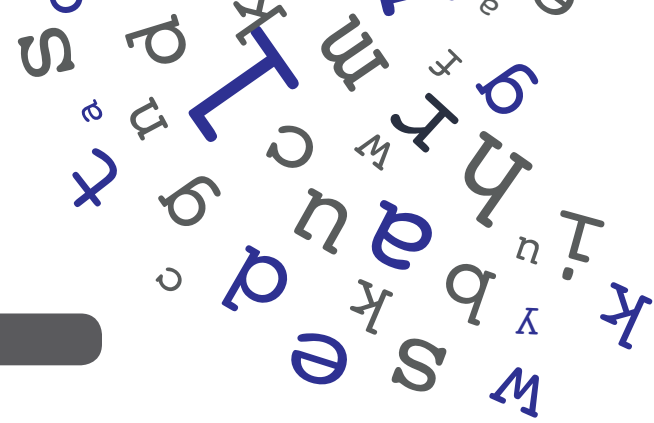


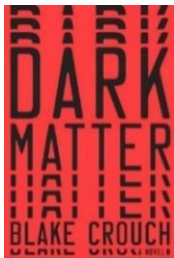


RA in a Day 2017

BEST BETS 2017

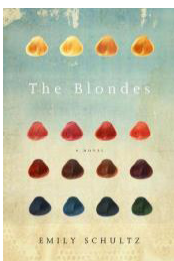


Charmaine Atrooshi, Ottawa Public Library



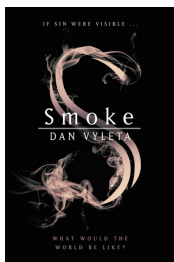
DARK MATTER by Blake Crouch

Jason awoke one day to discover everything about his life had changed. His wife was not his wife, his son was never born, and his whole existence was different. He doesn't know how he got there or how (or if) he can go back. A fast-paced thriller that keeps you on the edge of your seat as Jason travels between parallel universes and alternate realities as he tries to figure out how he can reclaim his life. For more time travel stories, check out **All Our Wrong Todays** by Elan Mastai and **The Time Traveler's Wife** by Audrey Niffenegger.



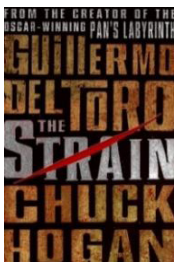
THE BLONDES by Emily Schultz

Hazel, a graduate student in NYC is grappling with her thesis. All around her, there is a rising epidemic. A blond epidemic. Women with blonde hair (both natural, highlighted, and dyed) are taking over; terrorizing the town and killing people. When Hazel discovers that she is pregnant, she decides to try escape and return home to Canada. Will Hazel be able to escape before it's too late? For other apocalyptic thrillers, try **The Amateurs** by Liz Harmer and Max Brooks's **World War Z**.



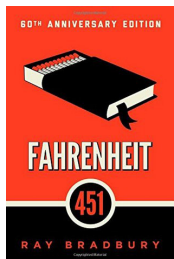
SMOKE by Dan Vyleta

Vyleta's **Smoke** is set in historical England, where Thomas and Charlie are students at an elite boarding school. In this world, when one commits a sin, they emit a telltale trace of smoke.... When Thomas and Charlie start to question some of the "truths" around smoke, they come to certain realizations, and embark upon a journey seeking answers. **Smoke** is a story of love, of class divisions, of science, and an exploration of right and wrong. For read-alikes in this area try **Gilded Cage** by Vic James and Natasha Pulley's **The Watchmaker of Filigree Street**.



THE STRAIN by Guillermo Del Toro and Chuck Hogan

What Dr. Goodweather and the CDC found on the arriving Boeing 777 shocked and perturbed them. The plane was in darkness, all shades drawn, with no signs of life within. Something...a strain, a disease, an epidemic had infected the plane, and will continue to spread. It's a race to the end as they try to figure out what happened and stop it before it's too late.... For other takes on infectious strains, try Joe Hill's **The Fireman** and Michael Crichton's **The Andromeda Strain**.



