

BEST

SCIENCE FICTION



FANTASY AND HORROR 2004

VOYA'S 20TH ANNUAL LIST OF TOP SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY, AND HORROR SELECTIONS FOR TEEN READERS PRESENTED YOUR EDITORS WITH SOME CHALLENGES. Originally more than one hundred titles qualified for the list based on their quality and popularity ratings of 5s or 4s in reviews published in VOYA from June 2004 through April 2005. The explosion of fantasy and science fiction titles published for teens is largely the cause. Changing our 4P rating recently to reflect "broad genre appeal" is also a factor in the blossoming of the list.

But nominated titles were top-heavy with 4Q 4P-rated books. Were they really the "best" of the lot, books that represent the highest quality and garner the most appeal among teen readers? We queried our reviewers, and as always, they came through in helping us to winnow this list down to the best of the best. The following list represents those books for which reviewers were willing to "go to the mat," arguing strongly for their inclusion. Once again, the list evolves as it has throughout its twenty years.

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Aidinoff, Elsie V. **The Garden.** HarperCollins, 2004. 416p. \$15.99. 0-06-055605-6. PLB \$16.89. 0-06-055606-4. VOYA June 2004. 4Q 4P J S

A young, inquisitive Eve and her wise mentor, the Serpent, explore inside and out of the Garden, while an impatient God waits with Adam to see if his creations will perform as he wishes.



Barry, Dave, and Ridley Peterson. **Peter and the Starcatchers.** Hyperion, 2004. 442p. \$17.99. 0-7868-5445-6. VOYA December 2004. 4Q 4P M J

In this action-packed prequel to J. M. Barrie's Peter Pan, Peter and his friends journey across the high seas on the derelict Never Land, facing a deadly storm, angry natives, ferocious mermaids, vicious pirates and a mysterious substance known as "starstuff."



Allende, Isabel. **Kingdom of the Golden Dragon.** HarperCollins, 2004. 448p. \$19.99. 0-06-058942-6. PLB \$20.89. 0-06-058943-4. VOYA August 2004. 4Q 4P M J

Alexander Cold, grandmother Kate, and companion Nadia Santo return to intrigue and adventure as Prince Dil Bahadur, Buddhist monk Tensing, and evil kidnappers race for the Golden Dragon statue in this fast-paced fantasy.



Bass, L. G. **Sign of the Qin.** Hyperion, 2004. 224p. \$17.99. 0-7868-1918-9. VOYA June 2004. 5Q 4P J S

A unique hybrid of Hong Kong action-film tropes and traditional fantasy themes, Bass's debut effort is a fast-paced, engaging read that will appeal to genre fans looking for something different.



Anderson, M. T. **The Game of Sunken Places.** Scholastic, 2004. 272p. \$16.95. 0-439-41660-4. VOYA June 2004. 4Q 4P M J

While visiting eccentric Uncle Max in rural Vermont, Gregory and his friend Brian find themselves hip deep in a mysterious, scary, and sometimes humorous game between ancient supernatural opponents.



Bernstein, Nina. **Magic by the Book.** Illus. by Boris Kulikov. Frances Foster Books/Farrar Straus Giroux, 2005. 240p. \$17. 0-374-34718-2. VOYA April 2005. 5Q 4P M J

Three children discover a magical book that has the power to whisk them into the adventures of such classic children's stories as The Adventures of Robin Hood and The Borrowers.



Atwater-Rhodes, Amelia. **Snakecharm.** Random House, 2004. 224p. \$14.95. 0-385-73072-1. VOYA December 2004. 4Q 5P M J S

In this fast-paced second volume of The Kieshara series, Zane Cobriana and Danica Shardae are expecting their first child when Syfka, a dangerous Falcon, shows up to cause discord among the Avian and Serpentine people.



