Reader’s Advisory for the Magazine Inclined

by Robin Illsley

Have you ever tried recommending a good book to a teen, only to see her sigh, roll her eyes, and then head for the magazine rack? Here are some book suggestions for teen girls who love their magazines.

If you like Teen Vogue, try...

- the Gossip Girl series by Cecily von Ziegesar
- the It Girl series by Cecily von Ziegesar
- the A-List series by Zoey Dean
- The Truth about Diamonds by Nicole Richie
- The Devil Wears Prada by Lauren Weisberger

If you like Seventeen or Teen, try...

- The Dating Game series by Natalie Standiford
- the Princess Diaries series by Meg Cabot
- the Clique series by Lisi Harrison
- authors Megan McCafferty & Carolyn Mackler

If you like Sugar or J-17, try...

- the Mates & Dates series by Cathy Hopkins
- Angus, Thongs, and Full-frontal Snogging (& subsequent books) by Louise Remnison
- the Shopaholic series by Sophie Kinsella

If you like Bust or Bitch...

- authors Francesca Lia Block, Carol Ann Duffy, & Carolyn Mackler
- Stitch 'n' bitch or The Happy Hooker by Debbie Stoller

MAGAZINES FOR GRRRLZ!

By Deb Mann

Most magazines for teen girls are pink and frilly and plastered liberally with the faces of Zac and Vanessa from High School Musical. Isn’t there any place a feminist can find solace on the magazine rack?

Thankfully, yes. There are a number of good magazines aimed at the female teen population that take a more feminist approach. Here are two to get you started.

The tagline of Bust magazine is “for women with something to get off their chests”. I picked up the recent Love edition (just in time for Valentine’s Day) and found it full of hilarious, thought-provoking and frank pieces. It doesn’t sacrifice fun, celebrity content or great fashion layouts, but manages to inject a fair bit of critical thought into its content – witness “The Guide”, a typical ‘what’s hot’ list of music and movies, but with a five-page-long section devoted to books. Articles include an examination of the Bush Administration’s abstinence program, the HPV vaccine, middle-age pregnancy, and using statistics to debunk popular myths about single women. There’s a bit of adult content in Bust – the erotica segment entitled “One-Handed Read”, for example – but in terms of women’s magazines with something to offer teens, this is pretty good.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, Shameless is directly marketed to teen girls. The tagline “News! Views! Music! Culture! Style! For Girls Who Get It” says it all. I took a look through the Second Anniversary issue of this publication, based out of Toronto. Shameless is in black and white, and definitely conveys a less glossy, more realistic image. The content reflects a focus on activism and action, with articles on alternative spaces, the inequities of the international chocolate trade, and the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty. Interview subjects are all young women - a slam poet, a singer, a fringe culture icon, and boxers. In lieu of makeup and hair tips, there are articles on making your own stencil for decorating your clothing/spray-painting messages on buildings, and podcasting. The fashion content is represented by an article on a co-op store that sells clothing made by women from around the world.