

# **BEST BETS**

## **2008**

### **Fiction Reading for Young Adults**

**The OLA's Canadian Materials  
Committee prepares this annual list.**

**Books are selected on the basis of their  
literary merit as well as their appeal for  
young adults. Illustrations are also  
considered in the case of graphic novels.**

## FICTION

**Armstrong, Kelley. *The Summoning.***

**Doubleday Canada.**

Chloe's life takes an unexpected turn when she's sent to Lyle House, one of those places for youth with "problems". The staff don't seem to know or care but the house has problems too.

**Doctorow, Cory. *Little Brother.***

**Tom Doherty Associates, Tor Press.**

Seventeen year old Markus, aka "w1n5t0n," and his friends find themselves in a secret jail courtesy of the Department of Homeland Security after a terrorist attack on San Francisco. When he is finally released, no-one believes his story so Markus sets his sights and considerable technological skills on taking down the DHS himself. A chilling reflection of recent current events that you won't be able to put down! Note that Doctorow has made his book available free online – google "Little Brother Doctorow" to find the site.

**Harvey, Sarah, N. *The Lit Report.***

**Orca Book Publishers.**

Julia always has a plan. It's lucky for her best friend Ruth that she does. When Ruth finds herself in trouble that her extra-religious parents won't approve of, it's Julia who decides what will happen. Together the two girls set the plan in motion, but Julia learns that feelings don't always follow the plan, and sometimes life just can't be planned.

**Hrdlitschka, Shelley. *Gotcha!***

**Orca Book Publishers.**

The graduating students of Slippery Rock High have just had an annual tradition squelched by the Principal, citing safety concerns, but don't expect them to take it lying down!

**Ibbitson, John. *The Landing.***

**Kids Can Press**

Ben lives and works with his mother and uncle on Lake Muskoka during the Depression. A rich widow hires him for some odd jobs and gives him a sense of the world beyond.

**Jocelyn, Marthe. *Would You.***

**Tundra Books.**

Would you rather know what's going to happen or not know? Natalie and her friends play the "would you rather" game all the time: the more terrible the choices, the better the game. Then, Natalie's older sister Claire is hit by a car and would you rather becomes a gruesomely real question.

**MacNamee, Graham. *Bonechiller***

**Wendy Lamb Books.**

Occasionally during an especially cold winter, one or two youths disappear from the isolated town of Harvest Cove. It doesn't happen often enough for anyone to see a pattern until it's Danny's turn.

**Ravel, Edeet. *The Saver*.**

**Groundwood Books.**

Fern's life had always been a bit of a struggle but her Mom had always made her feel loved and looked after. When tragedy strikes, Fern must strike out on her own and try to make a life for herself. A moving story of perseverance and teen ingenuity.

**Tamaki, Mariko. *Skim***

**Illustrated by Jillian Tamaki. Groundwood/House of Anansi**

This graphic novel about a social outsider and her observations of private school life is depicted (literally and figuratively) with a startling blend of simplicity and sensitivity.

**Ye, Ting-Xing. *Mountain Girl, River Girl*.**

**Penguin Group.**

Pan-pan and Shui-lian are two teenage girls from different parts of rural China. Both leave home for a better life and in their travels they end up meeting and becoming friends. Together they endure harsh realities as their dreams evaporate.

## **GRAPHIC NOVELS OF NOTE**

Castellucci, Cecil and Kugg, Jim. **Janes in Love**. DC Comics

Donner, Rebecca (text), Inaki, Miranda (art). **Burnout**, Minx (DC Comics)

Hicks, Faith Erin. **Zombies Calling**. SLG Publishing.

Lemire, Jeff. **Essex County III: The Country Nurse**. Top Shelf Productions

Mavreas, Billy. **Inside Outside Overlap**. Timeless Books.

Taylor, R.G.(Artist, Author), Bierkemo, Peter (Author), Kasman, Ron (Author), LeBlanc, Steve (Author), McCuster, Paul (Author), Taylor, Mel (Author), Taylor, Peter (Author), Walton, Rob (Author). **Growing up with Comics**. Desperado Publishing.

## **HONOURABLE MENTIONS**

Burtinshaw, Julie. **The Perfect Cut**. Raincoast.

Choyce, Lesley. **The Book of Michael**. Red Deer Press.

Juby, Susan. **Getting the Girl: a Guide to Private Investigation, Surveillance and Cookery**.

Harper Trophy.

Korman, Gordan. **Juvie Three**. Scholastic

McKay, Sharon. **War Brothers**. Penguin.

Skrypuch, Marsha. **Daughter of War**. Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

The OLA's annual Best Bets evolved from a list put out by the Canadian Material's Committee of the Children's Services Guild. This Canadian Materials Committee is now under the wing of the OPLA Children and Youth Committee.

The OLA's Canadian Materials Committee selects books on the basis of their literary/artistic merit as well as their appeal for children and young adults. Text and illustrations are of equal importance in picture books and information books.

### OLA'S CANADIAN MATERIALS COMMITTEE

We are a long standing committee with a strong voice in promoting Canadian literature for children and young adults. Our goal is to highlight excellence in literature for children and young adults for the OLA membership and others with an interest.

The Committee thanks S & B Books for their ongoing support with providing a place to meet and copies of books to review.

Meetings are held a minimum of four times a year at S & B Books Ltd (3086 Universal Dr., Mississauga). Members discuss and evaluate recent publications by Canadian authors and illustrators. The books evaluated are suitable for children and young adults from birth to nineteen years old. From these discussions, the Committee produces "Best Bets" lists, annual annotated lists of recommended titles. These lists are released each year at the OLA Super Conference.

OLA's Canadian Materials Committee Members:

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Sarah Hart, Brampton Library  
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