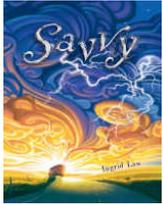


Book Picks for Juniors & Young Adults

Tracy's Picks: Ages 8-12



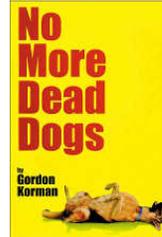
SAVVY Ingrid Law

This book is a wonderful comic adventure story with a lot of heart and a touch of magic. Mibs Beaumont can't wait for her thirteenth birthday—not because she wants to be a teenager, but because in her family that is when you get your “savvy.” Her oldest brother Rocket can create electricity; fourteen-year-old Fish can summon wind and rain and has even caused hurricanes. But when her father is seriously injured in a car accident only days before her special day, Mibs is certain that her savvy will be the key to her Poppa's recovery. Unfortunately, she is stuck at a boring birthday party she doesn't even want while her father is in a Salina hospital 90 miles down the road. So Mibs, along with Fish and their precocious younger brother Samson, plus the pastor's rebellious teenage daughter and her brother Will Junior (who keeps staring at Mibs for some reason) stow away on a pink bus headed for Salina (they hope!). **J LAW**



WHALES ON STILTS! M.T. Anderson

Compared to her friends Jasper (a gadget-mad inventor) and Katie (who stars in her own Fear Street-style book series), Lily considers herself merely ordinary. But when she discovers that her father's boss plans to take over the world with an army of whales, it is up to Lily to save the day. Perfect for kids with a love of the ridiculous, *Whales* is the book equivalent to Saturday morning cartoons. **J ANDE / CD J BOOK ANDE**



NO MORE DEAD DOGS Gordan Korman

Wallace Wallace (no, that's not a typo!) refuses to tell a lie. So when he writes a book review for *Old Shep, My Pal*, he tells it straight: the book sucked. Unfortunately, his eighth-grade English teacher doesn't appreciate his honesty. The book is Mr. Fogelman's favorite, so Wallace is put in detention and suspended from the football team until he writes a review that Fogelman approves of. But Wallace sticks to his guns and, out of boredom, gets involved in the school play, a dramatization of *Old Shep, My Pal*. Wacky characters and comic mayhem ensue as Wallace slowly finds himself taking control of the play from its director—Mr. Fogelman! This is the perfect book for resistant readers, especially those who question why the dog always dies in award-winning books. **CAS J KORM**



THE MYSTERIOUS BENEDICT SOCIETY Trenton Lee Stewart

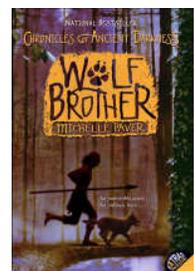
After undergoing a series of mind-bending tests, four orphans are chosen by the mysterious Mr. Benedict for a secret mission. Using their unique abilities (Reynie is a wiz at puzzles, Kate is fearless and enterprising, Sticky is a walking encyclopedia, and Constance is, well, troublesome), the children must work together to solve mysteries and, *ahem...* save the world! Wonderfully developed characters, lots of action, and clever twists reminiscent of the Lemony Snicket series make this an excellent adventure story that children and older readers will adore equally. **J STEW / CD J BOOK STEW**

Jada Recommends:

CHRONICLES OF ANCIENT DARKNESS SERIES by Michelle Paver

Torak, an orphan who can communicate with wolves, must defeat the evil forces responsible for his father's death. This is a popular fantasy series among both children and adults. Ridley Scott's film of Wolf Brother is currently in production.

Book 1: Wolf Brother
Book 2: Spirit Walker
Book 3: Soul Eater
Book 4: Outcast
Book 5: Oathbreaker
Book 6: Ghost Hunter
(Book 6 will be released 9/09)
J PAVE

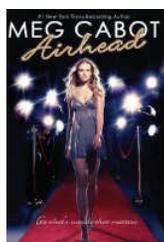


Tracy's Picks: Younger Teens



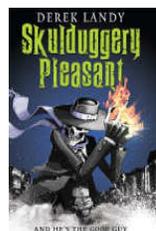
THE FORETELLING Alice Hoffman

Rain's life began after her mother, Queen of the Amazons, was attacked and raped. Named in remembrance of that sorrowful event, Rain grew up without the love or affection of her mother. But as the tribe's future queen, Rain does have the support of her "sisters," who teach her the skills she will need to know: beekeeping, archery, and Rain's favorite—horsemanship. But one day when she is out with her horse and bear cub, Rain meets a young man who her all-female tribe considers an enemy. A friendship develops and this, along with a mysterious prophecy, causes Rain to question the warring ways of her tribe. Her desire for peace threatens her position as her mother's heir and Rain must decide if she will bow to tradition or challenge the mother who is an intimidating stranger to her. This is a quick and fascinating read, and the unusual plot and setting will appeal to both guys and girls of all ages. **FIC HOFF / J HOFF**



