



Waves of YA, Episode 21, The Crossover Appeal with Audiobook Narrator Sophie Amoss

Transcript:

00;00;07;00 - 00;00;21;20

Cecelia

[CECELIA] Hello and welcome to Waves of YA, a podcast focused on YA literacy brought to you by the Ocean County Library's Teen Literacy Workgroup. My name Cecelia. I'm one of the Teen Services librarians at the Ocean County Library. Joining me today, we have.

00;00;21;28 - 00;00;25;04

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] Lyndsey I'm also a teen librarian at the Ocean County Library.

00;00;25;11 - 00;00;27;20

Sophie

[SOPHIE] And I am narrator Sophie Amoss.

00;00;28;10 - 00;00;53;09

Cecelia

[CECELIA] Yes, we have a special guest today. So for today's episode, we will be focused on the crossover appeal. We'll be discussing, narrating for different audiences and how titles written for one age group can be enjoyed by others. But before we get started on the topic today, we have some interview questions for Sophie. So how did you get started narrating books? Are you an actor first? What comes first?

00;00;54;02 - 00;03;08;11

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Yes, I'm an actor. It seems that audiobook narration is a sort of a natural branch of acting, so you'll find that most audiobook narrators come from acting. Not all of them, but most. So I studied acting most of my life. I grew up in New Orleans and I attended an art high school alongside with my normal public high school. And then I went on into college and went to study theater, pursued being a struggling actor in Chicago and went on to graduate school. And while I was in graduate school in New York studying acting, an alum came by and was speaking to us and she brought up voice acting, and they didn't even teach this in our graduate program. And they still don't really teach a lot of voice acting,

which is curious. They might do like a workshop, but it's not really something that is taught as part of the curriculum. So I sought classes outside and I got into commercial voice acting and found success in that. And so when I finished graduate school, I found success in commercial voice acting. While that was fun, you can book a big gig, but you're not booking them every day and I wanted to work every day. I didn't want to audition every day. Even successful actors, they mostly audition. That's kind of mostly what they're doing. And I had heard that the audiobook people were in town and on a whim I went to their annual conference and just a whole new world opened up to me. And it's one of those careers that it's not just something you decide to do, like a 9 to 5. It's very self propelling, you know, it's very - you got to put money into it and time into it. A lot of people turn their closets into a sound booth, you know, and they buy a microphone and they start working, you know, sort of in the sort of self-publishing self sector and sort of work their way up. So it's a very you got to really want to do it. That's for that's for sure. So, yes, but it comes from this, I would say most of us are actors for sure.

00;03;08;24 - 00;03;14;05

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] Now, where do you record? Do you have a closet studio?

00;03;14;05 - 00;05;32;19

Sophie

[SOPHIE] I never had a closet studio. I was lucky. So I was in New York and a lot of - I did invest in - it's sort of a funny story; when I was a kid, The school encouraged our parents to like, Hey, buy your kid like 50 bucks worth of stocks so they can learn about the stock market or something. My mom bought me like 50 bucks in Pixar, and this was right when Toy Story had just come out. I was about ten or so when Toy Story came out. And later on, Disney acquired Pixar. And so I was trying to find money to buy a sound booth. Fast forward, I'm like 29 years old, and my mom's like, "Well, why don't you sell the stock? Like how much would this be worth?" Turns out it was worth five grand and I had no idea. So I sold my Disney stock that I had got in fourth grade. It was like 50 bucks. And that I'd done nothing with and I bought, like, a booth. And I kind of used that to start off and do auditions and do some of my earlier sort of self publishing stuff. But eventually, once I got the attention of publishing houses and because I was physically in New York City, I would go in to Penguin Random House. That's how I spent the first seven years of my career going into Macmillan and Penguin and all these places, just hopping on the subway and actually going to the source. So that was kind of the added benefit of being in New York. I recently relocated back to New Orleans, so it's been a challenge because I sold that booth and I bought a glorious big new booth. But it arrives shortly from Spain in about two weeks. It's very nerve wracking and it's this very big industrial-like thing. And so I will operate out of that and it's basically the exact same thing that one of these studios has. But in the meantime, I've been working out of studios here in New Orleans, and it's pretty easy. There's an engineer here, just like there is in New York. Sometimes they'll zoom in like this and they can even control my computer remotely and engineer me from New York. So it is no different. It's pretty, pretty amazing. They figured all this during the pandemic.