FAHRENHEIT 451 by Ray Bradbury

Although this was written more than 60 years ago as a story of science fiction, one could easily draw parallels between this world and that of modern society. Given the contemporary political climate, now is a great time to (re)read Bradbury's story and reflect on the meaning and messages within. Bradbury addresses many issues worth contemplating: the dangers of complacency, the perils of neutrality, and the impacts of censorship. For more read-alikes set in alternate futuristic realities, check out Margaret Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale** and P. D. James's **The Children of Men**.

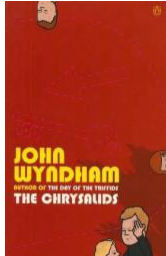


RA in a Day 2017

BEST BETS 2017

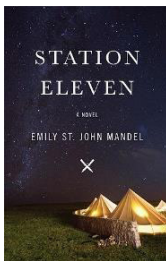


Kristen Caschera, London Public Library



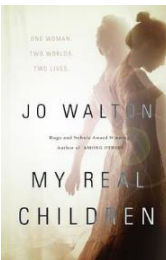
THE CHRYSALIDS by John Wyndham

In the years since the catastrophic Tribulation, sent by God to punish the Old People, the people of Waknuk live simply in their farming community, striving for genetic perfection and banishing any person or animal with abnormalities to the Fringes—or worse. But there are those with special gifts hiding in the most unexpected of places. M. R. Carey's **The Girl with all the Gifts** also features children with special gifts who are feared by those around them.



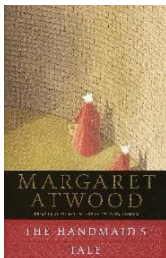
STATION ELEVEN by Emily St. John Mandel

This is the story of the collapse of civilization. A plague spreads like wildfire and decimates the population. It is also the story of theatre, and art, and culture. A travelling theatre troupe brings culture to the post-apocalyptic world. This book tells the story of the end of the world and its aftermath through five different voices. Read about another world-altering event in **The Age of Miracles** by Karen Thompson Walker, or about humanity's survival in Justin Cronin's **The Passage**.



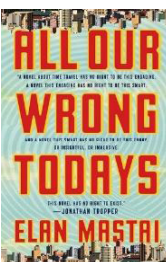
MY REAL CHILDREN by Jo Walton

Ninety-year-old Patricia Cowan remembers two different pasts with two different personalities. Which person is she? Is she Trish, an unhappily married politics enthusiast? Or is she Pat, a travel writer happy with her female partner? And how has a split-second decision affected the fate of the world? In Kate Atkinson's **Life after Life**, a single lifetime is lived many times, and Laura Barnett's **The Versions of Us** is a love story told in three different ways.



THE HANDMAID'S TALE by Margaret Atwood

Offred is a Handmaid in the post-war world known as the Republic of Gilead. She remembers a time when she had a husband, a child, her freedom. But the world now is a strict theocracy, and Offred's only job is to bear a child for her Commander, as is God's will. Published in 1986, the themes in this book are eerily relevant today. Read about more female oppression in dystopian futures in **When She Woke** by Hillary Jordan and Sarah Hall's **Daughters of the North**.