AIRHEAD Meg Cabot

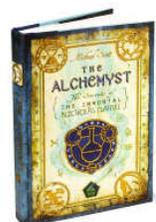
Sixteen-year-old Emerson Watts doesn't care that the popular kids at school—even her younger sister Frida—criticize her for being uncool. She's happy with who she is, baggy sweatpants, make-up free face and all. At least she has Christopher, a fellow video-game addict and her best friend in the world. It's just too bad Christopher hardly even notices she's a girl... And Em *really* wishes he would notice! But Em's life is turned upside down when she accompanies her sister to the opening of a new department store. A freak accident lands her in the hospital, and when Em wakes up she is a different person. Literally. Suddenly she has the body of teen supermodel Nikki Ashton—and she is expected to take over Nikki's life and responsibilities as well. This includes a modeling contract, an endearing but ditsy best friend, and three famous (and incredibly hot) admirers. Plus Em must figure out a way to hold on to her old life—school, her family, and, of course, Christopher. *Airhead* is a fast and funny read that places an engaging central character in a bizarre yet fascinating predicament. And after the cliffhanger ending readers will be clamoring for the sequel (*Being Nikki*), which is due out in May 2009. **J CABO / CD J BOOK CABO**



SKULDUGGERY PLEASANT Derek Landy

In case you missed the small print on the front of the cover, it says "And he's the *good* guy." Skulduggery Pleasant is indeed an unlikely hero—a living skeleton with the skills of a sorcerer and the style of Cary Grant. And although she is less unusual (or, at least at first glance), Stephanie makes a worthy heroine. A precocious twelve-year-old with a smart mouth, she inherits more than a spooky mansion and oodles of cash when her favorite uncle (a hermitlike author of horror novels she isn't allowed to read) dies. She also gets a crash course in a dangerous magical world straight out of one of her uncle's bestsellers. When she finds out Skulduggery is investigating her uncle's death, Stephanie talks her way into a partnership and the two must work together, using wit and magic, to thwart evil. This is a wonderful fantasy/mystery/adventure novel, and the sparkling dialog and wonderful characters make it one of the best—and funniest!—I've encountered. Harry Potter fans will definitely want to give this one a look. **J LAND**

Judy Wells Recommends:



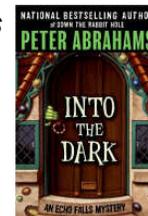
THE SECRETS OF THE IMMORTAL NICHOLAS FLAMEL SERIES by Michael Scott Book 1: The Alchemist Book 2: The Magician

Twins Sophie and Josh find themselves embroiled in a centuries-old struggle between two rival alchemists. **J SCOT / CD J BOOK SCOTT**

Mary W. Recommends:

INTO THE DARK by Peter Abrahams

A thirteen-year-old Sherlock Holmes fan must find a way to clear her grandfather of a murder. This is the third book in the Echoes Falls Mystery series (after *Down the Rabbit Hole* and *Behind the Curtain*).



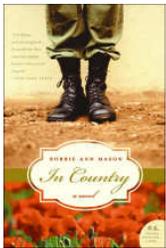
CD J BOOK ABRA

Tracy's Picks: Older Teens



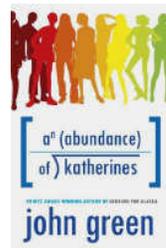
STORY OF A GIRL Sara Zarr

Deanna was thirteen when her father caught her in the back of a Buick with her older brother's friend, seventeen-year-old Tommy. Three years later she is still unfairly branded as the school slut and her father can hardly look at her. This is a wonderful book that I literally couldn't put down. It is realistic fiction at its best—a compelling story with believable, likable characters and a satisfying conclusion that in no way minimizes or oversimplifies the lives of its characters. **J ZARR**



