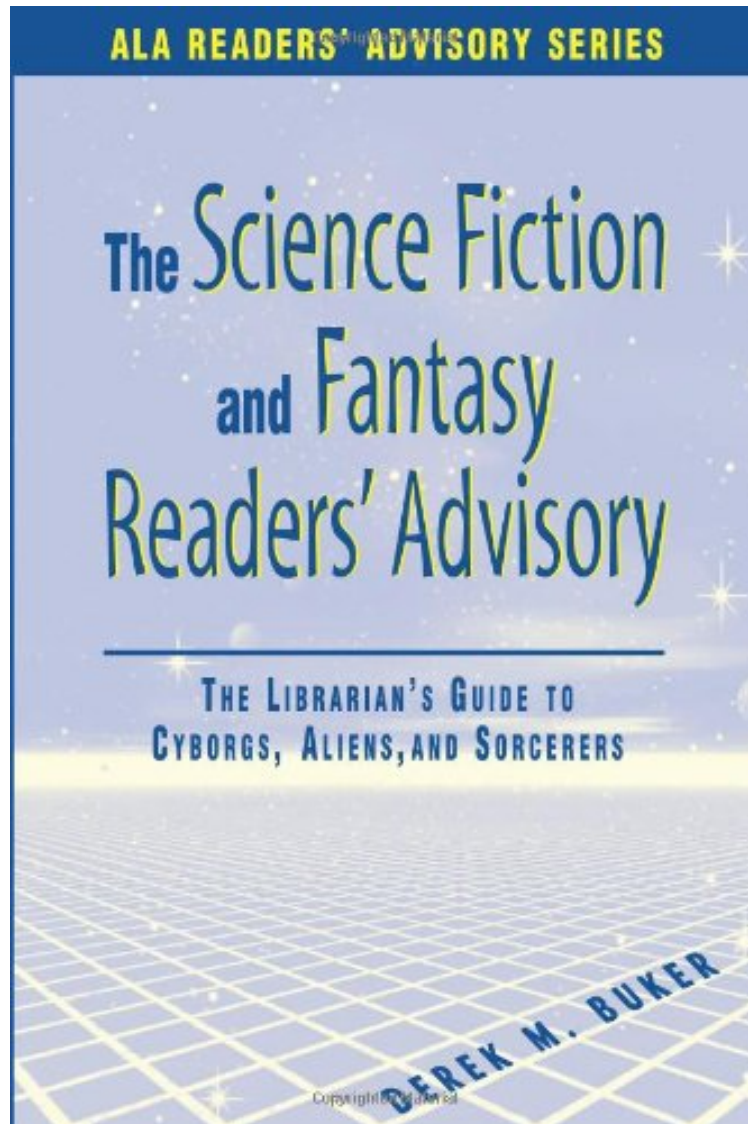


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Science Fiction and Fantasy Readers' Advisory: The Librarian's Guide to Cyborgs, Aliens, and Sorcerers (Ala Readers Advisory Series)

Derek M. Buker

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Derek M. Buker : Science Fiction and Fantasy Readers' Advisory: The Librarian's Guide to Cyborgs, Aliens, and Sorcerers (Ala Readers Advisory Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Science Fiction and Fantasy Readers' Advisory: The Librarian's Guide to Cyborgs, Aliens,