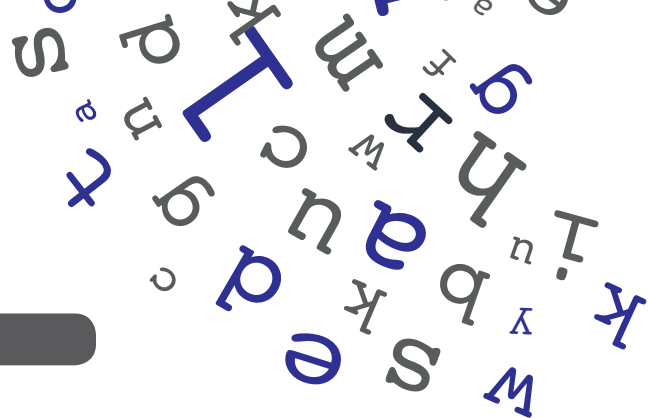
ALL OUR WRONG TODAYS by Elan Mastai

Remember the future that people in the 1950s thought we would have, with flying cars and robot servants? That is reality in Tom Barren's 2016. No need to drive anywhere, just teleport! No need to pick out clothes every day, a machine will dress you! When an unfortunate time travel accident brings Tom to the real 2016, he is surprised—and not in a good way. Peter Clines's **The Fold** is a clever, witty look at similar scientific advances, while **The Man in the Empty Suit** by Sean Farrell is another humorous time travel story.



RA in a Day 2017

BEST BETS 2017



Jennifer Green, Oshawa Public Libraries



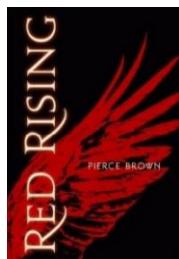
READY PLAYER ONE by Ernest Cline

In 2044, millions log into the OASIS, a virtual utopia. When the creator of OASIS dies, he leaves an “easter egg” for one lucky person to find. Teenager Wade Watts devotes his life to finding the treasure, but never imagines his personal hunt could be the greatest quest of his life—and the world’s. Cline’s writing is smart, fast-paced, and engaging; the characters are believable and sympathetic. Cory Doctorow’s **For the Win** has a similar premise, while **Snow Crash** by Neil Gaiman will appeal to those interested in virtual worlds.



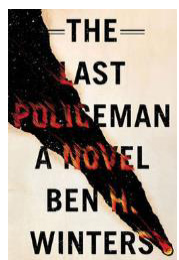
DARK MATTER by Blake Crouch

What would you do if you had the chance to do life differently, take a new path? Jason Dessen gets that opportunity, and what happens is both terrifying and exciting. Well worth a read, even if you’re not a fan of science fiction will appeal to lovers of fast-paced thrillers, as well. Other stories where the main character is trying to return home in a multiverse are **The Fold** by Peter Clines and **The Fall** by R. J. Pineiro.



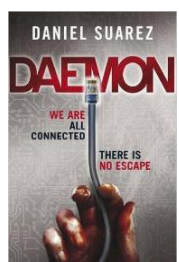
RED RISING by Pierce Brown

Darrow is a Red, a member of a mining society whose sole purpose is to prepare Mars for humans. When Darrow discovers his people have been lied to for generations, he vows to overthrow those who have enslaved them. **Red Rising** is fast-paced and action-packed. Try **THE HUNGER GAMES** by Suzanne Collins if you enjoy dystopian books about societies forced to battle one another, or **Wool** by Hugh Howey for another book that has a society rising against its oppressors.



THE LAST POLICEMAN by Ben H. Winters

An asteroid is headed straight for earth, and there is only 6 months remaining until impact. Society is starting to crumble and rather than wait for the impending disaster, many people are committing suicide. So, when another body turns up, the easy assumption is suicide, but Detective Henry Palace thinks differently. This is a great science fiction novel for mystery lovers. First of a series, readers may also enjoy other end of the world stories such as **Body Politic** by Paul Johnston or the dystopian novel **Never Let Me Go** by Kazuo Ishiguro.