00;05;32;22 - 00;05;33;12

Cecelia

[CECELIA] Yeah, they had to.

00;05;33;24 - 00;06;00;12

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Yeah, they kind of had to, you know? A lot of doors opened because of the pandemic where you had to physically be in New York. Most near readers are all over the country, but things like being directed over Zoom with a director or with an engineer - that usually was done in person. So it's really cool that Zoom and all these other things, we now have the capability of doing anything.

00;06;01;04 - 00;06;08;26

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] Yeah, and I imagine with everyone reading more, there's more demand for books and audio and everything.

00;06;09;03 - 00;06;21;04

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Audio is a format that keeps growing. Seeing it grow by the double digits and the percentage print not doing so great, but audio is going up and up and up for sure.

00;06;21;10 - 00;06;47;18

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] Yeah, I can see that people want to stay on the go. So audio is pretty cool. That's awesome. I love that. You can just kind of be wherever now and you work. It's that's a benefit I guess. Cool. All right so should we get into the book stuff? So, when you're recording a book, which point of view do you enjoy narrating the most?

00;06;48;10 - 00;08;45;14

Sophie

[SOPHIE] You know, that's it's a really interesting question and it comes up a lot in conversations among narrators. We have our yearly conference and people bring this stuff. I don't find it too different, and I'll tell you why because it depends on the style of writing. Not all third person is created equal. The style of writing dictates right? Third person can be incredibly intimate. It can almost feel like first person and then first person can sometimes almost feel detached and removed depending on the state of that person's mind. So it's not so much I'm focusing on the POV. I'm focusing on the style of writing that the author is giving me. How are they setting the tone? So there's a wonderful director within audiobooks, Paul Rubin, and he talks about almost like the eye of God. Sometimes it's like down here right by your ear, and sometimes it's way up high like a bird, and it can shift even one sentence. It doesn't always remain steady, even in the book. I think that that is true for both first person POV and third person. So when I look at a book, I don't approach a book any different if it's first person or third person. I basically look at what is the story here and how in in what way is the author trying to tell the story? How are they using the way that they write the style in which they write rhythm, texture, tone, environment, the type of characters to tell that story? And how do I lift that up and make that apparent, make that the star, and help bring the listener to meet that tone? So I guess the short answer is I don't think there's too much.

00;08;45;14 - 00;09;05;01

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] That's great. I love that. I found that when I - because I'm fairly new to listening to audiobooks, maybe just the past few years, and at first I could only do first person - I could not get through a book unless it was first person. But now I'm getting better. I feel like I've been training myself pretty well, so I can enjoy all the books.

00;09;05;24 - 00;09;41;22

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Yeah, that's good. And every and also it's just and spin out with different types of narrators, you know, just like there's different types of POV, there's different types of style of narrating. Narrators approach, you know, the way I approach a book is not how every other narrator approaches the book, and some listeners are going to like the way I tell a story and some are not going to like it. Everyone has their thing. So sometimes you're just like, "Okay, this I like." And then another narrator you're like, "Eh, it's not really my style." But definitely give everything a chance because you never know, you know, what floats your boat.

00;09;41;22 - 00;09;46;11

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] Yeah, for sure. Cool.

00;09;46;11 - 00;09;54;15

Cecelia

[CECELIA] So you kind of talked about how you do your process. How do you prepare for a book before you start narrating?