IN COUNTRY Bobbie Ann Mason

In the small town of Hopewell, Kentucky, Samantha Hughes has just graduated from high school. She lives with her uncle Emmett, a Vietnam War vet who she fears is suffering the effects of Agent Orange. Sam's father also fought in the war, but he was killed before Sam was born. Sam is fascinated by the war—she regularly watches *M*A*S*H* reruns with her uncle and even hangs out at the Veteran's hall with her uncle and his friends. Despite this, she knows almost nothing about her father and is largely ignorant about the war that looms so heavily in her life. Determined to finally get some perspective on who her father was and the war he died fighting, Sam organizes a road trip to visit the memorial in Washington, D.C., taking Emmett and her father's mother, whom she hardly knows, along for the ride. *In Country* is emotionally gripping and subtly humorous as it addresses the challenges that come with growing up and the consequences of a war long over, all punctuated with 1980s pop-culture references. I highly recommend it for both teens and adults. **FIC MASO**



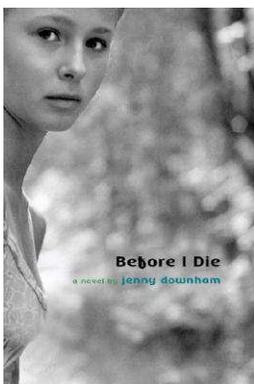
AN ABUNDANCE OF KATHERINES John Green

Recent high school grad and child prodigy Colin Singleton is devastated when his girlfriend Katherine dumps him. Of course this should be old hat by now, as this is Colin's 19th dumping—all of them by girls named Katherine. Depressed over the love of his life's rejection and the fact that his status as a child prodigy is over, Colin and his best friend Hassan—a wise-cracking, Judge Judy fanatic who lives with his parents and refuses to consider college or getting a job—head south on a road trip. This is a delightfully inventive and frequently hilarious adventure where the destination turns out to be the least of the journey. And, as a bonus, it has one of the funniest fight scenes I've ever read. **J GREE**



THIRTEEN REASONS WHY Jay Asher

When Clay Jensen finds a mysterious box with no return address waiting on his front porch, he is intrigued and excited. But he is shocked by its contents: 13 tape recordings from Hannah Baker, his former classmate and secret crush who committed suicide two weeks earlier. The tapes serve as a type of suicide note cum chain letter and each recording is about a different person who is somehow connected to Hannah's reasons for committing suicide. Following the instructions on the tapes, Clay ventures out with a (stolen) walkman on an all-night journey to try to figure out why Hannah made such a terrible choice—and to discover what part *he* played in her decision. This is an intense, compulsively readable novel for mature readers who will be just as curious and anxious as Clay as they learn all the reasons, great and small, that influenced Hannah's decision. **FIC ASHE**



Jada and Her Teenage Daughter Recommend:

BEFORE I DIE by Jenny Downham

In her debut novel, *Before I Die*, British author Jenny Downham shows promise of becoming teen readers' next Lurlene McDaniel. The novel deals with a host of teen issues, including teen pregnancy, depression, and first love. Tessa, the novel's central character, is terminally ill and composes a list of "10 Things to Do Before I Die." Near the top of her list is to have sex, learn to drive, and to somehow get her parents back together. This is an emotional read that will definitely appeal to fans of McDaniel's tear-jerkers. **J DOWN**

Read it. . . Watch it. . .

You probably already know that the *Twilight* movie is due out November 21 and that the latest Harry Potter installment has been pushed way back to July of 2009. To hold you over, here are a few more book/film duos that may interest you.

Coming Soon to Theaters:

- **The Tale of Despereaux** is based on Kate DiCamillo's bestseller. (12/19/08)
- **Inkheart** brings to life Cornelia Funke's hit. (1/9/09)
- Neil Gaiman's **Coraline** gets animated. (2/09)
- **Angus, Thongs and Perfect Snogging** is the revamped "P.C." movie title for Louise Rennison's *Angus, Thongs and Full-frontal Snogging*. The U.K. release date was way back in July, but the U.S. date is still undecided.



Now Showing in Theaters:

- **Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist** is based on Rachael Cohn and David Levithan's controversial teen favorite.

Genre Spotlight: Dystopian Fiction

Dystopian fiction is often considered a subgenre of science fiction. But it isn't what the uninitiated might think of as sci-fi—generally there are no intergalactic space battles, aliens, or time-travel machines. Dystopian literature is the opposite of utopian fiction (go figure!), showing nightmarish futures resulting from a global catastrophe or oppressive societies resulting from humans' imperfect efforts to create a utopian society. The plot is motivated by characters' efforts to subvert this new, horrific world or society.

