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President Obama Recommends: 8 Years of Presidential Book Recommendations!

President Barack Obama is a prolific reader and has made many excellent book recommendations during his presidency. Below is a comprehensive list of the books he has recommended throughout his presidency. This list was adapted from the *Entertainment Weekly* article written by Ruth Kinane. To order any of these titles, contact the library by email, phone, mail, in person, or order through our [online catalog](#). Select titles can be [downloaded from BARD](#).

President Obama recommended these titles for his oldest daughter, Malia.

One Hundred Years of Solitude By Gabriel García Márquez

Read by Peter Gil

Reading time 14 hours, 33 minutes

1820s to 1920s. Latin American epic tale follows seven generations of the Buendía family through triumphs and disasters that parallel the fortunes and misfortunes of their utopian town, Macondo. By the Colombian Nobel Prize-winning author. Some descriptions of sex and some strong language. 1967.

[Download from BARD: One Hundred Years of Solitude](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB059490

Also available on cassette RC059490 or RC025181

The Woman Warrior Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts By Maxine Hong

Kingston

Read by Catherine Byers

Reading time 6 hours, 52 minutes

Girlhood recollections of a Chinese American in California, where her parents had settled and operated a laundry. Her mother's "talk-stories" filled the girl's head with mythic Chinese figures and traditions as she coped with daily life in America. Some strong language. Nat'l Book Critics Circle Award. 1976.

[Download from BARD: The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood...](#)

Also available on cassette RC050624

The Golden Notebook By Doris Lessing

Read by Sally Darling

Reading time 29 hours, 38 minutes

A complex novel that explores the intimate details of the life of Anna Wulf, a writer evolving as a woman in relationships with men, as an artist, as a communist, and as a mother. Points up the differences between life and art as conveyed in Wulf's notebooks. Some strong language and some explicit descriptions of sex.

[Download from BARD: The Golden Notebook](#)

Also available on cassette RC023376

The Naked and the Dead By Norman Mailer

Read by Bruce Huntley

Reading time 26 hours

Classic novel of World War II. An American infantry platoon invades the Japanese-held island of Anopopei. Mailer explores the soldiers' behavior and emotions under the extreme stress of jungle warfare. Strong language and some violence. 1948.

[Download from BARD: The Naked and the Dead](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB053839

Also available on cassette RC053839

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR18541](#)

Also available in braille BR018541

Books purchased by President Obama for himself and his family from the independent bookstore Politics and Prose in Washington D.C.

Heart of Darkness, and The Secret Sharer By Joseph Conrad

Read by Jack Hrkach

Reading time 6 hours, 40 minutes

Two short allegorical novels based on real events and related by the central characters. 'Heart of Darkness' concerns a journey into the center of the Congo. The further Marlow, the narrator, penetrates into the interior, the more compelling becomes his confrontation with the potential for inhumanity in himself and others. In 'The Secret Sharer' a sea captain faces his own nature when he conceals an escaping murderer with whom he identifies.

[Download from BARD: Heart of Darkness, and The Secret Sharer](#)

Also available on cassette RC012613

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR11418](#)

Also available in braille BR011418

The Narrow Road to the Deep North By Richard Flanagan

Read by Peter Johnson

Reading time 12 hours, 38 minutes

Seventy-seven-year-old Dorrigo Evans thinks back on his life and relives his time in a Japanese POW camp, where he served as a surgeon, trying to save fellow prisoners from injury and cholera. Strong language, some violence, and some descriptions of sex. Man Booker Prize. Bestseller. 2013.

[Download from BARD: The Narrow Road to the Deep North](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB080095

Being Mortal Medicine and What Matters in the End By Atul Gawande

Read by Gary Telles

Reading time 9 hours, 33 minutes

Surgeon and author of Complications (DB 56061) and The Checklist Manifesto (DB 70422) examines the state of end-of-life care in the twenty-first century.

Discusses medical advances which have extended life expectancy, limited training of physicians to discuss mortality with patients and family members, and ways to be honest. Bestseller. 2014.

[Download from BARD: Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB080380

Redwall Abbey Series By Brian Jacques

The first book is: Redwall

Next books in the series: Mossflower, Mattimeo, Mariel of Redwall, Salamandastron, Martin the Warrior, The Bellmaker, Outcast of Redwall, Pearls of Lutra and others

Read by David Palmer

Reading time 11 hours, 28 minutes

The peaceful life at ancient Redwall Abbey is threatened by the evil rat Cluny and his villainous hordes. So young mouse Matthias resolves to find the legendary sword of Martin the warrior, convinced it will help Redwall's inhabitants destroy the enemy. Sequel to Mossflower (BR 13471). For grades 5-8. 1986.