00;09;55;15 - 00;14;06;14

Sophie

[SOPHIE] You definitely, obviously, you're reading the book, you have to obviously know the story and all the characters and all the arcs. I almost feel like it's best to know nothing about the book if you can. Generally, you know something, because a producer, a publisher has come to you, either you've recorded a little bit of a sample or they've just flat out offered you the book. So you know something about it. I think before sitting down and reading it and thinking about the characters, like reading it as a whole internally, it's good to sit down and actually read it out loud to yourself. Not the whole thing, but maybe a chapter or two, because especially good writing a good book, good writing, sort of if we're going to get lofty here, just like Shakespeare. So Shakespeare, the way he writes and how he places his lines and where his lines end and all this punctuation, that's informative. Those are breaths. He did that intentionally. It's part of what adds meaning and how he tells the story and the punctuation is the breath. That is the new thought coming in. Modern writers are very skilled as well, so how they write is intentional. Skilled writers and modern writers are intentional in the way they write. And so it's our job as narrators to pick up on that. We can't just copy and paste and do the same thing for every book. And every book is going to sound the same and we're just ignoring everything, right? So saying it out loud so that we get, okay, this book is telling me the rhythm it wants. It's telling me the pace it wants. It's telling me where it wants, the pauses, where it wants me to speed up, where it wants a little bit of texture, where it wants environment, where it wants me to back off a little bit. It's informing me what to do. It's

important to pay attention to those things because that's also going to inform me for character decisions, because there are a lot of books that'll be like, "He had a gravelly voice." There's a million ways you can do a gravelly voice, but you want to take all this other information. What kind of a gravelly voice? You know, if you're doing something that's like middle grade and it's a girl who's going on some adventure and she meets a pirate and she meets someone with a gravelly voice, the pirates going to be maybe a little bit more, you know, animated. Now, if I did a gravelly voice in literature like lit fic, you know, for like an adult like that, it would probably pull the listener out because that's just like a little over the top. Right? Whereas a gravelly voice might be just a little bit more down here because he's a truck driver and he might kill you, but he might help you out. You know, that's more like the gravelly voice for an adult, you know what I mean? So paying attention to the style of the book, things like that. Does a character start off as a good character, and then later we find out they're the bad character? How do we present that to the listener? How is the author presenting that? Is the author intentionally trying to mislead its listeners and readers, and are we supposed to mislead them as well? Things like that are important. Any kind of foreign language, any hard to pronounce words. We have to look this all up. We have to be accurate. We can't just guess. Sometimes if we're really overwhelmed, we have a lot of work. We actually hire people called Preppers, and their job is essentially this. They more or less just read the book and they write up a report and it's usually a chapter breakdown. They'll give us the characters, any physical descriptions, any tricky words, things for us so that we can take that sort of prep time and just go. It happens. But I would describe that as sort of the basic prep. But overall, after we've analyzed plot and characters, the main thing is figuring out the heartbeat of the book in the style of the author. I find that when you can tap into that, listeners really respond. When you really get a genre, when you really get an author, people love it and that's when they yeah, that's most of what we have to do.

00;14;06;25 - 00;14;10;05

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] A lot more than I think I realized.

00;14;10;05 - 00;14;13;01

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Yeah.

00;14;13;01 - 00;14;30;07

Cecelia

[CECELIA] But it makes so much sense that you can't put all that thought and like the different age genres stuff. That you would put all that thought into it, and like the gravel voice like that you explained so perfect. Like, you would not do that if you were doing an adult book.

00;14;30;10 - 00;15;00;20

Sophie

[SOPHIE] You got to feel, you got to feel and listen to the book and what's appropriate to the book, and you got to feel what's appropriate for the listeners and what the author's goal is. You have to and that requires good instincts. At that point, it's not even almost about how well you're doing voices and being an actor. That's your editing skills, that's your producer's skills, that's your understanding what you're

doing. And are your choices going to fit? Are these the correct choices? You have to put all kind of a lot of different hats as a narrator.

00;15;00;25 - 00;15;29;08

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] Yeah, I feel like I had that experience listening to YA book recently. It was dual narratives, male and female and the male narrator was - they were supposed to be teens, but he was an adult male and there was no getting around it. And I was like, I can't listen to this because it made me feel weird because he just sounded like a very mature male and she did not, and it didn't work for me, so I had to quit it.