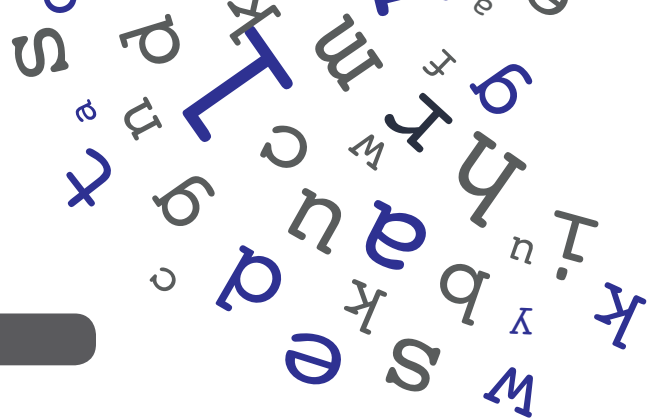
DAEMON by Daniel Suarez

Not for the faint of heart, **Daemon** takes you on a wild techno-thriller ride. When a dormant daemon activates after the death of its creator, computer game architect Matthew Sobol, the world is unprepared for the insanity that’s released. The daemon distorts news, takes over companies, and assassinates seemingly random targets. Try **Transmission** by Hari Kunzru for another cyber-thriller, or **Crytonomicron** by Neal Stephenson for a title about computer programmers with a slower pace.

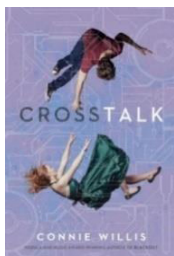


RA in a Day 2017

BEST BETS 2017



Melanie Kindrachuk, Stratford Public Library



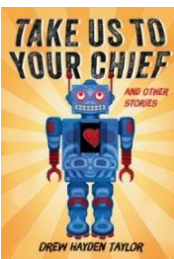
CROSSTALK by Connie Willis

A zany tale about how much communication is too much communication, this speculative fiction melds the sparkling wit of a 1930s romantic comedy with a setting in the very near future—when our technologically enabled constant availability is upgraded...to telepathy. **The Fold** by Peter Clines looks at the drawbacks of another potential human achievement, teleportation; Randy Ingermanson's **Double Vision** takes on an odd couple and a quantum computer, with suspense, humour, and a light touch of romance.



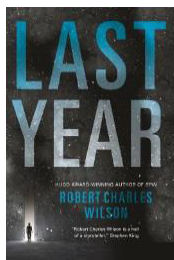
THE BOOK OF PHOENIX by Nnedi Okorafor

A corporation experiments with genetically modified individuals in a secured tower; the captives find a way to destroy their captors and take their destructive powers out into the world. Individual, racial and gender identities are examined in this powerful, violent read about the end of the world. Neil Stephenson's **Seveneves** also looks at apocalypse and survival in extreme situations, while N. K. Jemisin's **The Fifth Season** features death, betrayal, and a volcanic disaster which destroys Earth.



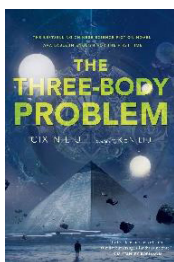
TAKE US TO YOUR CHIEF by Drew Hayden Taylor

This collection of short stories reinvents classic science fiction tropes through Indigenous eyes. With Hayden Taylor's wry brand of humour, these stories entertain and educate, while ranging from time travel to space travel. Ted Chiang's **Story of Your Life and Others** is a collection of short and innovative stories (and the basis for the movie Arrival); the anthology **Dark Matter: A Century of Speculative Fiction from the African Diaspora** looks at speculative fiction from a range of Black perspectives.



LAST YEAR by Robert Charles Wilson

A portal from our era allows for a tourist city in the Old West, but it only remains open for so long and it's the last year that the city will be a viable destination. Jesse Cullum, a local hired to work for the city, finds he is caught between past, present, and future. Charles Yu's **How to Live Safely in a Science Fictional Universe** follows another melancholy male time traveler, who works as a time machine technician, while Elan Mastai's new **All Our Wrong Todays** takes on the question of time travel and the disturbing of timelines.



