

# Podcasts: Library Staff Picks

Most everyone listens to podcasts these days. Some of us have a couple of favorites?some fanatics have dozens. And though the most avid fan is always on the lookout for exciting new recommendations, with so many podcasts out there, how do you find the ones that suit your interests? Your trusty Library Staff offer this list.

## **Books & Literature**

### **ALOUD**

The Los Angeles Public Library's onstage talks with writers, artists, historians, scientists, social activists, film personalities, and just about every other interesting person who passes through the LA area. ?

*Bill, Communications & Marketing*

### **Levar Burton Reads**

The beloved *Reading Rainbow* host reads aloud again?this time for adults. Levar reads his favorite short stories in his familiar and charming style. His voice takes me back to my childhood watching him on PBS, and I still get to hear him reading age-appropriate books! ?*Jeannette, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **The New Yorker Fiction**

Authors read short stories by other authors published in the *New Yorker*. Following each reading is a short discussion about the story, and why it was chosen for reading aloud. It's a great way to discover new authors: all of the stories I've listened to so far have been really good. It's fairly short too, at about 30 minutes per episode. ?*Vincent, Access & Content Services*

### **Re: Joyce**

For all of us who want to read James Joyce's *Ulysses*, but haven't the stamina. Frank Delaney was an Irish writer and actor who passed away earlier this year. Fortunately, he left nearly 400 episodes of his reading, interpretation, and love for this masterpiece of literary imagination. ?*Bill, Communications & Marketing*

### **The Worst Best Seller**

This podcast focuses on bad literature. The hosts are hilarious and take down bad books in a constructive and enlightening way. ?*Lizzy, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **Writing Excuses**

A podcast for writers hosted by four published authors, each episode is only 15?20 minutes long, and discusses an aspect of the writing process. It's very informative and educational, and has improved my writing SO much. Geared mostly toward fiction writing (usually sci-fi and fantasy), but lots of what they discuss is applicable to all genres, and they have special episodes talking about nonfiction and game writing occasionally. ?*Lily, Community & Customer Engagement*

More Books & Literature recommendations

## **Comedy**

### **2 Dope Queens**

It's technically a comedy podcast, but they cover all sorts of stuff, so it's really a cultural/comedic podcast about race, gender, advice, etc., with guest comedians, sometimes big names like Michelle Obama. Good stuff! ?*Jane, Administration*

### **Gettin' Better With Ron Funches**

Comedian Ron Funches interviews a variety of guests and talks about their journeys through life and how they're trying to improve. He?s infectiously cheerful and has some interesting conversations with people from all walks of life including his mother, his personal trainer, and professional wrestlers. ?*Tom, CATS*

### **Handel on the Law**

My life is pretty plain and boring, so I can?t imagine having the kinds of problems these people have.

Bill Handel is a lawyer based in California who gives free legal advice on some serious, strange, funny, and weird situations. ?*Burl, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **Judge John Hodgman**

If a disagreement with a friend or relative has reached gridlock, you're in luck: justice is here. Parties in Judge Hodgman's courtroom air their real-life grievances, subject themselves to his hilarious analysis, and agree to abide by his final decision. ?*Ryan, Communications & Marketing*

### **My Brother, My Brother and Me**

My favorite, favorite podcast! Funny and charming, radically inclusive, and always absurd. These three good boys offer bad advice to questions sent in by their listeners and for Yahoo! Answers questions. ?*Matt, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **WTF**

An East Coast radio personality and stand up comedian who moved west to take up acting, Marc Maron interviews just about every celebrity and quasi-celebrity on the planet from his garage in the Los Angeles hills. ?*Bill, Communications & Marketing*

More Comedy recommendations

## **Drama/Performing Arts**

### **Archive 81**

Chilling and surreal, Archive 81 is a fictional found sound horror where we listen to Dan, an audio archivist, go through the recorded records of the Housing Historical Committee of New York State. The multi-layered creeping horror keeps me on edge and made me worry after whatever new monster or mystery was around each twist and turn. ?*Edwin, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **The Magnus Archives**

A fiction podcast about the mysterious goings on investigated by a paranormal society. Spooky with an interesting overarching story about the archive of testimonies from people involved in paranormal happenings. ?*Lily, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **Welcome to Night Vale**

