in half the time it takes to listen to the audio version.[5] Yes, the process can be sped up with pitch-controlled rapid playback—a technology that, as Mara Mills and Jonathan Sterne discuss in their joint contribution to this cluster of essays, was in fact pioneered by young time-pressed students, in schools for children who are blind. Paired with the highly regular synthetic vocals of text-to-speech software, today's advanced time-compression algorithms enable some blind listeners (and a few sighted life-hackers) to achieve astonishingly rapid listening rates.[6] But the quest for speed is not a meaningful factor in the rise of audiobooks. Only five percent of Audible listeners have even briefly experimented with a setting of 1.5x or higher on the company's Narration Speed feature (Jun). Few are willing to trade the naturalism of the vocal performance for even slightly greater rapidity of content extraction. Indeed, on the evidence of online reviews and discussion threads, the special qualities of the trained actor's vocal performance are the primary appeal of long-form narrative audio. As my students have told me, listening to a novel means spending more time with it, not less; if they need to speed up, they just switch to reading.

Nor is there any empirical basis for the belief that listening is somehow a superficial or unrigorous substitute for "actually reading" a book. Studies have repeatedly found that one's comprehension of a text is just as thorough after listening to it as after reading it (Rogowsky et al.). Indeed, the most recent neurological research finds that, whether a story is being read from the page or listened to, the human brain processes the words in identical fashion, with precisely the same areas activated at the same intensities. Whatever differences there may be between the experience of listening and that of reading, overall comprehension and the processing of semantic particulars are the same in both cases (Deniz et al.).

As for the remaining differences, it's wrong to assume that the experience of listening is less literary than that of reading, that audiobooks intrude with their extraliterary elements on what would be a direct encounter between reader and text. That objection is rooted in a theory of mediation (as a process of separation and loss) whose inadequacies have been exposed by a whole generation of scholars in media studies. We would do better, I think, to conceive mediation along the lines pursued by Antoine Hennion in his innovative work on the sociology of taste and developed by Rita Felski in *Hooked*, her forthcoming study

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2020.135.2.419 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of attachment in literature and art. Theirs is a theory of mediation as connection rather than separation. Reception, Hennion argues, is never simply a matter of encounter between a "masterpiece" on the one hand and an individual's "taste" on the other, "the univocal installation of oneself into a rapport with a definitively delineated object." The multiply mediated, "distracted" relation to art that we attribute to earbudded millennials is not fundamentally different from what Hennion describes as our own "ordinary state" of affairs. Aesthetic experience is always part of a chancy, dynamic situation, a changing set of opportunities and alternatives unfolding in a crowded "world of mediations and effects" and requiring our "spontaneous management of multiple relationships to the body, to others, to things, to events" (105). Readers become attached to certain novels not in spite but because of the many fortuitous links and contingencies of articulation that constitute this shifting space of reception. Today that means a student may connect to *Jane Eyre* through the voice, sounded on the air by a best friend's smart speaker, of a favorite actor, Thandie Newton, whose association with the film adaptation of *Beloved*, enjoyed with that same friend a few months earlier, triggers an enthralling effect of Morrisonian resonance in the Brontë novel. We make an error of theory but also one of pedagogical practice when we treat these new, complex yet determining mediations of literary experience as just so much noise.

Notes

1. Libro.fm's library is now about half the size of Audible's, though the two libraries are approaching parity in literary fiction.

2. Though he calls it a "fantasy," Kim has made the case that "colleges could collaborate with Libro.fm to finally get audiobooks in the hands of students, faculty, and staff."

3. The voice actor in question, Phil Gigante, is also a convicted child sex offender, highlighting a further set of potential problems under the category of the "politics of narration."

4. Some comments from Audible and Apple Books customers are "The narrator over-does it with . . . a main character's speech impediment" (Chels Alexandra), "the narrator does an excruciatingly cringe-inducing 'deaf accent' for one character" (Christina), and "Cringe-worthy narration. The narrator literally tries to imitate the sound of a deaf person. Incredibly offensive" (User3789). My thanks to the disability scholar and activist Janet Lyon for calling this controversy to my attention.