00;15;29;08 - 00;16;06;01

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Sometimes it happens and it and sometimes it's not even his fault. Like sometimes they just cast it wrong and stuff like that. I have to be very careful because I'm definitely an adult woman, but I sound much younger and look much younger, so I definitely get cast much younger and then sometimes I get cast more closer to my age and I'm like, I mean, I am this age but I don't sound, you know, [laughs]. I don't know, so I have to really play it, but yeah [laughs].

00;16;06;01 - 00;16;14;17

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] I love that. So how long would you say, can you tell us the longest time it took for you to record and the shortest?

00;16;14;17 - 00;16;34;13

Sophie

[SOPHIE] I think I just did the longest. Well, so every book's going to be different, right? Right. You know, there's no average book. The longest book, I think I just did the longest book. It was very, very dense. It probably took us 11 to 12 days. And I think it's going to be about 25 hours long.

00;16;34;13 - 00;16;35;05

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] Wow.

00;16;36;14 - 00;18;17;28

Sophie

[SOPHIE] A very long book. It was a lot I mean, the shortest I mean, probably like well, we also do lots of multicast. You know, I've gone in for like a line. I've gone in for two lines. You know, I've gone in where I've only recorded for 30 minutes, things like that. So, I mean, I would say on average standalone books, you know, anything from 3 to 5 days, that kind of thing, because everything seems to be between like 250 to 450 pages, you know, it could be somewhere in there, but it's, you know, everyone records at a different pace, you know? So I get about two recorded hours done a day, which is pretty slow. I mean, some people might get three in, but I like to chat with my engineer. I'm a bit naughty. I like to think, how's your day going? So everyone works at a different speed. And it also depends. It depends on the

style of the book. Is this more, you know, film noir and it's very slow or is it very chatty and has a lot of dialog? It depends like that. So something could be like the book that was like 25 hours. I've done a book that's like 420 pages and it's like 10 hours or even 8 hours. That one's 420 pages, but it's also formatted and it's also like super dense. And it's super chatty. So that's just how it is. And it's it all talks about word count as well. So that's the longest one I just finished.

00;18;17;28 - 00;18;34;26

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] That's awesome. The the longest book I listened to was like 48 hours or something, it took me. And that was before I was pumping up the speed. So it took me like two months to listen to.

00;18;34;26 - 00;18;35;21

Sophie

[SOPHIE] I had no idea it's that long.

00;18;36;00 - 00;18;37;08

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] It's very, very long.

00;18;37;08 - 00;18;48;01

Cecelia

[CECELIA] I think the longest I tried to listen to, I never finished. It was "Game of Thrones," which was like 31-ish hours.

00;18;48;07 - 00;19;40;03

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Yeah and now that I think about it, I think the longest one I ever listen to - it's still one of my favorites - is Truman Capote's "In Cold Blood." So good. So Scott Brick narrated that one. I highly recommend but... it doesn't even cut close to what you guys listen to. It has like 19 hours but that's not even like like I said like I think before this 25 hour book, I think the longest one before that was actually my favorite audiobook I've ever done. It was 15 hours, and that was the longest one I had ever done. I would say again, like everything kind of within that six, seven, eight, nine, ten, kind of... That's kind of the range for most average kind of books.

00;19;40;19 - 00;19;42;01

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] Yeah, yeah, for sure.

00;19;42;11 - 00;19;42;21

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Yeah.

00;19;43;03 - 00;19;47;28

Cecelia

[CECELIA] Are there any types of books you haven't done yet but would like to in the future?