[Download from BARD: Redwall](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB029729

Also available on cassette RC029729

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR13472](#)

Also available in braille BR013472

The Laughing Monsters By Denis Johnson

Read by Andy Pyle

Reading time 7 hours

Roland Nair, who calls himself Scandinavian but has a U.S. passport, reunites in Freetown, Sierra Leone, with fellow fortune hunter Michael Adriko, who has another scheme. Adriko's girlfriend comes along, and all three are keeping secrets from each other. Strong language, some violence, and some descriptions of sex. 2014.

[Download from BARD: The Laughing Monsters](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB080389

Age of Ambition Chasing Fortune, Truth, and Faith in the New China By

Evan Osnos

Read by George Backman

Reading time 16 hours, 43 minutes

Journalist uses his experiences living in China between 2005 and 2013 to examine the state of the country--especially that of individuals. Features stories of a soldier who defected to China from Taiwan, a scholar who began an influential dating service, and subversive artist Ai Weiwei. Unrated. Commercial audiobook. Pulitzer finalist. Nat'l Book Award. 2014.

[Download from BARD: Age of Ambition Chasing Fortune, Truth, and...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB079724

Junie B. Jones Series By Barbara Park

The first book is: Junie B. Jones and the Stupid Smelly Bus

Next books in the series: Junie B. Jones and a Little Monkey Business, Junie B. Jones and Her Big Fat Mouth, Junie B. Jones and Some Sneaky Peeky Spying, Junie B. Jones and the Yucky Blucky Fruitcake and others

Read by Susan McInerney Reading time 54 minutes

Junie B. is almost six years old and is starting kindergarten. She worries for a week about riding the yellow school bus and doesn't like her first trip on it at all. So she decides not to ride it home after school. For grades K-3. 1992.

[Download from BARD: Junie B. Jones and the Stupid Smelly Bus](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB054794

Also available on cassette RC054794

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR17950](#)

Also available in braille BR017950

Nora Webster a Novel By Colm Tóibín

Read by Gabriella Cavallero Reading time 10 hours, 49 minutes

Newly widowed Nora Webster tries to cope with the well-meaning but misplaced sympathies of her neighbors. They share predictable advice--how to raise her young sons without their father, how to get a job, and how to live as a solitary entity--but Nora can use none of it. Bestseller. 2014.

[Download from BARD: Nora Webster a Novel](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB080260

Brown Girl Dreaming By Jacqueline Woodson

Read by Jacqueline Woodson Reading time 3 hours, 58 minutes

In this autobiography told through vivid poems, Woodson explores her childhood as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s and her growing awareness of the civil rights movement. Reflects on the joy of finding her voice through writing stories, despite her difficulties with reading as a child.

Commercial audiobook. For grades 4-7. 2014.

[Download from BARD: Brown Girl Dreaming](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB080026

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR20541](#)

Also available in braille BR020541

Books from a Summer reading list shared by President Obama in 2016.

Barbarian Days A Surfing Life By William Finnegan

Read by William Finnegan Reading time 18 hours, 10 minutes

Memoir of an obsession and a way of life by a writer who started surfing as a child. Describes chasing waves all over the world, wandering for years through the South Pacific, Australia, Asia, and Africa. Details the intricacies of famous waves and his own apprenticeships to them. Pulitzer Prize. Unrated.

Commercial audiobook. 2015.

[Download from BARD Barbarian Days a Surfing Life](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB082098

The Girl on the Train By Paula Hawkins

Read by Louise Brealey Reading time 11 hours, 1 minute

Rachel's train commute to London passes her former house--now inhabited by her ex-husband and his new family. She also observes a happy young neighboring couple--but then the wife goes missing. Rachel believes she witnessed a critical clue, but her alcoholic blackouts make her an unreliable witness. Strong language, descriptions of sex, and some violence. Commercial audiobook. 2015.

[Download from BARD: The Girl on the Train](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB080635

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR20688](#)

Also available in braille BR020688

H Is for Hawk By Helen Macdonald

Read by Martha Harmon Pardee Reading time 10 hours, 41 minutes

Cambridge lecturer describes the year she spent training a goshawk, a decision she came to after the sudden death of her father in 2007. Discusses the field of falconry, which her father avidly practiced, the grieving process, and author T.H. White's book *The Goshawk* (DB 42687). Bestseller. 2014.

[Download from BARD: H is for Hawk](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB081386

Seveneves By Neal Stephenson

Read by Madelyn Buzzard Reading time 34 hours, 37 minutes

A catastrophic event forces humanity to band together to survive, though only a handful succeed and flee Earth. Five thousand years later, their descendants number three billion and comprise seven distinct races. They embark on a journey into the unknown, to an alien world--Earth. Some strong language. 2015.