Cole, Stephen. **The Wereling: Wounded.** Razorbill/Penguin, 2005. 272p. \$5.99 pb. 1-59514-041-7. VOYA February 2005. 4Q 4P S

Teens Tom and Kate struggle desperately to escape from Kate's bloodthirsty werewolf family members who go to gruesome lengths to force both young people to live the deadly, violent life of the werewolf.



Colfer, Eoin. **The Supernaturalist**. Hyperion, 2004. 288p. \$16.95. 0-7868-5148-1. VOYA August 2004. 5Q 4P S
Cosmo Hill's life is forever altered when he escapes from an orphanage and joins a band of young people fighting the mysterious and nearly invisible Parasites who prey on those near death.



Farmer, Nancy. **The Sea of Trolls**. Simon & Schuster, 2004. 480p. \$17.95. 0-689-86744-1. VOYA October 2004. 4Q 5P M J
When eleven-year-old Jack and his sister are snatched by Viking berserkers, Jack must draw on all his skills as an apprentice bard to survive the Northmen and complete a quest into Jotenbeim—troll country.

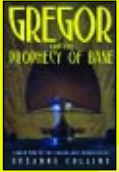
Collier, James Lincoln. **The Empty Mirror**. Bloomsbury, 2004. 192p. \$16.95. 1-58234-949-5. 4Q 4P M J S
Growing up in the years after the great influenza epidemic, Nick enjoys a comfortable life until someone who appears to be his double begins to perpetrate an escalating series of crimes.



Flint, Eric. **1634: The Galileo Affair**. Baen, 2004. 550p. \$26. 0-7434-8815-6. VOYA August 2004. 5Q 4P S A/YA
One of the sequels to Flint's 1632, this blithe romp through seventeenth-century theology, commerce, and male-female relationships ends with a papal assassination attempt worthy of Mack Sennett.



Collins, Suzanne. **Gregor and the Prophecy of Bane**. *The Underland Chronicles*, Book 2. Scholastic, 2004. 312p. \$16.95. 0-439-65075-5. VOYA December 2004. 4Q 4P M J
Gregor and Boots battle giant rats, squid, and flesh-eating insects to save Regalia, the secret world beneath New York City, from The Bane, a white rat prophesied to unite his fellow rodents against all humans.



Flint, Eric. **Ring of Fire**. Baen, 2004. 578p. \$23. 0-7434-7175-X. VOYA June 2004. 4Q 4P S A/YA
These stories based on the small twenty-first-century West Virginia town transported to seventeenth-century Germany in 1632 offer essential character development and plot details including credible extrapolations of the behavior of actual historical figures.



Czerneda, Julie E. **Survival: Species Imperative**. DAW, 2004. 401p. \$23.95. 0-7564-0180-1. VOYA October 2004. 4Q 4P J S A/YA
Mac Connor is torn away from her salmon research when Brymn, an alien, needs her help in finding why a group of planets have become lifeless before more are devastated.



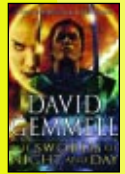
Funke, Cornelia. **Dragon Rider**. The Chicken House/Scholastic, 2004. 528p. \$12.95. 0-439-45695-9. VOYA October 2004. 4Q 4P J S
Firedrake, his Brownie companion Sorrel, and the orphan Ben must locate the mythical dragon homeland to save Firedrake's dragon community, escape an ancient dragon enemy, and discover Ben's destiny as the Dragon Rider.



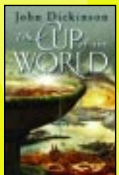
De Lint, Charles. **The Blue Girl**. Viking, 2004. 368p. \$17.99. 0-670-05924-2. VOYA December 2004. 5Q 4P J S
When a ghost falls in love with Imogene, his attempts to make her see the other spirits around her causes her imaginary childhood friend to return and attracts the attention of dark, soul-eating creatures.



Gemmel, David. **The Swords of Night and Day: A Novel of Skilgannon the Damned**. Del Rey, 2004. 451p. \$24.95. 0-345-45833-8. \$7.50 pb. 0-345-45834-6. VOYA October 2004. 5Q 4P S A/YA
Larger-than-life characters display the full range of human qualities while fighting evil and wrestling with the difficult questions of life in a story that includes strong women who can work with or against the powerful men.