A fictional radio broadcast from a strange town in the desert. Think Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett writing about Area 51, with some occasional help from Stephen King. Spooky, hilarious, and surprisingly thought-provoking. ?*Lily, Community & Customer Engagement*

More Drama/Performing Arts recommendations

## **Food**

### **Food Stuff**

Various food topics, especially the history of how we got certain foods, as well as the politics and culture of what we eat. Highly educational, and really makes you think about the food that you are eating. ?*Erica, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **The Sporkful**

The tagline for this podcast by Dan Pashman is "It's not for foodies, it's for eaters." He explores the details of how we eat?and how to get the most enjoyment out of each bite. ?*Paula, Communications & Marketing*

More Food recommendations

## **Gaming**

### **The Adventure Zone**

I really love this podcast! Three brothers and their dad play Dungeons and Dragons together and get into all kinds of shenanigans. The story is really unique and sweet. ?*Brigid, Access & Content Services*

### **Critical Role**

An actual-play Dungeons and Dragons game on twitch that has been adapted to podcast form. They are a

group of professional voice actors who have finished their first campaign and are currently playing their second one. *?Laura, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **She's a Super Geek**

If you like role-playing games, Senda and Avery live-play both new games and classic D&D, while fighting the good fight for women in gaming. *?Bill, Communications & Marketing*

## **Health & Wellness**

### **Nopal Kweenz**

3 Latinx Therapists, La Luna, La Rosa, and La Sirena, taking on mental health issues in the Latinx community one episode at a time. *?Amber, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **Sleep With Me**

The concept of this podcast is brilliant in its simplicity: it's so dull it'll put you to sleep. In his nondescript tone and gently rambling meter, host Drew Ackerman recounts, in snooze-worthy detail, such un-riveting topics as riding the bus, varieties of soup, and what he watched on television in the 1980's. Oddly enough, the episodes are actually amusing to listen to... and then you're asleep. *?Ryan, Communications & Marketing*

More Health & Wellness recommendations

## **History & Folklore**

### **Astonishing Legends**

Two charismatic hosts give you the history and facts behind conspiracies, urban legends, and the unexplained, all the while trying to debunk some of the claims. If you like history, the paranormal, and interesting legends, you will love this. *?Meghan, Access & Content Services*

### **Hardcore History**

Dan Carlin explains great historical events in a visceral manner: cinematic in scope and unforgettable in description. *?Bill, Communications & Marketing*

### **The Memory Palace**

This podcast tells totally immersive stories from the past. The shows aren't very long, but offer vivid details about a small sliver of obscure history. Hosted by Nate DiMeo. *?Paula, Communications & Marketing*

### **Mobituaries With Mo Rocca**

Mo Rocca has always loved obituaries. With Mobituaries he introduces listeners to the people who have long intrigued him?from the 20th century's greatest entertainer ... to the Civil Rights pioneer who is completely forgotten ... to sitcom characters gone all too soon. Even if you know the names, you've never understood why they matter?until now. *?Jane, Access & Content Services*

### **Stuff You Missed in History Class**

A podcast that expands upon historical events and little-known historical figures. I enjoy learning about history, as well as the conversations the hosts have. *?Erica, Community Engagement & Learning Services*

### **The History of Rome**

Recommended to me by my father, a military historian and teacher; I find this podcast fantastic. The author puts everything in a nice chronological order, beginning with the mythological journey of Aeneas and continuing to the fall of the Western Empire. He keeps it fairly light, constantly cites his sources, and also suggests reading material for people who want more details. *?Ian, Community & Customer Engagement*

More History recommendations

## **Languages**

### **The Allusionist**

This podcast is about language (English, mainly). Hosted by Helen Zaltzman, episodes run about 25

minutes and discuss crossword-solving competitions, accents, techno-babble, literature, history, science, and much more. *?Kelsey, Access & Content Services*

### **Coffee Break Spanish**

At about 20 minutes per episode, this podcast covers how to converse about real-world situations in simple Spanish. Although it appears to be on hiatus, CBS is a great resource for beginners like me?the four existing seasons will keep you busy for a while. *?Ryan, Communications & Marketing*

## **Local**

### **The Btown Lowdown**

It's great for finding out what's going on in and around Bloomington. They often feature events that are sponsored by, and/ or taking place here at the library. They come out with a new episode every Monday. They also feature local musicians. *?Vincent, Access & Content Services*