[Download from BARD: Seveneves](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB083040

The Underground Railroad By Colson Whitehead

Read by Bahni Turpin Reading time 10 hours, 45 minutes

Cora, a third-generation slave, flees the plantation where she lives. She escapes with a man who claims to know how to get to the Underground Railroad. Once there, she discovers it is an actual railroad, and every stop shows her moments of horror and joy. Unrated. Commercial audiobook. 2016.

[Download from BARD: The Underground Railroad](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB085212

Books from a Summer reading list shared by President Obama in 2015.

Washington A Life By Ron Chernow

Read by Michael. Scherer Reading time 38 hours 59 minutes
Award-winning author pens a comprehensive biography of America's first president. Uses previously unavailable letters and papers to delve into the personality behind the icon. Details Washington's private life, including his beliefs about slavery, while chronicling the wars and political conflicts that shaped the country's path. Some violence. Pulitzer Prize. Bestseller. 2010.

[Download from BARD: Washington a Life](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB072132

Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Read by Ta-Nehisi Coates Reading time 3 hours, 37 minutes
Columnist and editor for the Atlantic Monthly examines the history of contentious race relations in America. He reflects on the ways racial inequality plays out in his personal past and in the twenty-first century, and imagines the world his teenage son may inherit. Unrated. Commercial audiobook. Bestseller. 2015.

[Download from BARD: Between the World and Me](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB082201

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR21183](#)

Also available in braille BR021183

All the Light We Cannot See a Novel By Anthony Doerr

Read by Jill Fox Reading time 16 hours, 3 minutes
When Paris is invaded by the Nazis, Marie-Laure LeBlanc's father evacuates her to St. Malo to stay with her great-uncle. Blind since the age of six, Marie-Laure must learn the town by the scale model her father has left. Then, the Germans arrive. Violence and some descriptions of sex. Bestseller. Pulitzer Prize winner. 2014.

[Download from BARD: All the Light We Cannot See](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB079182

The Sixth Extinction an Unnatural History By Elizabeth Kolbert

Read by Kerry Dukin

Reading time 11 hours, 20 minutes

Editor of *The Ends of the Earth* (DB 66582) examines the causes of the five prehistoric mass extinctions and compares previous conditions with those existing in the twenty-first century. Posits that humanity is on the brink of the sixth mass extinction and is the primary cause of it. Bestseller. Pulitzer Prize. 2014.

[Download from BARD: The Sixth Extinction an Unnatural History](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB078463

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR20478](#)

Also available in braille BR020478

The Lowland By Jhumpa Lahiri

Read by Andy Pyle

Reading time 13 hours 55 minutes

Brothers Udayan and Subhash grow up on the outskirts of Calcutta. In the 1960s Udayan falls in with a radical movement and helps plot revolution. Subhash disapproves, but begins a new life in America--until he's called back home. Some violence and some explicit descriptions of sex. Bestseller. 2013.

[Download from BARD: The Lowland](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB077581

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR20304](#)

Also available in braille BR020304

All That Is By James Salter

Read by Erik Sandvold

Reading time 12 hours, 2 minutes

World War II veteran Philip Bowman becomes an editor at a small New York publishing house. He marries a wealthy Virginian, divorces, and has affairs with both a married Englishwoman and a divorcée. But true love eludes him. Some strong language and some explicit descriptions of sex. Bestseller. 2013.

[Download from BARD: All That Is](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB076675

During a visit to a public library in 2015, President Obama revealed these titles as some of his favorite classics from childhood.

The Great Gatsby By F. Scott Fitzgerald

Read by Alexander Scourby Reading time

The glitter and recklessness of the Jazz Age is the backdrop for this novel about Jay Gatsby's desperate attempt to recapture the past, and along with it, the love of Daisy Buchanan. Amid extravagant parties at Gatsby's palatial estate, his neighbor narrates the story of his obsession with the American dream. 1925.

[Download from BARD: The Great Gatsby](#)

Also available in digital cartridge DB16147

Of Mice and Men By John Steinbeck

Read by Graci Ragsdale Miller Reading time 3 hours, 12 minutes

A tale of the far-reaching bonds of friendship between two itinerant ranch workers: George, the more levelheaded, and Lennie, more dependent. Their dream of owning a small farm is doomed by Lennie's unintentional overuse of his physical strength and George's honorable attempt to resolve the problem it causes. Some strong language. 1937.

[Download from BARD: of Mice and Men](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB048515

Also available on cassette RC048515

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR08851](#)

Also available in braille BR008851

Where the Wild Things Are By Maurice Sendak

Read by J. Michael McCullough Reading time 4 minutes

After being sent to bed without supper for misbehaving, Max puts on his wolf suit and sails away 'through night and day and in and out of weeks and almost over a year' to where the wild things are. An imaginative fantasy for grades K-3. Caldecott Medal 1964.