00;19;48;10 - 00;21;20;26

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Yes, I would love to do a memoir. I will say I have been lucky in the sense that no one's put me in a corner or pinned me to one genre. I've had a pretty eclectic, you know, it's been all over the place, which I've been very lucky and fortunate with. So I've got a lot of, you know, YA literary fiction and thrillers and even a few rom coms. And I did my first nonfiction, which was very interesting and I really enjoyed and it was very sort of science oriented. It was like it was called "The Joy of Sweat." And it's really fascinating and it's you'll learn more than you ever wanted to know about how we sweat. But I would I would love to do historical nonfiction, especially things like I love history about like World War Two, things like that. I'd be interested in that. Anything about my hometown, maybe about New Orleans. But memoirs are also super interesting. There was a memoir I auditioned for years ago that was really interesting because it was a memoir about a poet. I didn't end up getting the book, but it was just interesting because this particular poet suffered a little bit from mental illness, and so the way it was written was sort of flitting between the now and then and in a very poetical way. And so it was a very unusual format, and I thought that that was really interesting. So I would say those two genres are something I'd love to explore.

00;21;21;16 - 00;21;24;28

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] Do you have a favorite genre that you've done?

00;21;25;18 - 00;23;09;08

Sophie

[SOPHIE] I mean, it's such a broad thing to say. Literary fiction because that's just like a lot to write. Just because it's usually just very good writing, right? So generally when anything is sort of literary fiction, you're going to get at something from the big five publishers and it's going to be really, really good writing. And because it's really good writing, it's gonna be a really good story and the writing is so good because the author's going to have a very distinct style. And the producers of that level - and now that I've been working with them for years - when they cast you, it's almost surgically amazing because you get it and you go, "Oh, I am so perfect for this. I see why you cast me." And it makes your life and your work so much easier because we work with all kinds of books, very highbrow, and sometimes we get, you know, not the best books and all this kind of stuff when it's kind of not so great, it's kind of clunky. You find that you're you're messing up more and you're having to stop and, you know, move the cursor and fix things more. When the writing is really good, you're not messing up as much. And it's just like butter. You're just moving along, you're just clicking in with the author and the story and it just makes it that much more of a delight. So that's also kind of why literary fiction and that's just usually also just more likely books that I myself would like to pick up - that kind of reasoning as well. And I don't really pick up books anymore because I read for a living.

00;23;09;08 - 00;23;17;16

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] Do you keep track of the books that you read for work, like on Goodreads or like a book tracker?

00;23;17;16 - 00;24;36;16

Sophie

[SOPHIE] I mean, I think I have a document so I don't forget. Because sometimes on Audible, like you come up for like 90% of your stuff, but sometimes you're on something and it just says full cast. So you're just like, "Yeah, I'm in that." It tends to not be healthy. We tend to pay attention to things like "AudioFile" magazine. That's a really good source for reviews of audiobooks. Audible is hit or miss, you know, it's like the Yelp of audiobooks. You know, you can give people five stars and one star and very mixed messages. And people forget that we're human beings on the other end and they're like, "I hate her." You're like, "I'm a person!" Most experienced narrators don't look at it. It's good to look at it sometimes. Sometimes it's important to look at that stuff because I remember not too long ago, we discovered that a file got uploaded incorrectly or something like that, and so a reviewer alerted us to that and so we were able to correct it through the publisher and fix it so that the file was fixed through Audible and that reviewer got their full book. So that's important in that regard. But it tends to be a healthy way to check in on reviews in an unhealthy way. And so to avoid those channels in particular.

00;24;36;17 - 00;24;38;04

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] Gotcha. That makes sense.

00;24;38;24 - 00;24;39;09

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Yeah.

00;24;39;19 - 00;25;05;06

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] So I have a question because you mentioned fixing any errors. If you have to go back and change something, is it really annoying where you have to like record a lot of it or can you record a word or two and they kind of fix it? Because I feel like sometimes when I'm listening, I can hear a word or two words that all of a sudden get louder and then it goes keeps going.