Dickinson, John. **Cup of the World**. David Fickling Books/Random House, 2004. 432p. \$15.95. 0-385-75025-0. VOYA February 2005. 5Q 4P J S
Civil war ensues in noble-born Phaedra's country after she decides to marry Ulfyn without permission from her father, in this page-turner from a new author.



Goobie, Beth. **Flux**. Orca, 2004. 256p. \$16.95. 1-55143-314-1. VOYA October 2004. 4Q 4P J S
Nellie, who can feel the flux and travel the levels between parallel universes, must dodge both teenaged gangs and the dangerous Interior Police while searching for the secret of her past.



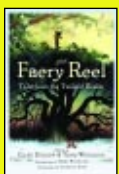
Dr. Ernest Drake's Dragonology: The Complete Book of Dragons. Dugald Steer, Ed. Illus. by Helen Ward, et al. Candlewick, 2003. 32p. \$19.99. 0-7636-2329-6. VOYA August 2004. 4Q 5P M J S
Serious dragonologists will celebrate the rediscovery of Dr. Drake's beautiful and essential guide that includes a classification of dragons, anatomical drawings, helpful riddles, and a practical list of essential equipment.



Gothic! Ten Original Dark Tales. Deborah Noyes, Ed. Candlewick, 2004. 256p. \$15.99. 0-7636-2243-5. VOYA October 2004. 5Q 4P M J S
These sinister gothic tales that are diverse, quirky, and ultimately terrifying are guaranteed to give readers the shivers and delight teen horror fans.



The Fairy Reel: Tales from the Twilight Realm. Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling, Eds. Viking, 2004. 528p. \$19.99. 0-670-05914-5. VOYA February 2005. 4Q 4P J S
This diverse, multicultural collection of stories and poems features faeries, from Japanese goblins to seductive undines, and from an alternative Captain Hook to an assassin designed to rid Los Angeles of immigrant faeries.



Harrison, Mette. **Mira, Mirror**. Viking, 2004. 256p. \$16.99. 0-670-05923-4. VOYA October 2004. 4Q 4P M J
Imprisoned in the form of a magical mirror, Mira schemes to use a peasant girl to help regain her human form, but she finds that friendship and girl power are more redeeming than magic.





Hoeye, Michael. **No Time Like Show Time**. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2004. 277p. \$14.99. 0-399-23880-8. VOYA December 2004. 4Q 4P J S
Watchmaker mouse Hermux Tantamoq goes undercover to find a saboteur at the Varmint Variety Theater and discovers a tangle of secrets, unaware that his interference might endanger his dearest friends.



Lindsfold, Jane. **Wolf Captured**. Tor, 2004. 528p. \$27.95. 0-765-30936-X. VOYA February 2005. 4Q 4P S A/YA
Only the Feral girl, Firekeeper, the Rise Wolf Blind Seer; other wise beasts; and the human-animal hybrid maimalodalum can prevent a coup that will bring a priestly cult of blood sacrifice to power.

Horowitz, Anthony. **Scorpia**. Philomel, 2004. 312p. \$17.99. 0-399-24151-5. VOYA April 2005. 4Q 5P M J
After discovering that his father was an assassin and desperate to know more, Alex leaves MI6 to join a criminal organization, but his divided loyalties endanger more than his life.



Lowry, Lois. **Messenger**. Walter Lorraine Books/Houghton Mifflin, 2004. 176p. \$16. 0-618-40441-4. VOYA June 2004. 4Q 5P M J S
Lowry brings The Giver and Gathering Blue full circle with Matty's journey of self-discovery through complex issues of human nature, answering some questions from the previous volumes but posing even more.