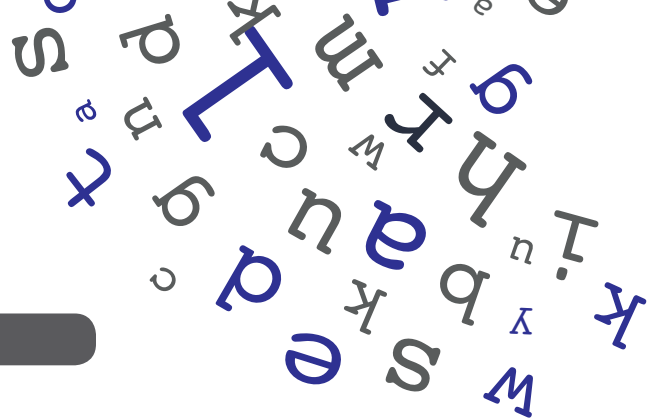
THE THREE-BODY PROBLEM by Cixin Liu

A rash of scientist suicides, a mysterious online game ruled by three suns, and the potential for human extinction via alien invasion: this novel, with a background in the Cultural Revolution, is finally available in English. Nnedi Okorafor's **Lagoon** looks at aliens invading the world starting with Lagos, Nigeria; Michael Flynn's **Eifelheim** is a quieter novel with archeologists investigating the possibility of First Contact having occurred in a medieval German town.

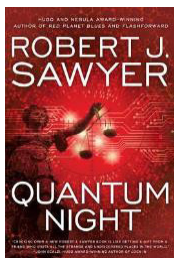


RA in a Day 2017

BEST BETS 2017

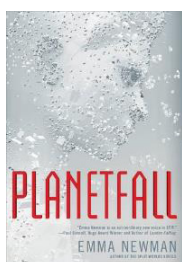


Laura Peacock, Kitchener Public Library



QUANTUM NIGHT by Robert J. Sawyer

We are raised to believe that we are unique, but what if there are truly only three types of people—empathetic, constant, or sociopathic. The research into consciousness and sociopaths by utilitarian and scientist Jim Marchuk is propelled by his desire to uncover pieces of his life that he recently discovered he was missing. What happens when he realizes that not all minds are made equal will thrill readers of Michael Crichton's **Timeline** or the **Uninvited** series by Sophie Jordan.



PLANETFALL by Emma Newman

Our planet has been overtaken by overpopulation, conflict, and waste, when a small group leaves earth, following a path to a new planet that their leader, Suh, believes she was destined to discover. Years later, Ren who followed her love Suh to Planetfall is struggling to come to terms with early decisions made by, or more specifically for, the colony. Mental health, sexual preference, religion, politics, war, and morality all play a role in this page-turner. For readers of complex space sagas like **Hyperion** by Dan Simmons or **Aurora** by Kim Stanley Robinson.



THE RIFT UPRISING by Amy S. Foster

As children, the Citadels were implanted with chips, enabling them to be faster, stronger, and smarter. They became super soldiers tasked with protecting the Rift—a Stargate-esque portal to other versions of earth. When a boy from a world very similar to hers comes through the Rift, Ryn wonders for the first time about what kind of life those who come through are forced into, and what would happen to her if she went through to another Earth. Palatable science and pop culture references abound—for readers who loved the **Divergent** and **The Hunger Games** sagas.



SLEEPING GIANTS by Sylvain Neuvel

Little is explained and little can be inferred as you read *Sleeping Giants*. As a child, Rose literally falls into a giant metal hand. Seventeen years later she is the head of a top secret search party for the remaining body pieces. Told entirely in transcripts of conversations between an unnamed interviewer and the search team, readers will be enthralled as they discover how the pieces were buried, and what will happen when they come together. For readers who enjoyed the epistolary style of **The Martian** by Andy Weir or **Speak** by Louisa Hall.