### **Girls Sound It Out**

A podcast created by girls at our very own Library! There are only three episodes so far and it's got a very DIY feel, but it's charming and local. Content focuses on books, creative writing, interviews with local folks, music, and more, all centered around a specific theme. *?Jeannette, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **Unspoken Requests with Jared and Mike**

Although it could be listed in the music category, it's impossible to ignore the local-ness of the music, people, and regular nonsense (pretzel talk galore!) that is discussed on this music podcast, hosted by locals (and Library employees) Jared Cheek and Mike Adams. It is delightful to listen to their good-humored banter and their absolute genuine appreciation for people and music is infectious. Check it out! *?Jeannette, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **Your Friendly Neighborhood Librarians**

This monthly podcast from our very own MCPL features ways to read, learn, connect, and create from your chattiest Librarian pals, Erica and Matt! *?Mandy, Communications & Marketing*

## **Music**

### **Cocaine and Rhinestones**

Tyler Mahan Coe is the son of legendary and controversial country singer/songwriter David Allen Coe. Tyler grew up hearing crazy stories about country music and the people who created it, and after tirelessly researching the facts, he shares these stories in a fascinating and objective manner. Oh, and the music is wonderful! *?Kevin, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **Legacy Music Hour**

A showcase of classic video game music from the mainstream to the obscure. Includes both episodes featuring discussions with guests and curated playlists featuring music on the show. A fun way to experience some music that often goes unappreciated. *?Tom, CATS*

### **Mogul: The Life and Death of Chris Lighty**

Chris Lighty built a Hip Hop empire and represented some of the biggest names in the industry from Missy Elliott to Busta Rhymes. He died under mysterious circumstances, a gunshot wound to the head that was officially deemed a suicide. Mogul is a riveting look at a larger-than-life man. Fans of Hip Hop and American culture should not miss this podcast. *?Shannon, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **New Sounds**

Host John Schaefer loves discovering unusual music from around the world. Fortunately for us, he shares what he finds on this amazing podcast. From genre-bending to live performances to pairings of unlikely instruments, there's lots here for anybody who loves music. *?Ryan, Communications & Marketing*

### **Turned Out a Punk**

Each week, Damian Abraham chats with someone new (usually someone in a punk or punk-adjacent band) about how their discovery of punk impacted their life. [definitely not a kid's podcast though; there is some language] *?Alejandria, Community & Customer Engagement*

More Music recommendations

## News & Politics

### 1A

With the 1st Amendment in mind, Joshua Johnson hosts current event, hot topic, and politically relevant conversations with great guests and frames the best debate in ways to make you think, share and engage. I always learn so much from this amazing podcast. They really try to cover all sides of the debate. ?

*Jeannette, Community and Customer Engagement*

### 5 on 45

Concise commentary on the current president's policies. ?*Ned, Information Technology*

### Lovett or Leave It

Former Obama speechwriter Jon Lovett hosts this news-week-in-review show, recorded live in front of a studio audience with a panel of comedians, actors, journalists, politicians, and more. Foul-mouthed and very funny, but always an interesting take on what's going on in our country this week. ?*Erin,*

*Communications & Marketing*

More Politics recommendations

## Philosophy

### The Partially Examined Life

A philosophy roundtable by hosts who were "at one point set on doing philosophy for a living, but then thought better of it." Entertaining, informative, with a built-in community of philosophy geeks around it. ?

*Bill, Communications & Marketing*

### Very Bad Wizards

Hosted by a philosopher and a psychologist, it's an acerbic (and occasionally raunchy) examination of the application of major modern philosophical principles within popular culture and social discourse. ?

*Grier, Access & Content Services*

More Philosophy recommendations

## Science

### Science Vs

This podcast is a fun and entertaining listen for people who love science but aren't scientists. Science Vs. takes hot button topics, current fads, and big news topics, and looks at them using science and facts.