and Sorcerers (Ala Readers Advisory Series):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A practical and utilitarian guideBy Midwest Book ReviewThe Science Fiction And Fantasy Readers' Advisory: The Librarian's Guide To Cyborgs, Aliens, And Sorcerers by science fiction expert, library webmaster, and youth services specialist Derek M. Buker, is a unique and straightforward introduction to selecting science fiction and fantasy books for community library collections that are likely to be enjoyable and well-read, whether for one's personal reading pleasure or to serve science fiction/fantasy enthusiast in a library collection. A practical and utilitarian guide that includes information on the nature of each subgenre of sci-fi and fantasy, recommended picks, the lowdown on Hugo, Nebula, Mythopoeic, and World Fantasy award-winning books, and synopses of a few highly recommended picks, The Science Fiction And Fantasy Readers' Advisory is an informed and informative planning tool for developing an ideal collection attractive to anyone new to the wonders of science fiction and fantasy, as well as returning fans of the genre who want to learn more about the best of the very best titles in the field -- past, present, and forthcoming.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Tons of information...By V. BishopAll science fiction and fantasy are pretty much the same, right? According to Derek M. Buker, that could not be further from the truth. Lumping everything together is the one thing that you do not want to do; each different subgenre has different characteristics that appeal to readers. Also, the genres can bleed-together, making limiting a book to one particular group difficult. Buker puts it plainly "with these two genres, nothing is simple" (p. 8). Some of the first advice in The Science Fiction and Fantasy Readers' Advisory is to find-out what type of book is the reader interested in, the specifics, and go from there.Buker starts out by covering science fiction, and gives the reader a quiz to see how much he or she really knows about science fiction; it is surprising how much elements of science fiction have crept into the mainstream. The rest of the chapter follows a format that is used throughout the rest of the book: there is a description of one of the sub-genres, followed by several books and descriptions. Then, Buker offers a list of other recommended titles, wrapping up with "Derek's Pick" as well as the "Best Pick fo the Reluctant Reader," someone who might not be into that particular genre but is curious about it.The first part of the book covers science fiction: chapter one is "classic and general science fiction." Chapter two covers stories featuring aliens (either first contact with aliens or alien invasions. Chapter three involves stories that are either set on or involve traveling to other planets, with separate sections for Mars, the moon, and other celestial bodies. Chapter four concerns itself with robots and cyborgs, or "life of a mechanical kind" while chapter five concerns itself with books on when computers turn against their creators (p. 32). Chapter six covers "cyberpunk," a darker form of science fiction while chapter seven includes information on virtual reality. Chapter eight holocaust fiction, when the world is facing disaster, the world is pretty much ending, or the world is pretty much destroyed and what survives is living in the rubble. In chapter nine, the genre of alternate history is covered (what if the Nazi's won World War II) followed by time travel in chapter ten. Chapter eleven tackles comic book superheroes and tales of genetic engineering. Chapters twelve through fourteen and sixteen cover books where science fiction meets other genres: mysteries and thrillers (chapter twelve), humor (thirteen), books that blend science fiction and fantasy (fourteen), and romance and religion (sixteen). For those interested in people with superhuman abilities, that is covered in chapter fifteen. Finally, chapter seventeen covers "space operas," or adventure sin space that "take place on a galactic scale" and includes information on Star Wars and the different Star Trek series (p. 93).Part two starts right off by covering classic and general fantasy in chapter eighteen. Chapter nineteen and twenty cover epic fantasy and quest fantasy. Chapter twenty-one shows that fairy tales, both the more traditional variants and more modern versions can appeal not just to younger audiences. Chapter twenty-two covers both books based on characters of ancient myths as well as those that are adaptations of Arthurian legend. Chapter twenty-three concerns itself with historical fantasy; such as what things could have been like if magic existed in the past. Chapters twenty-four and twenty-five deal with darker fantasy and fantasy dealing with more horrific creatures such as vampires and ghosts. Chapter twenty-six is urban fantasy, or fantasy that takes place on Earth in the here and now while chapter twenty-seven has the character start on Earth but is transported to another world. Chapter twenty-eight covers books where swords and sorcery , where the heroes rely on strength and power to win the day while chapter twenty-nine highlights books where music plays a part. Chapter thirty is concerned with creatures that are not human: unusual animals, dragons, and elves. Finally, chapters thirty-one through thirty three cover humorous fantasy (thirty-one), fantasy mysteries (thirty-two), and fantasy romance (thirty-three). At the end, there is an appendix of award winners in the genres of science fiction and fantasy.Science fiction and fantasy are two complex genres, and even a fan of one is not likely going to be a fan of all, or even know what every genre is. Buker dives right into the two genres so that when someone is asked the "dreaded question: `Can you recommend a good science-fiction book?'" an answer can be given that is not just a generic "Have you read Asimov?" or a silent plea that someone who knows more about the subject will show up by magic (p. xi). For those who dread the next time a patron asks "can you recommend some good fantasy?" The Science Fiction and Fantasy Readers' Advisory is a good jumping-off point. It cannot cover everything, and it will not mean that every recommendation will automatically be something a patron will like. However, it does narrow things down, giving those who have no clue about science-fiction and fantasy, as well as those who do, a tool to help patrons find books

they might like. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Tremendous Resource
By Bill Glover
After reading through this book, I found that it was as complete a guide to Science Fiction as any previously read. The book is well laid out and the subject matter is complete and accurate. This manual is a "Must Have" for any Science Fiction buff, or any organization that needs to answer questions regarding the various subjects within the Science Fiction world. The various subsections dealing with different genre make this book capable of guiding the reader to any style of Science Fiction someone would want. Congratulations to Mr. Buker on a fine writing and hopefully we will see a second edition soon.

In the realm of science fiction, technology - either real or imagined-holds the key and in fantasy, magic is the dominating force. These two literary worlds share a maze of sub-genres that require an expert's navigation. This user-friendly book details the ins and outs of each genre and subgenres.

From School Library Journal
A well-organized, humorous guide to providing readers' advisory to customers wanting science fiction or fantasy recommendations, this volume will be especially invaluable to library staff members who do not read or are unfamiliar with these genres. The book is divided into two parts, one dealing with science fiction and one with fantasy, and further divides these genres into their many subgenres, providing short annotated lists of recommended titles as well as longer lists without annotations. Buker also includes suggestions for reluctant readers. What this guide does best is demonstrate the wide scope of science fiction and fantasy literature; it gives many suggestions and recommendations across this broad range. While Buker does include some crossover teen favorites, he leaves out many titles that are firmly rooted in the young adult science fiction and fantasy pantheon, making this book more useful for high school readers' advisory.
Sharon Grover, Arlington County Department of Libraries,
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