00;25;05;16 - 00;28;54;26

Sophie

[SOPHIE] That yeah, that probably was that. So we're fixing mistakes constantly. So there's generally for the most part, there's two ways in which audiobooks are being recorded, and the vast majority are being recorded in a method called punch and roll, meaning like 95% of narrators are recording themselves and they're engineering themselves, so they're in their booth and they have a monitor and keyboard and their computer is outside, but you don't hear the fan of the computer and they're going to mess up probably several times in a page. When they mess up, you know, there's usually like a shorthand, there's like a space to stop or whatever. And then they're usually putting the cursor and they can see the wavelength, so they can see the space in between where the breath is and they can place it there. And when they hit record, there's where we have a bit of pre-roll like 2 seconds. So they hear

themselves and then they know exactly when to come in. This all happens like that [snaps fingers]. They just [clicks] and they hear themselves and they go right in in their headset. And so this is a very quick thing. It's called punch and roll. When you're working with an engineer, they're doing this and in no words need to be exchanged because you just stop speaking. You messed up, they know you messed up and they punch you back in. Sometimes a word might trip you up and that you didn't look up previously and you go, "Oh, what's this?" And you might have to go to Merriam-Webster and you know, you have to go to reliable source and look something up, that kind of thing. So those are the things that we're doing in the moment. Later, after, in post, it's going through something called QC. So there is lots of things. There's human eye or human ears, I should say, and eyes that are going through the script and following it. More recently, they're having software that's also processing it, and the software basically is also looking for mistakes. The software prints out a report, but a human also goes through it and it looks for things that are like slurred or maybe gets cut off. But they have to make decisions. Sometimes it goes, well, it's not so much that you got cut off. This is just a conversational style for this narrator, so we're going to let this one go. Things like that, or this is mispronounced and that's called a pick up package. And they'll send that maybe a few weeks later to the narrator. And it's usually the pages that those mistakes are on they'll highlight. They usually want to get the whole sentence. Maybe they only need a half of the sentence from one breath to the other breath. And you usually want to be in the same space, same microphones. So you're usually in your home studio where you recorded it, or if you were at a studio, you go to that same studio and they have the audio clip and they have a note so you can hear yourself, hear what you did, and then you do it again so that it can match as best as possible. And then an editor goes in and puts them in. And usually they're pretty clean. They can go in. And I guess probably for that one, it wasn't it. It jumped out a little bit more to you, but they're generally pretty good about blending them in. That's that there's tons of mistakes and sometimes miscommunications happen about like, oh well we want a name to be pronounced this way and someone else decides that's not how the name is pronounced and you find that you're going to have to say that name 50 times in the pick up package. And that's a nightmare. But we as a community have gotten better and better at this process. So those mistakes are rare, I would say. So there's the mistakes that happened during and then the mistakes that we fix after you probably were hearing the after pickups and that it just wasn't a smooth.

00;28;54;28 - 00;28;55;18

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] Yeah.

00;28;55;18 - 00;28;58;09

Sophie

[SOPHIE] As smoothly inserted as it could have been for sure.

00;28;58;09 - 00;29;01;28

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] It's happened a couple times, not too many. But I do notice it.

00;29;04;05 - 00;29;15;22

Cecelia

[CECELIA] What aspects - and I know you talked about this a little bit - of the different age groups that you've narrated for, what do you enjoy most about the different portions of it?

00;29;15;22 - 00;32;07;15

Sophie

[SOPHIE] I definitely think that as far as things like middle grade... you can be a little bit more whimsical, you can have a little bit more fun and a little bit more cheeky and sort of whimsical with your voice and make a little bit more bold choices. Kids are a little bit more accepting if you decide that like, you know, a wizard is like, ooh, ooh, like, okay, yeah, that's what a wizard sounds like. You know, they're not going to fight you on it. And they're also not likely going to write like on Audible like, "This is horrible!"