[Download from BARD: Where the Wild Things Are](#)

Also available on cassette RC022906

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR16352](#)

Also available in braille BR016352 or BR005919

Treasure Island By Robert Louis Stevenson

Read by Erik Sandvold

Reading time 7 hours, 38 minutes

Young Jim Hawkins finds a map in a dead seaman's possessions. His friends, Squire Trelawney and Doctor Livesey, realize it's a treasure map. They hire a ship, unaware that the crew includes the pirate Long John Silver. For grades 6-9 and older readers. 1881.

[Download from BARD: Treasure Island](#)

Also available on cassette RC052436

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR13682](#)

Also available in braille BR008055 or BR013682

According to President Obama's Facebook page and an interview with the New York Times, these titles are some of his all-time favorite books.

Parting the Waters America in the King Years, 1954-63 By Taylor Branch

Read by Ralph Lowenstein Reading time 48 hours, 5 minutes

Wide-ranging chronicle of a turbulent decade when the civil-rights movement launched its determined, nonviolent battle for America's social conscience and soul. Branch focuses on the period that begins with Martin Luther King's 1954 arrival as pastor of Montgomery's Dexter Avenue Baptist Church and ends with the assassination of President Kennedy. Pulitzer Prize.

[Download from BARD: Parting the Waters America in the King Years...](#)

Also available on cassette RC029759

The Souls of Black Folk By W.E.B. Du Bois

Read by Chuck Young Reading time 8 hours, 14 minutes

Fourteen essays and sketches by civil rights activist, published in 1903, examine African American experiences in the post-Civil War South. Argues that emancipation should have brought immediate racial equality and that racial accommodation policies reflected a sellout. Centennial edition includes 2003 introduction by Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer/historian David Levering Lewis. 1903.

[Download from BARD: The Souls of Black Folk](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB063648

Also available on cassette RC063648

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR013240](#)

Also available in braille BR13240

The Federalist Papers a Collection of Essays Written in Support of the Constitution of the United States : from the original text of Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, John Jay By Roy P. Fairfield

Read by Bob Butz Reading time 13 hours, 28 minutes

Written by Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison to urge the voters of New York to ratify the U.S. Constitution, the "Federalist Papers" were the first important commentary on that document and continue to provide the basis for its interpretation. Fifty-one of these landmark essays are presented here along with extensive notes and a guide to writings about the "Federalist Papers."

[Download from BARD: The Federalist Papers a Collection of Essays...](#)

Also available on cassette RC026691

An Autobiography the Story of My Experiments with Truth By Mahatma Gandhi

Read by Patrick Horgan Reading time 16 hours, 37 minutes=
Written during a prison term in the 1920s, describes the forces that molded the Indian leader's religious and intellectual development. 1927.

[Download from BARD: An Autobiography the Story of My Experiments...](#)

Also available on cassette RC018041

The Power and the Glory By Graham Greene

Read by Jack Hrkach Reading time 8 hours, 7 minutes
As a fugitive Mexican priest flees from the authorities, he risks his life many times to bring spiritual comfort to the Mexican poor. Despite his human weakness for alcohol, Father Montez remains true to the spirit of his religious vows.

[Download from BARD: The Power and the Glory](#)

Also available on cassette RC016796

The Quiet American By Graham Greene

Read by Graeme Malcolm Reading time 5 hours, 44 minutes
Set in Saigon during the French occupation of Vietnam, this English adventure novel centers on the clash of conflicting cultures. The story revolves around Fowler, a skeptical British journalist; Phuong, his enthusiastic American sent out by Washington on a secret mission. Add Communist guerrillas to the French presence, and the situation for this trio escalates from a moral dilemma to an international struggle.

[Download from BARD: The Quiet American](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB036154

Also available on cassette RC036154

The Best and the Brightest By David Halberstam

Read by Fred Major Reading time 37 hours, 35 minutes
Study of the nature of political power, of the decision-making process that caused U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, and of key figures in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. 2001 foreword by Senator John McCain. Followed in 2001 by War in a Time of Peace (RC 53021). Bestseller. 1969.

[Download from BARD: The Best and the Brightest](#)

Also available on cassette RC053020

Moby Dick, or, The Whale By Herman Melville

Read by Gordon Gould

Reading time 25 hours, 36 minutes

Sailor Ishmael narrates this allegory of human potential and limitations. Seeking adventure, Ishmael signs on as a harpooner with Captain Ahab's whaling ship. Once at sea, the crew discovers that, despite dire warnings from other ships and a prophet, Captain Ahab is obsessed with killing Moby Dick, the white whale responsible for his missing leg. Violence. 1991.

