You are listening to, you've got this episode 319. Welcome to You've Got This, a weekly podcast for higher education professionals looking to increase their confidence and capacity for juggling the day-to-day demands of an academic life. I'm your host, Dr. Katie Lender. On this episode, I thought I would talk a little bit more about why I love series reading, and you may have noticed in my annual goals, I'm trying to get current or to complete 23 different series this year.

And um, I decided to do this because last year I had such a fun. Reading series books, and of course I'm reading a bunch of standalones this year too. But I thought I would just talk briefly about why I love Siri so much, some of the series that I'm reading, and, um, also tell you a little bit about how I'm tracking them.

So I'm basically gonna geek out on this for an episode, , and, um, hopefully there'll be some good recommendations in here if you want to, to try some things out. So first of all, what are some of the benefits of reading a series? . Now, I know that many of us don't have a ton of time to devote to reading. I mean, many people struggle to fit this into their schedules, and I think that sometimes series reading makes people a little bit nervous because they're like, I'm gonna start something and I'm not gonna be able to finish it.

Or maybe the author hasn't finished it yet, and so you're kind of nervous about starting it. But I think there's some definite benefits of series reading. Now, the first thing is that the authors usually only get better. I think it is very rare that you start a series and it gets worse over. , the author usually figures out the characters.

They figure out their arcs of kind of what they're trying to do, and you end up seeing the benefits of that over the course of a series. Secondly, you get really, really excellent character development across an entire series. Now, some series are more kind of, um, Systematically chronological, like they might go one year per book.

And then you see people age over the course of the series. Some series characters kind of stay the same, you know, across. You might see different relationships happen or other kinds of shifts, but they're kind of roughly the same age throughout the series. . But I also think that when you read a series, you end up with this wonderful familiarity of both the characters and the worlds because you're just used to people showing up in the same way across the different books.

And of course they, they have character arcs and things like that, but you're kind of getting familiar with what you're seeing in the series. . And then another benefit is just that it is so satisfying, to work your way through a series and to get caught up with this series to the point where like when an author has a new part of that series come out, you can like go right out and get it and be like, reading the latest thing with those characters I think is really fun.

Now, of course you could absolutely apply this to, if you're watching like TV show, if you like, TV show series, um, that go on for like multiple seasons. It's kind of the same thing, like you get to see different character arcs. You get to invest in a particular world or set of characters. You have new people coming in and out of the series over time.

Very similar. I understand that sometimes books may not feel as passive as what we watch on television, but I would definitely encourage you to check out some series. So I wanted to give you some ideas of the kinds of things that I've been reading, um, that might be interesting for you to check out. But first, let me give you some stats.

So I do track the series that I'm interested in, that I'm currently reading, that I'm, um, finished up with in Asana. I started doing this. I would say early last year because I was wanting to really track what series I wanted to continue with, what series I was interested in starting, but maybe I, I hadn't had a chance to start them yet.

And also because I own a lot of things on e-book, I wanted to start to track what I had on e-book and audiobook so that if I wanted to like read a series, I would know how much of it I actually. . So when I look at these statistics, I'm currently in the middle of 49 different series right now. Um, and actually I'm probably reading a book on my pile that is part of a series.

So I, I mean, we could probably round that up to an even 50. And I'm anywhere from like 95% complete. Like I have some series that are like, there's like 23 books in the series and I have like one left to read. , um, two series that I have, like 17 books left to read, 25 books left to read, 18 books left to read, just like depending on, um, what the series is.

So I've got about 50 that I'm, I'm tracking that I'm currently in the middle of. And then I have, um, about 25 that I am caught up with. So again, this ranges from anywhere. Um, I'm just glancing through these numbers here. Couple of these series have over 20 books. and I'm caught up with those series. Some of them just have like two or three, it's like a trilogy or a duology, and I read, you know, two or three books and, and that finished and caught me up to that series.