[laughs] They're going to be purely entertained. Do you know what I mean? Like you're telling them a story. They're very excited. So I would say that's very enjoyable about middle grade. YA is so interesting because I think YA has gone through this, like really interesting transformation over the last ten years. It's so much more daring than it ever was, at least for me when I was growing up. I think we can since, especially because of what this episode is about, we can agree that YA - that is a broad reaching audience, right? Because there are people in their twenties who are enjoying YA even in their thirties, and there are people who are teenagers who are enjoying YA. And so you can have YA that I would describe as quote a little bit, maybe more "PG" but still like again, enjoyable for those age ranges and then things that like deal with maybe much more like bigger themes again, like sexuality, orientation, how you identify, that are... very daring that I don't think I saw 15 years ago at all. And also just there's so much! Like you can take all of those topics and then be like, "Yeah, but do you want it with witches? Do you want it with werewolves? Do you want it set at a mortuary? You want it set in Britain?" You know, it is so many options, but it's great! And it's fun! And it doesn't treat its audience like children. And I think that's why it's wildly popular and obviously given like how I sound and oh my God, if they saw how I look, they'd be like, of course this is why you do this. Not only does she sound young, she looks young! [laughs] And also like, like right now, like, I don't have a headset. I'm like, I'm talking in my teeth resonators. This is how I like. If I'm talking normally, it's a little bit more like this, but when I'm relaxed, I'm a little bit more down here. I'm like the perfectly dejected teenager, you know, just like, "Whatever." [laughs]

00;32;08;09 - 00;32;14;25

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] I have listened to you be a teenager. So yeah, I can agree.

00;32;14;25 - 00;32;32;24

Cecelia

[CECELIA] It's so funny that when you were talking about appealing to different age groups that just unlocked a memory that, like an elderly patron, was coming in looking for YA titles for her mom. She was just like, she just likes historical YA fiction. She just really enjoys it.

00;32;34;01 - 00;32;34;26

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] Happens a lot.

00;32;36;26 - 00;32;45;21

Sophie

[SOPHIE] It is one of those genres that has just unlocked something that is just appealing for a lot of age ranges.

00;32;45;21 - 00;33;01;15

Cecelia

[CECELIA] I think older, older people like hark back to it's that nostalgia feeling to it, being a teen, and kind of still having everything ahead of you or whatever. Those emotions and stuff.

00;33;01;26 - 00;33;33;25

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] I think, like Sophie was saying, how it wasn't like this a decade ago. Just the topic and content. People that are older are still just coming up to face those things in their life. So like, YA is where it is because that's where a lot of kids are first coming to terms with their sexuality or their identity. So some adults, it's late for them. It happens later. So I think that attracts them to YA.

00;33;35;06 - 00;34;26;03

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Bear with me because it's going to sound like it starts sad, but I promise you it's not sad. So my grandmother passed away... in October 2019. She was a children's book author and illustrator. And my dad did the eulogy and he started off and it was about her career. And one of the things she didn't understand was how people dismissed children's books as something not to be taken seriously. And she was like, it is a serious thing. Like, children's literature has an impact on kids. And I think that for a very long time people didn't take YA seriously. Boy, that was a mistake, wasn't it? Now you go to Barnes Noble, it's like half the store.

00;34;27;17 - 00;34;37;04

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] It really is. Do you have recommendations for books that have great crossover appeal for multiple age groups?

00;34;37;07 - 00;34;40;20

Cecelia

[CECELIA] We can all answer that.

00;34;40;20 - 00;34;46;24

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Okay. Well, you guys go. Wait, you go first. Oh, my God. That's so much pressure because I'm just going to do books that I've done.

00;34;47;04 - 00;34;49;13

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] Well, that's okay!

00;34;49;13 - 00;34;51;24

Sophie

[SOPHIE] So then you guys go first.

00;34;51;24 - 00;35;15;03

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] I feel like I always at work, especially I'm always handing out Jason Reynolds to all ages because he has middle grade YA, but even adults. I always recommend him because I think he just has a really I don't know, I just love him and I think he's a really good writer and narrator. I like listening to him too.