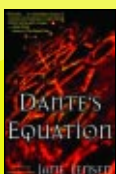


Jacques, Brian. **Rakkety Tam**. Philomel, 2004. 432p. \$23.99. 0-399-23725-9. VOYA February 2005. 5Q 4P J S
The security of Mosoflower Country is threatened by the most vicious adversary since the time of Martin the Warrior, as Gulo the Savage and his ravening horde pillage and devour all in their path.



Marillier, Juliet. **Foxmask**. Tor, 2004. 464p. \$27.95. 0-765-30674-3. VOYA August 2004. 4Q 4P S A/YA
Two young people's lives are changed forever when one sets out to find his father in this tale of adventure, love, and magic set in the Orkney and Faroe Islands of the Viking era.

Jensen, Jane. **Dante's Equation**. Del Rey, 2005. 486p. \$15.95 Trade pb. 0-345-43037-9. Voyages, VOYA June 2004. 5Q 4P S A/YA
Mathematical theory, mysterious human disappearances, and a missing manuscript by a Holocaust victim are interwoven in a riveting read that is more about the personal human journey than history.



McKillop, Patricia A. **Alphabet of Thorn**. Ace, 2004. 314p. \$22.95. 0-441-01130-6. VOYA August 2004. 5Q 4P J
Nepenthe translates the alphabet of thorns and discovers that her sorceress mother and warrior father are coming to claim her and the kingdom of Raine in this compelling and beautifully written mythical story.



Johnson, Kathleen Jeffrie. **A Fast and Brutal Wing**. A Deborah Brodie Book/Roaring Brook, 2004. 192p. \$16.95. 1-59643-013-3. VOYA December 2004. 4Q 4P J S
What happened to three teens in the woods on Halloween night? Was it murder, shape-shifting, or overactive imaginations?



Modesitt, L. E. Jr. **Ordermaster**. Saga of Recluce, Book 13. Tor, 2005. 480p. \$27.95. 0-765-31213-1. VOYA April 2005. 5Q 4P S A/YA
With his remaining family members murdered, the reluctant order mage Kharl must defeat these minions of chaos for the sake of his native land and his new homeland.



Kaaberbol, Lene. **The Shamer's Daughter**. Henry Holt, 2004. 230p. \$16.95. 0-8050-7541-0. VOYA June 2004. 5Q 4P M J S
A horrific triple murder plunges ten-year-old Dina into the midst of castle intrigue when her Shamer powers to reveal another's guilt convince her that the accused murderer is innocent.



Modesitt, L. E. Jr. **Scepters**. Corean Chronicles, Book 3. Tor, 2004. 624p. \$27.95. 0-765-31042-2. VOYA August 2004. 5Q 4P S A/YA
Herder Alucius must leave his wife Wendra and daughter Alendra to stop a cross-dimensional invasion force using his psychic talent.



Kress, Nancy. **Crucible**. Tor, 2004. 384p. \$24.95. 0-765-30688-3. VOYA October 2004. 5Q 4P S A/YA
An interstellar war between two alien species threatens the colonists on Greentree, and the arrival of a ship from the home planet Earth only complicates matters.



Modesitt, L. E. Jr. **Wellspring of Chaos**. Saga of Recluce, Book 12. Tor, 2004. 448p. \$27.95. 0-765-30907-6. VOYA June 2004. 5Q 4P S A/YA
Unjustly flogged for arson, robbed of his prosperous cooerage, exiled, widowed, and alienated from his sons, a middle-aged barrel maker resolves to fight the misuse of power that caused all his woes.

Lasky, Kathryn. **Blood Secret**. HarperCollins, 2004. 256p. \$15.99. 0-06-000066-X. PLB \$16.89. 0-06-000065-1. VOYA October 2004. 5Q 4P M J
A piece of lace, stained and yellowed with age, transports Jerry through time to 1591 Spain as the first Jewish persecutions begin in this beautiful story that ensnares the reader in the history of one family through the generations.