Okay. Then I have the amount of series that I'm tracking that I have not started yet, and I will also say if I read a series a long time ago and I didn't finish it, maybe I got like a couple books. I end up putting it back in this category of not started because I'm not gonna remember the early book. So if I was ever gonna read it again, I would, I would start from the beginning.

there are 134 series in this list. Now these series are all over the map in terms of genre. This is like mystery, romance, fantasy, sci-fi, um, I mean it's literary fiction, like anything you can think of is in this series. Like there are a ton that are listed here. And so this is part of why I was like, I really wanna like get current and like keep moving through these series because there are so many of them that I am interested in eventually.

Okay. So let me give you some recommendations. If you're like, if you're not completely thrown off by the fact that I have like over 200 things that I'm tracking in this series list, um, I thought I would recommend some just from my finished caught up category. Um, cuz these are ones that I've invested, you know, enough time in to like read the whole.

Thing and, and really enjoy it. So, um, a couple of them, you know, from last year, so if you've been following, you know, I finished the Armand Gamma Series by Louise Penny. Um, that is a series that has 18 books in it. And I also finished Wheel of Time, which including the prequel has 15 books, uh, wheel of Time by Robert Jordan and eventually Brandon Sanderson.

Armand Gammage is a mystery series set in a small town in Canada. Um, it is definitely not a cozy mystery series because it does include violence and a lot of cozy mysteries. Violence is really in the background or you don't have any violence at all. Um, so you do have a murder that happens in every single one of these books.

Um, but it is charming. It's, that's really the best way to describe it. This is a series that was also recently adapted. I think it's on. Amazon Prime. It's called Three Pines. So if you've seen that, that's the same series as the one I'm talking about here. I watched the first couple of episodes of Three Pines, and I'll just say I like the books a lot better.

I think they did fine with the adaptation, but it definitely doesn't closely follow the books, um, in several of the storylines. And I just, I prefer the books. Um, okay. And then of course, wheel of Time, high Fantasy takes place across. , oh, I would say at least a decade of time. Uh, extremely long, lengthy books.

And, um, there are some reader companions that I would also kind of recommend to read alongside, just to make sure you're getting all the details. Um, cuz it's super long and involved. Okay, so let me give a couple other, uh, options here. And I'm probably not gonna remember all the authors because the way I have them listed is just by the character of the series name.

Um, but I will definitely link all of these, like the Good reads, links in the show notes if you wanna check any of them out. . So, um, another mystery series that I really love is a series called the Claire and Russ Ben Stein series. And this is a series about a man who's a sheriff and a woman who is a, um, Like a reverend, uh, uh, she's like clergy.

Um, and they end up having a romance and they kind of work together on these different crimes. There's nine books in this series, and they all have kind of these, um, almost like a little bit of like religious themes in the titles, and I really liked what the author did with these books. I w I would definitely not put these in a category of.

religiously themed mysteries like, like they're written from like a Christian perspective. Like I, I would not put them in that category. I've certainly read books that I would put in that category. This is just more that there's like a spiritual element that's kind of woven throughout this series and, um, It's really, really good.

This is a series that I would consider reading again. Um, and actually I think I've read it a couple of times now and I don't know that the author of the series is still producing books, but it's one of those series that, um, the author is not afraid to do some pretty dramatic things, um, for the purpose of kind of like character development throughout the books.

And, uh, so this is one that I would highly, highly re. . Okay. Looking through this list here. Another one that I would recommend is the Kenzie and Janeiro series. This is, uh, a series by Dennis Lahane. There are six books in this series. Now, Dennis Lahane has written broadly. I've talked about him before, how I really enjoy his books.

Um, and he comes up frequently on, um, my YouTube channel because I've read a couple of his books in the last, uh, year or so, and. This is a series I haven't revisited in a while, but it's basically a private investigator. Um, and I, I believe a detective, but it's basically people who kind of are solving crimes.

There are a couple stories in this series that are kind of children in peril, so I'll just give that, um, that kind of, uh, trigger warning if that's a concern for you. But this is one of my favorite kind of. . It's almost like a modern day noir series. It takes place in Boston. Um, one of the books in this series, uh, is um, adapted into a film called Gone Baby Gone, if you're familiar with that film.