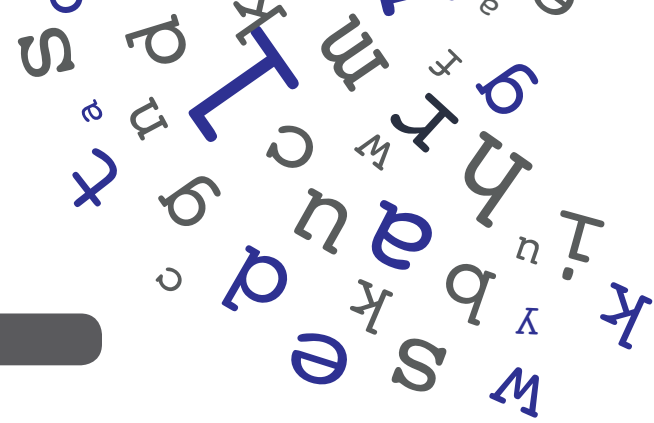
DARK MATTER by Blake Crouch

Every decision, for better or worse, defines our lives. The minutia or major choices and opportunities can drastically shift our lives. No one knows this better than Jason—a physics professor thrust into the multiverse—a world where our alternate choices inform our reality. Accessible sci-fi at its best, *Dark Matter* will make you consider your own defining moments and choices, and how far you would go to live the life you chose, without regrets. For lovers of parallel universe novels like **The Fold** by Peter Clines or **The Unquiet** by Mikaela Everett.

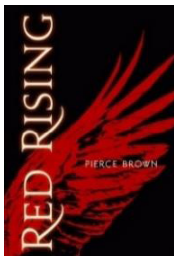


RA in a Day 2017

BEST BETS 2017



Megan Renkema, Caledon Public Library



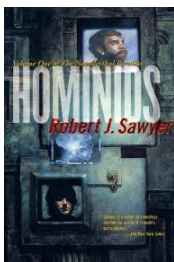
RED RISING by Pierce Brown

The planets have been colonized and a rigid, hierarchical class system has long been in place, ruled by the powerful Golds. Darrow, a lowly Red, infiltrates the Golds, first in an attempt to avenge the death of his wife, but also in order to bring down the entire system from within. The first in a three-part trilogy, this book has YA cross-over appeal and should be recommended to readers of **The Hunger Games** by Suzanne Collins, **The Fire Sermon** by Francesca Haig or **Gameboard of the Gods** by Richelle Mead.



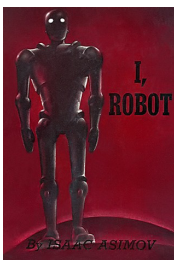
THE MARTIAN by Andy Weir

In the not-so-distant future, Mark Watney is accidentally left for dead on the planet Mars. Refusing to give up hope of rescue, Mark uses everything at his disposal to ensure his survival until people back on Earth realize that he is still there and are able to return for him. Of course, it seems that everything is stacked against him. If you enjoy tales of space exploration, you can also try **Red Mars** by Kim Stanley Robinson or **Seveneves** by Neal Stephenson.



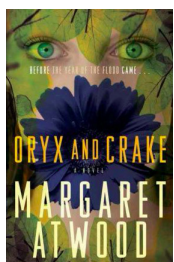
HOMINIDS by Robert J. Sawyer

Neanderthals and Homo sapiens exist in parallel worlds, each one fully though differently developed in terms of science and culture but completely unaware of each other. When Neanderthal physicist Ponter Boddit accidentally gets pulled into the human world, he is captured and studied but eventually befriends human geneticist Mary Vaughan who understands what he truly is, thanks to the help of Ponter's Companion implant. Readers of Hominids will also enjoy the rest of the trilogy: **Humans** and **Hybrids**.



I, ROBOT by Isaac Asimov

A collection of nine short stories that share the theme of interaction between humans and robotics, and in particular, the psychology, humanity and morality of robots. Most famous in this collection are Asimov's Three Laws of Robotics which govern robot behavior as it pertains to humans. Fans of **I, Robot** may also like **Robopocalypse** by Daniel Wilson.