Books in this genre include:

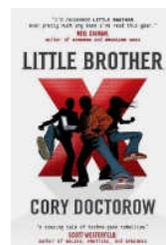
- **1984** by George Orwell
- **Fahrenheit 451** by Ray Bradbury
- **Brave New World** by Aldous Huxley
- **The Giver** by Lois Lowry
- **The Uglies, The Pretties, The Specials, and The Extras** by Scott Westerfield
- **Unwind** by Neil Shusterman
- **The Stand** and **The Running Man** by Stephen King
- **The Hunger Games** by Suzanne Collins
- **Feed** by M.T. Anderson
- **How I Live Now** by Meg Rosoff
- **Life As We Knew It** by Susan Beth Pfeffer

- Jeanne DuPrau's **City of Ember** adapts the first title in her Books of Ember series.

On DVD:

- **Jumper** is based on Stephen Gould's time-travel hit.
- **Stardust** brings Neil Gaiman's fairy-tale epic to life.
- The first book of Susan Cooper's *The Dark is Rising* series was released as **The Seeker: The Dark is Rising**.
- **Persepolis** is the award-winning film adaptation of Marjane Satrapi's graphic novel classic.
- **Prince Caspian: The Return to Narnia** brings to life C.S. Lewis's classic fantasy.
- **The Spiderwick Chronicles** chronicles the first book of Holly Black and Tony DeTerlizzi's popular series.
- **The Water Horse** adapts one of Dick King-Smith's children's favorites (he is also the author of *Babe*).
- **Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2** is actually an adaptation of Ann Brashares's fourth and final sisterhood installment, *Forever in Blue Jeans*, with flashbacks of the events in books 2 and 3.

Tracy's Pick:



LITTLE BROTHER Cory Doctorow

Warnings: (1) *This book contains some "adult" content, so it may not be appropriate for some younger readers.* (2) *This book may induce paranoia.*

This is a seriously scary book—in a very *real* way—and an easy segue into dystopian fiction for those who are not sure if they will like the genre. It takes place in a not-too-distant future where school security systems use gait recognition software to keep intruders out—and students in—and where every keystroke on a school laptop is monitored. Then there is a suspected terrorist attack in San Francisco and things get *really* crazy. Seventeen-year-old Marcus thinks the Department of Homeland Security is out of control, so he uses his tech savvy to start an underground rebellion against the current government. This book is socially and politically charged, featuring super-smart teen characters who are willing to take risks for what they believe in. It may hold particular appeal for techies and teens interested in civil liberties. **FIC DOCT**

Final Thoughts From Tracy:

- If you've read a great book that others should know about, help spread the word! E-mail me at reference@bcplib.org.
- As always, I hope you will take a minute to fill out the Reader Survey below. Your answers could appear in my next Book Picks list. Completed surveys can be returned at any Bullitt County library branch, or you can e-mail your answers to the address below. Thanks!
- I am always happy to hear your opinions of the books I've recommended. Is there a specific genre or author you would like to learn more about? If so, please let me know! I can also help with recommendations between lists. Feel free to contact me at any time.

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Reader Survey Results

Thanks to all of you who responded to our last Reader Survey. Listed below are some of the books *you* recommended for your fellow readers!



THE CHRISTY MILLER SERIES
 by Robin Jones Gunn

"Such a good series, you can't put them down." - *Tiffany Allen, 13*

J GUNN



SECRET OF THE SIRENS
 by Julia Golding

Book one of the Companions Quartet; follow up books are on order. Recommended by Morgan Hoover, 14.

J GOLD



THE FORTUNES OF INDIGO SKYE
 by Deb Caletti

"The story of a teenage girl who becomes a millionaire being a waitress at a local café." - *Tiffany Allen, 13*

J CALE

Book Picks Reader Survey

1. Who is your favorite new children's or YA author?
2. What author(s) do you pick up when you need a laugh?

1. I am loving John Green, whose third book, *Paper Towns*, is currently near the top of my reading list. I thought *An Abundance of Katherines* was a truly unique book—both intelligent and funny without becoming cliché. I am also eagerly awaiting new books from Sara Zarr and Ingrid Law.

2. I've found that Meg Cabot books (both her YA and adult novels) can be counted on for stress relief—pure, unadulterated fun and fluff. Derek Landy, Larry Doyle, and John Green have all had me laughing out loud as well. Which is kind of embarrassing if you are in public (or reading on break at work).

Your Name: _____

Your Age: _____