[Download from BARD: Moby-Dick or The Whale](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB034184

Also available on cassette RC034184 or RC047779

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR14641](#)

Also available in braille BR014641 or BR001608

Song Of Solomon By Toni Morrison

Read by Barry Bernson

Reading time 11 hours, 58 minutes

This novel surveys nearly a century of American history as it impinges upon four generations of a single black family. Macon Dead III, known as Milkman, is the first black baby allowed to be born in Mercy Hospital in the 1930s. Milkman undertakes an epic journey into an understanding of his family's heritage and, hence, himself. Strong language and descriptions of sex.

[Download from BARD: Song of Solomon](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB038330

Also available on cassette RC038330

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR09632](#)

Also available in braille BR009632

Gilead by Marilynne Robinson

Read by Roy Avers

Reading time 9 hours, 22 minutes

1950s. Dying seventy-six-year-old Gilead, Iowa, minister John Ames writes a parting letter to his young son. John reflects on the tensions between his pacifist father and militant abolitionist grandfather (both preachers), the death of his first wife and child, the gospel, a friend's transgressions, and life's eternal mystery. Pulitzer Prize. Bestseller. 2004.

[Download from BARD: Gilead](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB059561

Also available on cassette RC059561

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR16160](#)

Also available in braille BR016160

An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations By Adam Smith

Read by Maurice Shroder Reading time 49 hours, 54 minutes

This 1776 publication is the first formulation of classical English economics. The Scottish philosopher's theories of value, population and distribution have had tremendous influence on such men as Thomas Malthus and Karl Marx, and much of Smith's thought remains relevant today.

[Download from BARD: An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the...](#)

Also available on cassette RC023688

Cancer Ward By Aleksandr Isaevich Solzhenitsyn

Read by Jack Hrkach Reading time 21 hours, 56 minutes

Based on his own experiences when he was a cancer patient in a Soviet hospital, the Russian Nobel Prize Winner's novel fearlessly attacks the government of his country. The story focuses on Pavel Rusanov, a high official suffering from a tumor. Some strong language.

[Download from BARD: Cancer Ward](#)

Also available on cassette RC015883

All the King's Men By Robert Penn Warren

Read by Steven Carpenter Reading time 20 hours, 57 minutes

Restored edition, reconstructed from the author's original typescript, recreates the world of a corrupt southern politician of the 1920s and 1930s. Country boy Willie (Stark) Talos rises to become governor of his state only to be brought down by his personal failings. 2001 editorial afterword by Noel Polk. Strong language. Pulitzer Prize. 1946.

[Download from BARD: All the King's Men](#)

Also available on cassette RC053553

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR13840](#)

Also available in braille BR013840

Recent books President Obama has read and shared:

The Three-Body Problem By Liu Cixin

Read by Gary Tipton Reading time 13 hours, 58 minutes

A secret military project broadcasts signals into space to establish extraterrestrial contact, but when an alien civilization on the brink of destruction intercepts them, they decide to invade Earth. In response, sides form between those who would fight the invaders or welcome them. Originally published in Chinese. Some strong language. 2006.

[Download from BARD: The Three-Body Problem](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB080931

What Is the What the Autobiography of Valentino Achak Deng : a Novel By

Dave Eggers

Read by Ted Stoddard Reading time 20 hours, 46 minutes

Fictional account of real-life immigrant Valentino Achak Deng, a Sudanese refugee whose Dinka village was overrun by Muslim militants. Valentino survives a marathon march to refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya. Resettled in America, he faces further tragedies while adjusting to a strange culture. Violence and strong language. Bestseller. 2006.

[Download from BARD: What is the What the Autobiography of Valentino...](#)

Also available on cassette RC063687

Invisible Man By Ralph Ellison

Read by Peter Jay Fernandez Reading time 20 hours, 57 minutes

Classic novel of a young black man's search for identity. Follows the unnamed protagonist from his youth in a Southern town through the depression years in Harlem, where he examines and rejects the values thrust on him by both whites and blacks. Some strong language. Nat'l Book Award. 1947.

[Download from BARD: Invisible Man](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB056346

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR14988](#)

Also available in braille BR014988

Gone Girl By Gillian Flynn

Read By Mare Trevathan Reading time 17 hours, 55 minutes

Nick and Amy alternate telling the story of their troubled marriage, their move from New York to Nick's Missouri hometown, and Amy's disappearance on their fifth wedding anniversary. As clues begin to implicate Nick, he learns more about Amy. Strong language, some violence, and some explicit descriptions of sex. Bestseller. 2012.

[Download from BARD: Gone Girl](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB074888

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR19868](#)

Also available in braille BR019868

Purity By Jonathan Franzen

Read by Stephen Van Doren Reading time 23 hours, 13 minutes

Recent college grad Purity "Pip" Tyler wants to get away from her needy mother and her crushing student debts. She takes an internship with the Sunlight Project, a hacker group dedicated to uncovering Internet secrets, and meets Andreas Wolf, the group's charismatic leader. Some strong language and some descriptions of sex. 2015.