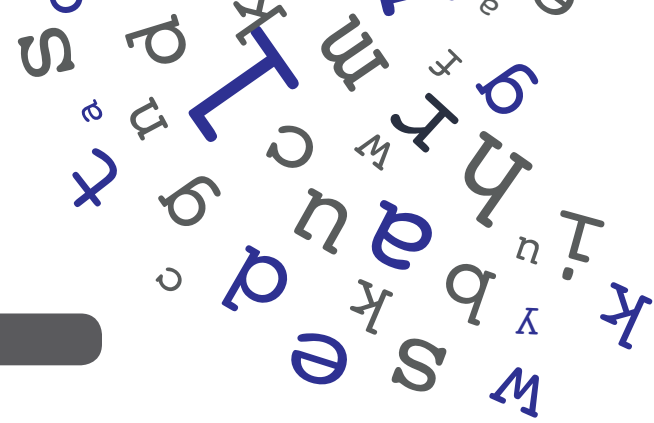
ORYX AND CRAKE by Margaret Atwood

In a world ecologically destroyed by technology and bioengineering, Jimmy, an unaltered human now known as Snowman, struggles to survive. While evading mutant predators amidst the wreckage of Earth, Snowman reflects on the past events that led to the devastation, including his relationship with Oryx, a sex-slave and the love of his life, and Crake, his genius friend who created The Children of Crake, bioengineered artificial humans. **The Windup Girl** by Paolo Bacigalupi, **The Chrysalids** by John Wyndam, and **Perdido Street Station** by China Miéville would all be great recommendations for readers of **Oryx and Crake**.

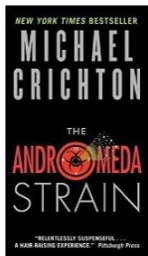


RA in a Day 2017

BEST BETS 2017

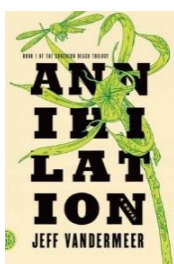


Dawna Wark, Hamilton Public Library



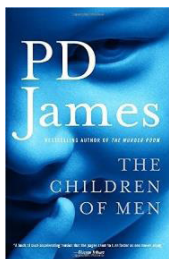
ANDROMEDA STRAIN by Michael Crichton

Andromeda Strain a speculative, technical medical thriller that unfolds briskly after a panel of specialized scientists called Wildfire regroup. An errant satellite has fallen to earth and the consequences are grave. Wildfire must elucidate the cause to determine what may be at stake for the planet. Would appeal to fans of Tess Gerritsen (**Gravity**) for the scientific details and storyline development, and Greg Bear's **Darwin's Radio** for the speculative aspect of how a DNA mutation could impact human gestation.



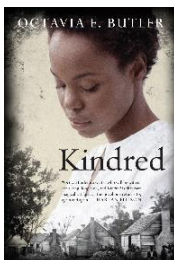
ANNIHILATION by Jeff Vandermeer

Annihilation is an intense read following the twelfth expedition of four scientists into a long abandoned Area X. A beautiful, lush, but eerily haunting environment awaits the scientists after their entry. Everything is not as it seems and strange occurrences erode the trust and stability of the team. **Annihilation** is the first book in the Southern Reach trilogy. Similar reads could be **Bird Box** by Josh Malerman or **Long Way to a Small Angry Planet** by Becky Chambers.



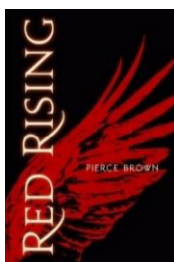
CHILDREN OF MEN by P. D. James

The Children of Men is a slowly rendered look at English society 25 years after the last children have been born (Omegas). Valued institutions have been hollowed out and the texture of the once rich England has warped. Theo Faron lives a bleak, uninspired life until he is sought to help challenge the state, and its leader, his cousin. Similar reads would be Margaret Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale** or **Never Let Me Go** by Kazuo Ishiguro for the sinister, slowly revealed behind the veil of normalcy.



KINDRED by Octavia Butler

Kindred is an intense, moving story about a contemporary black woman, Dana, who time travels between California of the 1970s and the antebellum South of 1819. Butler reveals the brutality of violence against black slaves by their white owners and the touching relationships amongst slaves struggling to survive. Similar storyline reads would be **The Book of Negroes** by Lawrence Hill and **Beloved** by Toni Morrison.



