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Binging the *Binge Mode* Podcast: Implications for Literary Analysis

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Binge watching has become a popular way of viewing in succession and over continuous stretches of time. This usually occurs with series of television shows, films and other popular culture content available via cable and other streaming subscription providers such as *Netflix*, *Amazon Prime*, and *Hulu*, among others (Rubenking & Bracken, 2020). It is particularly common among young people, with 86% of individuals ages 18-34 admitting being engaged in this behavior (Pangarkar, 2024).

Binge watching fulfills “innate human needs and wants, such as a desire to consume well-constructed stories and to connect with others” (Rubenking & Bracken, 2020, back cover). Other motivations are “catching up, relaxation, sense of completion, cultural inclusion, and improved viewing experience” (Steiner & Xu, 2020, p. 82). At the same time, binge viewing can have negative consequences such as “the symptoms of behavioural [original spelling] addiction, despair, loneliness, and escapism” (Amr et al., 2024, p. 47).

This widespread behavior has been studied in a number of fields such as psychology (Nanda & Banerjee, 2020), media and cultural studies (Wight & Cooper, 2022), and business, advertising and marketing (Schweidel & Moe, 2016). It has, however, received little attention from education studies, especially English language arts education. Jarvie and Neville’s article “Not Even a Maester: Considering *Binge Mode* as English Teaching Practice” in this issue of *Ubiquity* addresses this gap.

Specifically, in their qualitative study which involved binge watching as a methodological approach and a data collection mechanism, Jarvie and Neville examine the ways in which the hosts Rubin and Concepcion discuss and analyze popular books, TV shows, and movies in their podcast, *Binge Mode*. They are, in particular, interested in how close reading, literary analysis and fandom intersect and shape the ways in which the hosts approach reading,

analyzing and co-constructing individual and collective discourse and engagement with the works they review in their podcast.

Thinking with enjoyment theory (e.g., Muhammad, 2023) and the multiliteracies perspective (e.g., New London Group, 1996), they direct us to consider how English teacher educators, secondary English language arts teachers and teacher candidates can enact differently close reading and literary analysis in the classroom by expanding the notions of reading, discussion format (i.e., podcasting) and literary analysis practices (e.g., relational and joy-driven analytic styles), and as a result, improve youth's engagement with a literary text. Readers are encouraged to dive deep into this issue and learn more about the authors' binging methodology and the outcome of it.

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Bio: Dr. Ewa McGrail is Professor of Language and Literacy Education at Georgia State University. In her research, she examines digital writing, multimodal composition, and multimodal assessment; copyright and meaning making; critical media literacy and social representations in mass media, popular culture and literature.