[Download from BARD: Purity](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB082740

Fates and Furies By Lauren Groff

Read by Julia Whelan Reading time 14 hours 6 minutes

The story of a marriage, told in two parts. First is Lotto's story. A failed actor, he becomes a successful playwright with his wife, Mathilde, at his side. Mathilde's perspective on their shared years is quite different from Lotto's, however, with her own secrets and desires. Unrated. Commercial audiobook. 2015.

[Download from BARD: Fates and Furies](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB082476

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR21329](#)

Also available in braille BR021329

To the End of the Land By David Grossman

Read by Madelyn Buzzard Reading time 27 hours, 5 minutes

Israel, 2000. Ora, estranged from her husband Ilan, leaves home to avoid the military notifiers in case her son Ofer dies in the war. She goes hiking with Avram, her former lover and father of Ofer, and tells him about his son.

Translated from Hebrew. Some descriptions of sex. 2010.

[Download from BARD: To the End of the Land](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB073214

Plainsong By Kent Haruf

Read by Jim Zeiger Reading time 9 hours, 6 minutes

Life in the small town of Holt, Colorado, includes a high school teacher caring for his two young sons as his wife leaves him. His coworker, later his lover, convinces two old rancher brothers to take in an outcast pregnant student.

Some strong language and some descriptions of sex. Bestseller. Alex Award. 1999.

[Download from BARD: Plainsong](#)

Also available on cassette RC049056

Redeployment by Phil Klay

Read by Chuck Young Reading time 8 hours, 23 minutes

Twelve stories about soldiers at war in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the personal wars they fight reintegrating into society at home. In the title story, a soldier who had to shoot dogs on the battlefield must readjust to life in suburban America.

Violence. Nat'l Book Award. 2014.

[Download from BARD: Redeployment](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB078988

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR20602](#)

Also available in braille BR020602

A Bend in the River By V. S. Naipau

Read by Ted Stoddard

Reading time 11 hours 33 minutes

In a recently independent central African nation, Salim, a Muslim of Indian origin, purchases a defunct store in a town at a bend in the river. Hoping to prosper but feeling trapped, Salim describes the people, political climate, and needs of a society in upheaval.

[Download from BARD: A Bend in the River](#)

Also available on cassette RC048487

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR19152](#)

Also available in braille BR019152

Netherland By Joseph O'Neill

Read by Robert Sams

Reading time 9 hours 16 minutes

New York City. After the 2001 terrorist attacks, Dutch-born Hans van den Broek's British wife Rachel returns to London with their son Jake. Lonely Hans joins a local cricket league and befriends Trinidadian Chuck Ramkissoon, who is a shady businessman but a great pal. Strong language. Bestseller. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Netherland](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067189

The Way Home By George P. Pelecanos

Read by Conrad Feininger

Reading time 7 hours, 54 minutes

Released from a juvenile-detention facility, Chris Flynn goes to work for his disappointed father, laying carpet. When Chris and a buddy find a stash of money on a job, they don't take it--but it still poses a threat to Chris. Violence, strong language, and some explicit descriptions of sex. 2009.

[Download from BARD: The Way Home](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB070614

Lush Life By Richard Price

Read by Jim Zeiger

Reading time 15 hours, 43 minutes

New York, Lower East Side. Frustrated actor-writer Eric Cash claims two teens mugged him and his drinking companions as they stumbled home, shooting Ike, an aspiring writer. But when Ike dies, detectives Matty Clark and Yolonda Bello arrest Eric for homicide. Violence, strong language, and some explicit descriptions of sex. Bestseller. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Lush Life](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB066237

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR17827](#)

Also available in braille BR017827

Harry Potter Series By J.K. Rowling

The first book is: Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

Next books in the series: Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

Read by Erik Sandvold

Reading time 8 hours, 55 minutes

On Harry Potter's eleventh birthday, he learns that he is more than an unwanted orphan. The Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry recruits him because he has inherent magical abilities. As he purchases his school supplies--robes, wand, and messenger owl--Harry looks forward to attending his new boarding school. For grades 4-7. Bestseller.

[Download from BARD: Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB047260

Also available on cassette RC047260

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR011879](#)

Also available in braille BR011879 OR BR017774

Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights By Salman Rushdie

Read by Robert G Slade

Reading time 11 hours, 28 minutes

Interconnected fantastic tales. Centuries ago, a jinn princess fell in love with a mortal philosopher; their descendants in the present have no idea of the power they contain. The roots of violence in the world lie in a conflict between light and dark forces embodied in these jinni. Some strong language and some descriptions of sex. Commercial audiobook. 2015.