Moench, Doug. **Forensic Files of Batman**. ibooks, 2004. 350p. \$22.95. 0-7434-8732-X. VOYA February 2005. 4Q 4P J S A/YA
Batman outlines how he used CSI-like methods to solve his famous cases as the Joker, Two-Face, and other infamous villains are brought to justice with scientific techniques and mystery.



Le Guin, Ursula. **Gifts**. Harcourt, 2004. 288p. \$17. 0-15-205123-6. VOYA December 2004. 4Q 4P J S A/YA
A teenage boy, heir to the deadly gift of unmaking, must learn to harness his power while he rebels against its destructiveness . . . but is the unmaking his only gift or does he possess greater talent?



Morris, Gerald. **The Princess, the Crone, and the Dung-Cart Knight**. The Squire's Tales. Houghton Mifflin, 2004. 320p. \$15. 0-618-37823-5. VOYA June 2004. 5Q 4P M J
In this Arthurian tale, Sarah, seeking revenge for her murdered guardians, witnesses the kidnapping of Sir Kai and Queen Guenevere and joins in the quest to rescue them.



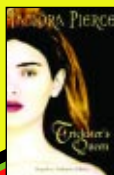
New Magics: An Anthology of Today's Fantasy. Patrick Nielsen Haydon, Ed. Tor, 2004. 256p. \$19.95. 0-765-30015-X. VOYA August 2004. 5Q 4P M J S
Two decades worth of standout contemporary fantasy is the gift of an eclectic collection of authors whose compelling, finely crafted stories are seamlessly woven with the fantastic.

Nix, Garth. **The Keys to the Kingdom: Grim Tuesday.** Scholastic, 2004. 333p. \$5.99 Trade pb. 0-439-43655-9. VOYA August 2004. 4Q 4P M J
When Grim Tuesday forecloses on everything that the unwilling heir to the creation-encompassing Kingdom owns—including Earth—thirteen-year-old Arthur Penhaligon and his allies race to prevent a catastrophe.



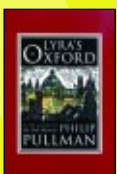
Paver, Michelle. **Wolf Brother.** *The Chronicles of Ancient Darkness.* HarperCollins, 2004. 304p. \$16.99. 0-06-072825-6. PLB \$17.89. 0-06-072826-4. VOYA April 2005. 4Q 4P M J
Twelve-year-old Torak must journey to the Mountain of the World Spirit with his animal guide, Wolf, bearing three talismans that will save the forest clans from a giant demon-possessed bear.

Pierce, Tamora. **Trickster's Queen.** Random House, 2004. 482p. \$17.95. 0-375-81467-1. PLB \$19.99. 0-375-91467-6. VOYA February 2005. 4Q 5P M J
Recruited to aid in a rebellion against usurpers, Aly Homewood shines as a spymaster to the future queen of the Copper Isles in this action-packed fantasy.



Pratchett, Terry. **A Hat Full of Sky.** HarperCollins, 2004. 288p. \$16.99. 0-06-058660-5. PLB \$17.89. 0-06-058661-3. VOYA June 2004. 5Q 4P J S A/YA

Young witch Tiffany Aching leaves home to study witchcraft, pursued by an invisible, mind-stealing biver in this message-driven, humorous fantasy that again features her crazed Scottish fairy friends, the Nac Mac Fegleas.



Pullman, Philip. **Lyra's Oxford.** Supplement to *His Dark Materials.* Knopf, 2003. 64p. \$10.95. 0-375-82819-2. VOYA June 2004. 4Q 4P M J S
Set two years after His Dark Materials concludes, this simple account of Lyra and Pan's attempts to rescue an ailing witch's daemon becomes a thriller detailing their narrow escape from a cruel vengeance plot.

Rosoff, Meg. **How I Live Now.** Wendy Lamb Books/Random House, 2004. 160p. \$16.95. 0-385-74677-6. PLB \$18.99. 0-385-90908-X. VOYA December 2004. 4Q 4P S
Shortly after fifteen-year-old Daisy is sent to England to live with her cousins, war breaks out and the cousins must learn to survive the harsh conditions.