5. A study sponsored by Staples found that an average college student reads 450 words per minute (Nelson), but most experts in college-level reading and writing specify an average of 350 to 400 words per minute (Jamieson, 5–6). Even at 350 words per minute, one can read the 122,000 words of *Pride and Prejudice* in 5 hours, 49 minutes, half the run time of Audible Studios's audiobook edition, performed by Rosamund Pike in 11 hours, 35 minutes (Pike).

6. A recent large-scale study found that "synthetic speech is intelligible to many people at rates much faster than typical human speaking rates" (Bragg et al.).

Works Cited

Anderson, Porter. "Audio Publishers Association: Third Year of Strong US Audiobook Sales Growth." *Publishing Perspectives*, 7 June 2017, publishingperspectives.com/2017/06/audiobook-sales-growth-us-2016-report/.

Bernstein, Charles. "Making Audio Visible: The Lessons of Visual Language for the Textualization of Sound." *Textual Practice*, vol. 23, no. 6, Dec. 2009, pp. 277–89. *Taylor and Francis Online*, doi:10.1080/09502360903361550.

Bragg, Danielle, et al. "A Large Inclusive Study of Human Listening Rates." *CHI '18: Proceedings of the 2018 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, Apr. 2018, pp. 1–12. *ACM Digital Library*, doi:10.1145/3173574.3174018.

Brookbank, Elizabeth, et al. "Don't Call It a Comeback: Popular Reading Collections in Academic Libraries." *Reference and User Services Quarterly*, vol. 58, no. 1, Oct. 2018, pp. 28–39. *Journals.ala.org*, doi:10.5860/rusq.58.1.6838.

Chels Alexandra. "Awe-Inspring Writing, but Annoying Narration." Review of Suzanne Toren's reading of *The Overstory*, by Richard Powers. *Audible*, 28 Feb. 2019, www.audible.com/pd/The-Overstory-Audiobook/B078PJ2TY4#customer-reviews.

Christina. "Great Book, Iffy Narration." Review of Suzanne Toren's reading of *The Overstory*, by Richard Powers. *Audible*, 24 Jan. 2019, www.audible.com/pd/The-Overstory-Audiobook/B078PJ2TY4#customer-reviews.

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2020.135.2.419 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Deniz, Fatma, et al. "The Representation of Semantic Information across Human Cerebral Cortex during Listening versus Reading Is Invariant to Stimulus Modality." *Journal of Neuroscience*, vol. 39, no. 39, Sept. 2019, pp. 7722–36, doi:10.1523/JNEUROSCI.0675-19.2019.

Donttakethebait111. "Narrator Doing Female Voices." *Reddit*, 28 July 2017, www.reddit.com/r/audiobooks/comments/6q611p/narrator_doing_female_voices/.

Felski, Rita. "After Suspicion." *Profession*, 2009, pp. 28–35. *Modern Language Association*, doi:10.1632/prof.2009.2009.1.28.

———. *Hooked: Attachment in Art*. U of Chicago P, forthcoming.

Gigante, Phil, reader. *Sea of Poppies*. By Amitav Ghosh, Brilliance Audio, 2008. Audiobook.

Haddon, Mark. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*. Vintage, 2003.

———. "Mark Haddon on 'Disability.'" Excerpt from podcast interview. *World Book Club*, BBC News, 1 July 2015, www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02w1xpr.

Hattenstone, Simon. "Rock Steady." *The Guardian*, 29 Sept. 1994, p. T10.

Hennion, Antoine. "Those Things That Hold Us Together: Taste and Sociology." *Cultural Sociology*, vol. 1, no. 1, Mar. 2007, pp. 97–114. *Sage Journals*, doi:10.1177/1749975507073923.

Jamieson, Sandra. "Reading for College: How to Read Faster and More Effectively." *Northwest Missouri State U*, 2005, www.nwmissouri.edu/trio/pdf/sss/study/Reading-for-college.pdf.

Jude. "Message 245." *Audiobooks Discussion*, *Goodreads*, 8 July 2012, www.goodreads.com/topic/show/923555-summer-2012?page=5.

Jun, Jane Hu. "What's Your 'X' Rating?" *Audible Range*, Audible, 8 June 2017, www.audible.com/blog/the-listening-life/whats-your-x-rating/.