Um, so this is one also just really, really strong in terms of like character development and um, I would say also like in terms of like partners who are solving crimes together, one of my favorite series that depict. . Um, a couple other mystery series that I really have loved also about partner solving crimes, the Linley Haver series by Elizabeth George.

This is what I also got current on in the past year, 21 books in that series. I feel like it really stands the test of time this takes place in England. And, um, also has, I would say, really somewhat dramatic character arcs, um, for several of the characters in the. Similarly, um, I'm also caught up on the re Brazilian Isles series.

This was also adapted into a TV show. You'll start to see a lot of these things get adapted because they're so good. So, um, you start to see them, uh, really getting picked up by, um, TV and, and film. Re Brazilian Isles is about a detective and a, uh, coroner, uh, who are working together to solve crimes. Um, I read a lot of mystery series, so I would say of the ones that are on my.

who at least 75% of the series that I've finished are, are mystery novels. Um, Tony Hill, Carroll Jordan is an 11 book series. Uh, Brazilian Isles was a 13 book series. Um, Tony Hill, Carroll Jordan is also a, like a, um, forensic psychologist and a detective who are working together also set in Britain. I mean, I could just go on and on.

So , I will like link all of these series, um, in the show notes, some of the ones that do not fall into a mystery series that I'm kind of in the middle of. Cause I know I just listed a bunch of mystery ones. Um, oh man, it is so hard to like narrow these down. Okay, I have to give you one more mystery one cuz it's so good and it's about an academic.

I have one book left in this series to read. It's the Ruth Galloway series. Um, the main character is an academic who works with a detective. 15 books in this series. And again, character arcs are incredible. Um, she's kind of an armchair archeologist and ends up working with a detective and it's always like a mix of like a cold case with, um, a contemporary crime that they're solving together.

So that is phenomenal. Okay. Glancing through here. . I just started reading a new series that's a romance series. I'm only one book in and there's five books so far. It's called the Bergman Brothers series. The first book is about, uh, two college students. The male of the couple is Heart of Hearing, um, and is almost completely deaf.

And then, um, the female of the couple is a soccer player and they end up getting kind of thrown together on a class project. And, um, I really loved the first book in this series. And each of the. Books in this series covers a different sibling in this family. So that was one that I'm looking forward to diving into a little bit more.

Um, another series, if you're looking for something that is a little bit more cozy is, um, a series called Mitford. There's 14 books in this series. It's basically about a small town. , um, and all of these characters that are kind of around him, I, it reminds me in some ways of like, children's book, almost like Boxcar Children or something like that.

Like it's, it's very clean, it's very innocent in terms of the kinds of things that are happening in these books. It's almost a palette cleanser for me when I do a lot of like, um, mystery novels or kind of dark psychological suspense. Um, that's one that I will usually pick up and read in between. And let me see if there's anything else I wanna recommend here.

There's some that I'm really kind of intrigued by, but I haven't gone deep enough into them to really understand, you know, how much I'm gonna like them or not. Um, couple other series I can recommend. Um, some these have both been picked up, um, to be TV shows. Virgin River, which has 19 books. And Cedar Cove, which has 12.

These are romance series that take place in kind of smaller towns and you get to have a different romance in each of the books tied to the different characters that are in the small town. So you get to kind of learn about the small town as you're reading the different books. And um, so those are kind of fun if you're looking for books that are all.

Okay. So I feel like this episode is a bit ramly, but the point is I think series books are so fun and incredible and it's great to kind of dip in and out of them. I also try to read a few of my series books just like back to back if I have a ton that I need to get through in a particular series. Um, but I'm gonna be reading series for a very long time because I can tell you in the series that I'm currently reading, I have 217 books that are remaining in those series that I've started.

And the ones that I haven't started yet, I have almost a thousand books that I have not yet read in the series that I want to start from scratch. So plenty to to do here and I would love to hear if there's any series that you're curious if I'm already reading or that you think I should read that maybe I don't have on my list.

You can always email me at hello dr katie leonard.com. I always love to hear your suggestions and I would totally add them to my to be red pile of series books that I want to get to in the. Thanks for listening. Thanks for listening to this episode of You've Got This. You can access show notes and transcripts for each episode@drkatielinder.com slash podcasts.

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