Rucker, Rudy. **Frek and Elixir.** Tor, 2004. 476p. \$27.95. 0-765-31058-9. VOYA October 2004. 5Q 5P J S A/YA
This "wild and crazy" ride into the 3005 Toyland of "biotweaked krittlers" reflects the intellect of the author as wonderful surprises and brilliantly conceived creatures appears at every turn.

Sage, Angie. **Magyk.** *Septimus Heap, Book One.* Katherine Tegen Books/HarperCollins, 2005. \$17.99. 0-06-057731-2. PLB \$18.89. 0-06-057732-0. VOYA February 2005. 4Q 5P M J
The birth of the seventh son of a seventh son launches a captivating and humorous tale of mysterious occurrences, silver bullets, magykal spells, a confused rat, and a rollicking cast of characters.



Shinn, Sharon. **The Safe-Keeper's Secret.** Viking, 2004. 240p. \$16.99. 0-670-05910-2. VOYA June 2004. 5Q 4P M J
Raised together as the Safe-Keeper's children, aware that some things are best kept secret, Reed and Fiona ignore rumors that Reed is really the King's son—until the King comes looking for his heir.



Spencer, Wen. **Tinker.** Baen, 2003. 340p. \$21.95. 0-7434-7165-2. VOYA August 2004. 4Q 4P S A/YA
A teenaged genius inventor must prevent an invading army of Japanese demons from destroying both Pittsburgh and Elfhome, while coping with the political fallout from her runaway marriage to an Elflord.

Stroud, Jonathan. **The Golem's Eye.** Hyperion, 2004. 556p. \$17.95. 0-7868-1860-3. VOYA October 2004. 4Q 4P M J S
The sequel to The Amulet of Samarkand doesn't disappoint as Nataniel, Kitty, and Bartimaeus—the wise-cracking, omniscient djinni—take on threats against their magical London that include a menacing clay golem and a dancing skeleton.



Valentine, James. **JumpMan Rule #1: Don't Touch Anything.** Simon & Schuster, 2004, ©2002. 272p. \$14.95. 0-689-86872-3. VOYA August 2004. 4Q 4P M J S
Thirty-second-century teen Theo won the new JumpMan Pro timejumper... but accidentally got a prototype that strands him in early Mil 3, leaving him visible to teens Gen and Jules, as humorous adventures ensue.



Weber, David, and Eric Flint. **1633.** Baen, 2003. 673p. \$7.99 pb. 0-7434-7155-5. VOYA June 2004. 4Q 4P S A/YA
Twenty-first-century Americans work with the oppressed inhabitants of seventeenth-century Germany to throw off the rule of despotic nobility and end the Thirty Years War in this action-packed novel.



Weis, Margaret. **Dragon's Son.** *The Dragonwarld Trilogy, Book 2.* Tor, 2004. 334p. \$25.95. 0-765-30469-4. VOYA October 2004. 4Q 4P S A/YA
The fate of the world rests on twins Prince Marcus and half-dragon Ven (geance) and their guardian Draconas as renegade dragons foil the plans of the dragon Parliament for mankind's future.

Westerfield, Scott. **Midnighters: Touching Darkness.** Eos/HarperCollins, 2004. 336p. \$15.99. 0-06-051954-1. PLB \$16.89. 0-06-051955-X. VOYA February 2005. 4Q 4P M J S
Five teens with special powers battle mystical forces in a small town to save themselves, uncover the source of their unique abilities, and discover why they were chosen to be Midnighters.



Wooding, Chris. **The Haunting of Alaziabel Cray.** Orchard, 2004, ©2001. 304p. \$16.95. 0-439-54656-7. VOYA October 2004. 4Q 4P S
In a gothic-style London straight from Jack the Ripper; Thaniel Fox hunts creatures of the night with his mentor, Catherine, in this rich and magical story that will appeal to fantasy and horror fans alike. ■