RED RISING by Pierce Brown

Red Rising is a fast-paced epic read with a memorable slate of characters. Darrow, the Helldiver Red, attempts to avenge the death of his freedom-seeking partner Eo. Realizing that the Reds are slaves in an oppressive regime set in the richly imagined, terraformed Mars, Darrow seems an unlikely rebel. **Red Rising** is the first book of a trilogy and would appeal to those who loved **The Hunger Games** by Suzanne Collins. For its immersive, world-building appeal, **Wool** by Hugh Howey would be another possibility.

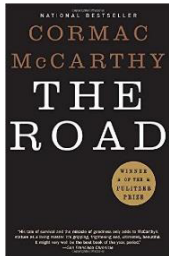


RA in a Day 2017

BEST BETS 2017

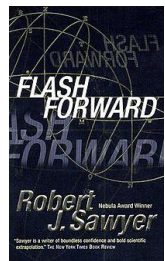


Julie Wendland, County of Lennox & Addington



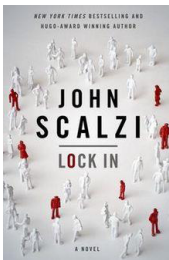
THE ROAD by Cormac McCarthy

In this contemporary classic, we follow a father and son as they struggle to survive in the aftermath of the apocalypse. Without any sun, food or shelter—and all the while being hunted by roaming cannibals—the pair believes their only hope is to make it to the coast. With its haunting tone and lyrical, stylistically complex prose, **The Road** provides readers of literary fiction with a gateway into the sci-fi genre. **The Reapers are the Angels** by Alden Bell is similarly haunting and also set in post-apocalyptic America.



FLASH FORWARD by Robert J. Sawyer

When a science experiment goes terribly wrong—and humankind is given a sneak peak of twenty years into the future—the characters in this thought-provoking novel must grapple with knowing their fates. A creative exploration of destiny, free will and the nature of the universe, **Flash Forward** is a great example of a character-driven sci-fi novel with wide appeal. Readers who are fans of time travel narratives with well-developed characters and themes of determinism and fatalism, will also enjoy **Dark Matter** by Blake Crouch.



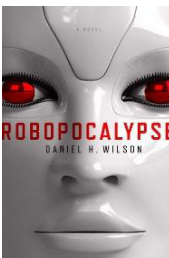
LOCK IN by John Scalzi

In the not-so-distant future, a meningitis-like disease called Haden's Syndrome has killed millions and left a small percentage of survivors "locked in"—fully conscious but immobile. Research has allowed the afflicted to resume their lives in a virtual environment, and to interact with the real world via humanoid robots. However, the new order of things is disrupted when it appears bodies are being hijacked. A fresh blend of sci-fi and police procedural, this novel will appeal both to readers who appreciate solid world building and those who like a good mystery. Also try **Company Town** by Madeline Ashby.



THE MARTIAN by Andy Weir

When astronaut Mark Watney is presumed dead following a violent Mars dust storm, and therefore abandoned on the red planet by his crew, he must rely on his wits to survive. The reader follows Mark as he faces *out of this world* adversity with a surprising amount of humour. Sci-fi fans will appreciate the technical details, but with its likeable hero, witty dialogue and edge of your seat suspense, **The Martian** is accessible to readers of all genres. **Aurora** by Kim Stanley Robinson also blends a compelling human interest story with space travel and its nitty gritty technical details.



ROBOPOCALYPSE by Daniel H. Wilson

In this fast-paced suspense novel, robots are everywhere controlled by humans but when the human race is nearly annihilated by an uprising of robots intent on destroying their controllers and humankind it is up to the remaining survivors to put an end to the robot war. It is told as an oral history by an international cast of survivors. Wilson creates the perfect eerie atmosphere of what happens when artificial intelligence outwits its creators. **Sleeping Giants** by Sylvain Neuvel is another title that will appeal to robot aficionados.