Kim, Joshua. "Why the Audiobook Platform Libro.fm Matters to Higher Ed." *Inside Higher Ed*, 9 Aug. 2018, www.insidehighered.com/blogs/technology-and-learning/why-audiobook-platform-librofm-matters-higher-ed.

Kozlowski, Michael. "Good E-Reader Global Audiobook Report for 2019." *Good E-Reader*, 12 Jan. 2019, goodereader.com/blog/audiobooks/good-e-reader-global-audiobook-report-for-2019.

Lenzner, Robert. "Amazon Celebrates Twenty Years of Stupendous Growth as 'Earth's Most Customer-Centric Company.'" *Forbes*, 24 Apr. 2018, www.forbes.com/sites/robertlenzner/2018/04/24/amazon-celebrates-20-years-of-stupendous-growth-as-earths-most-customer-centric-company/.

Lowrey, Annie. "Jeff Bezos's $150 Billion Fortune Is a Policy Failure." *The Atlantic*, 1 Aug. 2018, www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2018/08/the-problem-with-bezos-billions/566552/.

Lupton, Christina. "To Read Is to Choose." *Los Angeles Review of Books*, 11 Dec. 2016, lareviewofbooks.org/article/to-read-is-to-choose/.

McGurl, Mark. "Everything and Less: Fiction in the Age of Amazon." *Modern Language Quarterly*, vol. 77, no. 3, Sept. 2016, pp. 447–71. *Duke University Press*, doi:10.1215/00-267-929-3570689.

"Michelle Obama and Stephen Fry Help Drive Audiobook Boom." *BBC News*, 26 June 2019, www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-48760602.

Nelson, Brett. "Do You Read Fast Enough to Be Successful?" *Forbes*, 4 June 2012, www.forbes.com/sites/brettnelson/2012/06/04/do-you-read-fast-enough-to-be-successful/#28b5f500462e.

"New Survey Shows Fifty Percent of Americans Have Listened to an Audiobook." *Audio Publishers Association*, 24 Apr. 2019, www.audiopub.org/uploads/pdf/Consumer-Survey-Press-Release-2019-FINAL.pdf.

Nussbaum, Susan. *Good Kings, Bad Kings: A Novel*. Algonquin Books, 2013.

Pike, Rosamund, reader. *Pride and Prejudice*. By Jane Austen, Audible Studios, 2015. Audiobook.

Price, Leah. "Bibliotherapy and Human Flourishing." *Literary Studies and Human Flourishing*, edited by James F. English and Heather Love, Oxford UP, forthcoming.

———. *What We Talk about When We Talk about Books: The History and Future of Reading*. Basic Books, 2019.

Rogowsky, Beth A., et al. "Does Modality Matter? The Effects of Reading, Listening, and Dual Modality on Comprehension." *SAGE Open*, vol. 6, no. 3, 1 Sept. 2016. *Sage Journals*, doi:10.1177/2158244016669550.

Rubery, Matthew. *The Untold Story of the Talking Book*. Harvard UP, 2016.

Stevenson, Juliet, reader. *The Portrait of a Lady*. By Henry James, Naxos Audiobooks, 2016. Audiobook.

Toren, Suzanne, reader. *The Overstory*. By Richard Powers, Recorded Books, 2018. Audiobook.

Underwood, Ted, et al. "Mapping Mutable Genres in Structurally Complex Volumes." *Proceedings—2013 IEEE International Conference on Big Data, Big Data 2013*, 1 Dec. 2013, pp. 95–103. *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*, doi:10.1109/BigData.2013.6691676.

User3789. "Cringe-worthy Narrating, Great Book." Review of *The Overstory*, by Richard Powers. *Apple Books*, 2019, books.apple.com/us/audiobook/the-overstory/id1425378530.

Watson, Amy. "U.S. Leading Audiobook Genres, 2017." *Statista*, 11 Dec. 2019, www.statista.com/statistics/249846/preferred-audiobook-genres-in-the-us/.

Wolfson, Gene. "Using Audiobooks to Meet the Needs of Adolescent Readers." *Semantic Scholar*, 2008, www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Using-Audiobooks-to-Meet-the-Needs-of-Adolescent-Wolfson/d13021b8b646a93a9f1ac0daa12f78818afa6396.

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2020.135.2.419 Published online by Cambridge University Press