Through interviews with experts on all sides of the topic. ?*Erica, Community & Customer Engagement*

### SciShow Tangents

A hilarious science podcast! In each episode the hosts discuss a specific topic (such as the sun, or bees, or flight) and share interesting facts and information about that topic. ?*Lily, Community & Customer*

*Engagement*

More Science recommendations

## Society & Culture

### 99% Invisible

Host Roman Mars examines the things in our built environment we don't normally think about: architecture and design that we usually walk right by, from revolving doors to emojis. ?*Paula,*

*Communications & Marketing*

### Desert Oracle Radio

Desert Oracle Radio is a weekly road trip through the weird American desert from the publisher of Desert Oracle, the pocket-sized field guide published in Joshua Tree, California. Hear tales of mysterious lights, missing tourists, lost mines, venomous creatures, weird history and weirder people. Hosted by

editor Ken Layne and featuring a cast of intriguing mystics, oddballs, scientists and artists, Desert Oracle Radio is your soundtrack for a desert night. The program is broadcast on Friday nights at 10 p.m. on KCDZ 107.7 FM in the Mojave high desert, with field reports from around and across the desert lands, and is distributed by Public Radio Exchange (PRX). *?Jared, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **Every Little Thing**

Every Little Thing answers all your burning questions through the ELT hotline. Who invented the Cha Cha Slide? Why do auctioneers talk like that? Is egg the only nog? Find the answers to questions you didn't even know you wanted to ask with host Flora Lichtman. *?Paula, Communications & Marketing*

### **Fresh Air**

Terry Gross has interesting guests and asks incisive questions on a wide range of topics. I always learn something when I listen. *?Mary, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **Imaginary Worlds**

Explore new areas of geekdom from the art of Margaret Brundage at Weird Tales to alternate movie posters. If you like digging into a niche subject, this will be your jam. *?Matt, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **Latinos Who Lunch**

Latinos Who Lunch is a podcast with FavyFav and Babelito. Join them as they engage in conversations about everything from pop culture to art and identity politics. *?Amber, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **Nancy**

The wonderful hosts of Nancy have brought me to tears more than a few times with their honest exploration of the contemporary queer experience. *?Shannon, Community & Customer Engagement*

### **Open Source**

Great shows, wide-ranging topics. I especially recommend the three-part series on Henry David Thoreau. *?Ned, Information Technology*

### **Radiolab**

Each episode tackles a different topic in an interesting way. The hosts are intriguing, and the way each episode is put together makes for a really unique listening experience. Highly recommended to people who enjoy exploring topics from a new perspective. *?Joseph, Access & Content Services*

### **Reply All**

One of my favorite podcasts ever. They explore modern life with amazing narratives and compelling characters, ostensibly through the lens of technology. *?Michael, Communications & Marketing*

### **She Explores**

Unfortunately, I don't get out for a hike every weekend. When I'm stuck at home cleaning my fridge, or whatever, and I'd rather be outside I live vicariously through the stories of the guests on She Explores. *?Alejandria, Community & Customer Engagement*

More Society & Culture recommendations

## **Spirituality**

### **On Being**

Each week the show takes up the big questions of meaning with scientists and theologians, artists and teachers ? some you know and others you'll love to meet. *?Kelly, Community & Customer Engagement*

More Spirituality recommendations

## **True Crime**

### **Bear Brook Murders**

A true crime podcast about 4 bodies that were found separately in barrels on a remote campsite in New Hampshire; one in 1985 and the other in 2000. The bodies have yet to be identified, but the real story is in how the suspected killer was found through DNA and genealogical research. The case was cold for almost 30 years until the research linked the suspected killer with one of the children. Bear Brook is often

found at the top of the list for what to listen to in 2019. ?Dana, *Community & Customer Engagement*

### **Dr. Death**

A true crime podcast about a Texas doctor who was able to get away with murder. This podcast is a compelling and horrifying listen. I found myself taking my dog for longer walks or doing an extra twenty minutes at the gym just to keep listening. ?Erica, *Community & Customer Engagement*

### **My Favorite Murder**

If you're a true crime lover, you're in for a treat. Two ladies (Karen and Georgia) talk murder cases in a comedic sense, while also relaying the facts. We also get to hear other listeners' tales of their own "hometown murders." Stay sexy, don't get murdered! ?Meg, *Access & Content Services*

### **Thinking Sideways**

Three friends discuss a different true crime each episode, and offer their theories as to what happened and whodunit. Sometimes contentious, often funny, and always interesting. ?Ryan, *Communications & Marketing*

More True Crime recommendations

**Happy listening!**

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Posted by Jeannette L. on November 15, 2017

Information, Answers & Reviews

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