

Audiobook Genre Study: Podcasts and short story anthologies
December 7, 2023

Led by Natalie DeJonghe
Notes by Natalie DeJonghe

6 in attendance

Podcasts/Anthologies listened to by attendees

Marple: twelve new mysteries narrated by Alex Kingston, Adrian Scarborough, Adjoa Andoh, Imogen Stubbs, Alison Steadman, Jodhi May, Chipu Chung, Cathy Tyson, Ramon Tikaram, Tanya Reynolds, Celia Imrie, and Miriam Margoyles.

- Good mix of mysteries
- Variety of narrators
- Good for folks who enjoy Agatha Christie or cozy mysteries generally

Other terrors: an inclusive anthology narrated by Jeanette Illidge, Catherine Ho, James Fouhey, Tim Chiou, Neil Shah, and Blessing Mokgohloa

- Strong mix of stories
- Some narrators were better than others
- Mix of authors allowed the discovery of some new folks in the horror genre

Smartless with Jason Bateman, Sean Hayes, & Will Arnett

- Very entertaining
- Good for fans of those actors
- Improvised
- Conversation focused

Sounds Like a Cult with Amanda Montell & Isabela Medina-Matè

- DNF first episode
- Hosts are critiquing shows they haven't watched, results in mistakes and misinformation
- Doesn't do much of a deep-dive into the topics
- Some episodes are better than others, but it's hard to know going into one

This Land with Rebecca Nagle

- Political podcast
- First season follows United States Supreme Court case Sharp v. Murphy
 - Also discusses various native issues such as land rights, sovereignty issues, and the Indian Child Welfare Act
- Content is heavy, but episodes are a good length
- Very reliable narrator

Old Gods of Appalachia with Steve Shell

- Fiction horror podcast
- Short episodes, some connect
- Good for folks who enjoyed Welcome to Nightvale

Welcome to Nightvale with Cecil Baldwin

- Fiction podcast, atmospheric horror, very bizarre
- Set up to mimic a radio station
 - Includes music, commercials, etc.
- Very entertaining
- No longer running so good for those who want a podcast with a set number of episodes

Other recommended podcasts:

- This American Life
- 36 Questions
- We Fix Space Junk
- Library Love Fest
- The Babysitters Club Club
- Reading Glasses

Other Discussion

Pros of short story anthologies:

- Discover new authors
- Likely to enjoy at least some of the stories

Cons of short story anthologies:

- Narrator choice can be a mixed bag
- If the collection is focused on a genre, some patrons may not enjoy all the stories
 - For example, a mystery anthology with a mix of cozy and thrillers may not appeal to readers of only one of the subgenres

Podcast general feedback:

- Most staff would only be comfortable recommending a podcast to a patron they'd worked with before/knew
- Difficult to find recommendations for podcasts since they aren't typically reviewed like audiobooks are
 - BookRiot sometimes has reviews
 - Often just have to check pop culture websites for reviews
- Some podcasts start out with questionable quality so require a pretty lengthy investment of time