70 Years of Best Sellers 1895-1965 (1967) by Alice Payne Hackett – a book of bestsellers; not necessarily the “best” books, but books people wanted to read.

ALA: Challenges by Initiator, Institution, Type, & Year – lists of challenged books, as reported to ALA’s Office for Intellectual Freedom, from 1990-present. http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/bannedbooksweek/bbwlinks/challengesinitiator.htm


Best Books, A Reader’s Guide to the Choice of the Best Available Books (About 50,000) in Every Department of Science, Art and Literature with the Dates of the First and Last Editions and the Price, Size, and Publisher’s Name of Each Book: A Contribution towards Systematic Bibliography (1894) by William Swan Sonnenschein – the title says it all.

Best Novels of the Nineties: A Reader’s Guide (2000) by Linda Parent Lesher – a list of approximately 1,000 titles by about 700 authors that were published in the English-speaking world.

BookBrowser – currently hosted by Barnes & Noble, this site includes extensive categorization of books. http://www.barnesandnoble.com/bookbrowser/Welcome.asp?

Book Lust: Recommended Reading for Every Mood, Moment, and Reason and More Book Lust: Recommended Reading for Every Mood, Moment, and Reason (2003, 2005) by Nancy Pearl – the well known Seattle librarian lists her recommendations in thematic style.

Books Fatal to Their Authors (1970) by P. H. Ditchfield – a book of authors that so angered the establishment they were often cast into “perpetual imprisonment” where they often died.


Fiction_L Booklists – Morton Grove Public Library’s Webrary provides booklists by category, including genre, character, setting, subject, author, and audience. Also find subscription instructions for the Fiction_L listserv. http://www.webrary.org/rs/FLbklistmenu.html

Molders of the Modern Mind: 111 Books that Shaped Western Civilization (1961) by Robert B. Downs – the author admits that an unanimous verdict on any title was difficult to obtain (but in the area of the hard sciences considerably easier) – but this is his final list.

Notable Books – since 1944, the Notable Books Council (currently a part of ALA’s Reference & User Services Association (RUSA)), has compiled an annual list of 25 very good, very readable, and at times very important fiction, nonfiction, and poetry books for the nation’s readers. http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaprotools/rusanotable/notablebooks.htm
One Hundred Best Books with Commentary and an Essay on Books and Reading (1922) by John Cowper Powys – a booklist specifically not for those looking to become “cultivated persons,” but rather those who read for the pleasure of reading.

One Thousand Best Books: The Household Guide to a Lifetime’s Reading and Clue to the Literary Labyrinth (1931) by Don Dickinson – a list of compiled lists from booklists such as the ALA Catalog from 1904 and the Harvard Classics (a.k.a “The Five-Foot Shelf) selected by C. W. Eliot.

Outstanding Books for the College Bound and Lifelong Learners – list of the recommended readings organized by the following academic disciplines: history, humanities, literature and language arts, science and technology, and social sciences. This list was created by ALA’s Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), in collaboration with the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL). http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/booklistsawards/outstandingbooks/outstandingbooks.htm

Overbooked – a volunteer project undertaken by Ann Chambers Theis, Collection Management Administrator, Chesterfield County (VA) Public Library. Site includes genre fiction and reader’s advisory resources, as well as other tools for “ravenous readers.” http://www.overbooked.org/


Rotten Reviews: A Literary Companion and Rotten Reviews II: A Literary Companion (1986 & 1987) by Bill Henderson – lists of books that received rotten and scathing reviews, but stood the test of time and whose authors “remain a force” even after being beaten down by reviewers.

For more great booklists, check your library catalog under the Library of Congress Subject Heading: Best Books.

Colorado Association of Libraries
2006 Annual Conference

Booklists: Should- and Want-to-Reads
Sarah Naper, Reference Librarian
University of Northern Colorado Libraries

and

Stephanie Wiegand, Reference Librarian
University of Northern Colorado Libraries

Have a favorite Internet or print booklist? We would love for you to share with us!
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