[Download from BARD: Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB082514

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR21260](#)

Also available in braille BR021260

In Dubious Battle By John Steinbeck

Read by Jim Zeiger

Reading time 11 hours, 17 minutes

Jim Nolan leads disgruntled migrant workers in a confrontation with California landowners during the depression. Bestseller after its original publication in 1936. Conveys several levels of meaning about social forces and poverty in addition to its portrayal of labor strife. Some strong language and some violence.

[Download from BARD: In Dubious Battle](#)

Also available on cassette RC049209

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR12516](#)

Also available in braille BR012516

Cutting for Stone By A. Verghese

Read by Mark Ashby

Reading time 21 hours, 24 minutes

Ethiopia, 1954. Twin brothers Shiva and Marion Stone's Indian-nun mother dies during their birth and their British father abandons them. As revolution brews decades later, Marion, a surgeon, flees to America, where he eventually confronts his past. Some violence, some strong language, and some explicit descriptions of sex. 2009.

[Download from BARD: Cutting for Stone](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB070131

Collected Poems, 1948-1984 By Derek Walcott

Read by Earle Hyman

Reading time 12, 14 minutes

Includes generous selections from the poet's nine books of poetry and adds the entire text of "Another Life," his autobiography in verse, which is a tribute to the formative influence of the island of St. Lucia. Walcott is primarily a stylist who leaves his signature in complex chains of imagery.

[Download from BARD: Collected Poems, 1948-1984](#)

Also available on cassette RC026220

Books about other presidents which President Obama has said he has turned to for advice.

Defining Moment: FDR's Hundred Days and the Triumph of Hope By

Jonathan Alter

Read by Lou Harpenau

Reading time 14 hours 15 minutes

Concentrates on the beginning of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's presidency in 1933 (the "Hundred Days"), when federal legislation was implemented to provide immediate relief from the effects of the Great Depression. Details the programs that were launched, including Social Security, and the failure to implement others, including universal healthcare. 2006.

[Download from BARD: Defining Moment: FDR's Hundred Days and the...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB068945

Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln By Doris Kearns

Goodwin

Read by Robert Sams

Reading time 35 hours, 57 minutes

Pulitzer Prize-winner illustrates the political acumen of Abraham Lincoln.

Highlights the careers of Lincoln's three prime competitors in the Republican party--William Seward, Salmon Chase, and Edward Bates, men more qualified and educated, whom he beat for the 1860 nomination for chief executive.

Discusses their subsequent appointments to the cabinet. Bestseller. 2005.

[Download from BARD: Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB061162

Also available on cassette RC061162

Lincoln: The Biography of a Writer By Fred Kaplan

4 v. of braille

Explores the life of Abraham Lincoln through the language of his writings. Posits that Lincoln's boyhood readings of Burns, Byron, Shakespeare, Aesop's fables, and the Bible shaped his ideas about liberty, love, and human nature and led to his use of clear, common speech to convey morality and democracy. 2008.

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR18404](#)

Also available in braille BR018404

John Adams By David McCullough

Read by Gary Telles

Reading time 33 hours, 4 minutes

Award-winning author chronicles the life and times of America's second president, New Englander John Adams (1735-1826). Examines his pivotal role as revolutionary, diplomat, and politician as well as his friendship--and rivalry--with Thomas Jefferson. Primary sources detail his relationship with his wife, Abigail, four children, and notable contemporaries. Bestseller. Pulitzer Prize. 2001.

[Download from BARD: John Adams](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB052275

Also available on cassette RC052275

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR13426](#)

Also available in braille BR013426

The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt By Edmund Morris

Read by George Guidall-Shapiro Reading time 28 hours, 29 minutes

A detailed look at the colorful personality and life of the man who was a leader in the New York State Assembly at the age of 23, second-in-command of the Rough Riders, and President of the United States. Traces events from his birth in 1858 until his assumption of the Presidency in 1901. Pulitzer Prize. Nat'l Book Award.

[Download from BARD: the Rise of Theodore Roosevelt](#)

Also available on cassette RC014168

FDR By Jean Edward Smith

Read by Cashman, Marc.

Reading time 32 hour 45 minutes

Author of John Marshall (RC 44531) draws on archives to pen a biography of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the thirty-second president of the United States. Chronicles his political career as governor of New York and four terms as commander in chief. Explores his complex personal life involving his family and mistresses. Commercial audiobook. 2007.

[Download from BARD: FDR](#)

Also available on cassette RC063751

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR17365](#)

Also available in braille BR017365

Recent nonfiction and informative books President Obama has read.

The Fire Next Time By James Baldwin

Read by Gordon Heath

Reading time 2 hours 15 minutes

In two essays, combining autobiography with political philosophy, Baldwin expresses how he feels as a Black American in White America. Includes a section on the Black Muslim movement and a meeting with its leader, Elijah Muhammad.