00;35;16;19 - 00;35;26;17

Cecelia

[CECELIA] I always hand out Karen McManus to adults looking first for stuff. Mysteries, they've read the entire mystery

00;35;26;17 - 00;35;30;25

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] Well, have you tried YA? [laughs]

00;35;33;04 - 00;36;17;24

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Okay, there's two that I did recently that I think have some good crossover. There's this book called "The Second Death of Edie and Violet Bond" by Amanda Glaze. It takes place in 1880s San Francisco. It's about two twin sisters who are mediums. It's a YA, but I think it's got good crossover. Another YA that I think has good crossover is called "The Agathas" by Kathleen Glasgow and Liz Lawson. That one's pretty funny. And again, "The Agathas" is kind of an Agatha Christie and they kind of go in their own little - it's a high school sort of detective thing, I would say. I'm trying to think of if there might be any other. I'm scrolling really quickly.

00;36;18;09 - 00;36;19;29

Cecelia

[CECELIA] Yeah, I was just scrolling. [laughs]

00;36;21;09 - 00;36;24;12

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Scroll, scroll, scroll, scroll.

00;36;24;29 - 00;36;26;21

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] So you read "the Second Death of...?"

00;36;27;23 - 00;36;31;29

Sophie

[SOPHIE] I did read that one. "The Second Death of Edie and Violet Bond."

00;36;31;29 - 00;36;35;02

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] I have an ARC of it. But now, I'll wait to listen to it.

00;36;35;07 - 00;36;54;26

Sophie

[SOPHIE] You know, this one I actually think is good. You know, I'm going to stand. It's not YA, it's a little dark, but I actually think that this one could be interesting as a sort of reverse as far as like instead of like an adult meeting the teenager half way in the YA, this would be the teenager meeting the adult half way where they are.

00;36;55;06 - 00;36;58;06

Cecelia

[CECELIA] Which happens a lot. A lot of kids.

00;36;59;01 - 00;38;24;25

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Yeah. So this is called "A Crooked Tree" by Una, U-N-A, Mannion, M-A-N-N-I-O-N. It's by HarperCollins. It takes place in the seventies. It's about a group, a family. And they're in a car and like one of the daughters kind of acts up and the mother's like, "Get out of the car!" and they don't think about it. And then the daughter goes missing for a few hours and all hell breaks loose. It's very seventies nostalgic. So I think a lot of, you know, Gen-Xers and adults will really appreciate it. And it's also kind of got that sort of - the protagonist is 16 and it's constantly - they don't ever think to go to the adults because the adults aren't paying attention. It's that kind of the seventies. No one's paying attention and no one's listening to us. So we're going to just have to figure this out. There is someone here who is a predator that we need to stop and figure out who it is. So it's dark in a way, but I do think there is some crossover there because again, it does have that because it's told through the eyes of a 16 year old. And it does have that sort of "No one's listening to us. Why aren't the adults listening to us?" And again, I think has a nostalgia of the seventies. So that has some interesting crossover, I think, in there, "A Crooked Tree." But anyway...

00;38;25;03 - 00;38;26;05

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] I can attest to that.

00;38;27;04 - 00;38;27;24

Cecelia

[CECELIA] With that one?

00;38;27;27 - 00;38;33;00

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] I listened to you read it, it was wonderful. [laughs]

00:38:33:00 - 00:38:34:02

Sophie

[SOPHIE] Oh, you listened to it?

00:38:34:02 - 00:38:49:15

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] I listened to it. Yeah, a while ago, maybe a few months ago. What does it say? In March. On Goodreads it tells me when I finished. So in March. I read it in March.

00:38:49:23 - 00:38:51:02

Sophie

[SOPHIE] I love that one. I don't know. I like that one a lot.

00:38:51:02 - 00:38:52:08

Lyndsey

[LYNDSEY] It was great.

00:38:53:02 - 00:38:54:20

Sophie

[SOPHIE] It's a good written book. Yeah, well written.

00:38:55:15 - 00:39:12:06

Cecelia

[CECELIA] Thanks for joining us today. Be sure to check out the Ocean County Library's website for more podcasts and events. All titles mentioned in today's episode can be found through the Ocean County Library. Free with your library card. Until next time. Happy reading.