[Download from BARD: The Fire Next Time](#)

Also available on cassette RC012439

Behind the Beautiful Forevers By Katherine Boo

Read by Catherine Byers

Reading time 9 hours, 23 minutes

Pulitzer Prize-winning writer's 2007-2011 observations of the inhabitants of Annawadi, a slum surrounding the luxury hotels at the Mumbai, India, airport. Portrays the lives of disadvantaged families who battle hunger and disease and describes India's political and religious tensions and police corruption. Violence and strong language. Bestseller. Nat'l Book Award. 2012.

[Download from BARD: Behind the Beautiful Forevers](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB074457

The Power Broker Robert Moses and the Fall of New York By Robert A.

Caro

Read by Richard Blanding

Reading time 68 hours, 53 minutes

Biographical critique of Robert Moses as the most powerful man in New York for almost half a century. Behind the scenes he shaped the city's politics and physical structure. Pulitzer Prize.

[Download from BARD: The Power Broker Robert Moses and the Fall of...](#)

Also available on cassette RC017458

Ghost Wars the Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001 By Steve Coll

Read by Bill Wallace

Reading time 30 hours, 58 minutes

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and Washington Post managing editor Steve Coll describes how the United States became embroiled in the affairs of Afghanistan from 1979 to 2001. Chronicles the efforts to control the country by CIA spies, the former Soviet Union, local warlords, and Arab leaders. Some strong language. Bestseller. Pulitzer Prize. 2004.

[Download from BARD: Ghost Wars the Secret History of the CIA...](#)

Also available on cassette RC057940

Hot, Flat, and Crowded Why We Need a Green Revolution and How It Can Renew America By Thomas L. Friedman

Read by Patrick Downer

Reading time 20 hours, 8 minutes

Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist and author of The World Is Flat (RC 60317) examines the contributions of global warming, population growth, and the rise of the middle class to Earth's instability. Urges the adoption of strategies for clean, efficient, renewable energy to improve the environment and revitalize America. Bestseller. 2008.

[Download from BARD Hot, Flat, and Crowded Why We Need a Green...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067562

Lessons in Disaster: McGeorge Bundy and the Path to War in Vietnam By

Gordon M. Goldstein

Read by Jim Zeiger

Reading time 11 hours, 31 minutes

Political scientist Goldstein analyzes the decisions that maintained and deepened America's presence in Vietnam. Highlights the involvement of McGeorge Bundy, national security advisor in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, whom Goldstein knew personally. Examines the role of the presidency and asserts that President Kennedy would have eventually left Vietnam. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Lessons in Disaster: McGeorge Bundy and the...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB071449

Sapiens A Brief History of Humankind By Yuval N. Harari

Read by Bill Burton

Reading time 16 hours 56 minutes

A discussion of the development of human culture and history, from the emergence of the first species of the genus Homo over 2 million years ago to the twenty-first century. Examines progress from the standpoints of biology, anthropology, paleontology, and economics. Translated from the 2011 Hebrew edition. 2015

[Download from BARD: Sapiens A Brief History of Humankind](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB081335

Thinking, Fast and Slow By Daniel Kahneman

Read by Mark Ashby

Reading time 19 hours 55 minutes

Nobel Prize-winning psychologist synthesizes decades of research on intuition versus systematic thinking. Analyzes quick, emotional thinking, which he calls System 1, and deliberative, logical thinking, which he calls System 2. Discusses the ways people make choices and provides techniques to use to guard against mental glitches. Bestseller. 2011.

[Download from BARD: Thinking, Fast and Slow](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB073958

Andy Grove: The Life and Times of an American By Richard S Tedlow

Read by Jake Williams

Reading time 25 hours 14 minutes

Harvard professor traces the life of Andy Grove, from his youth in war-torn Hungary in the 1940s to his 1987-98 leadership of Intel. Also follows Intel's evolution, from its 1968 creation to its trajectory from semiconductors to microprocessors under Grove's management. Discusses Grove's ability to survive corporate setbacks. 2006.

[Download from BARD: Andy Grove: The Life and Times of an American](#)

Also available on cassette RC064663

The Post-American World By Fareed Zakaria

Read by Patrick Downer

Reading time 9 hours 36 minutes

Author of the The Future of Freedom (RC 56018) posits that, as a result of globalization, countries such as India and China have better economies than the United States does. Decries U.S. geopolitical decline and suggests ways America can become a partner with the rest of the world. Bestseller. 2008.

[Download from BARD: The Post-American World](#)

Also available on cassette RC066884

Additional authors that President Obama has recommended at some point during his presidency.

Saul Bellow
Junot Díaz
E.L. Doctorow
Dave Eggers
Ralph Waldo Emerson
Langston Hughes
Thomas Jefferson
Barbara Kingsolver
Abraham Lincoln
Friedrich Nietzsche
Philip Roth
St. Augustine
Zadie Smith
Paul Tillich
Mark Twain
Richard Wright
Malcolm X