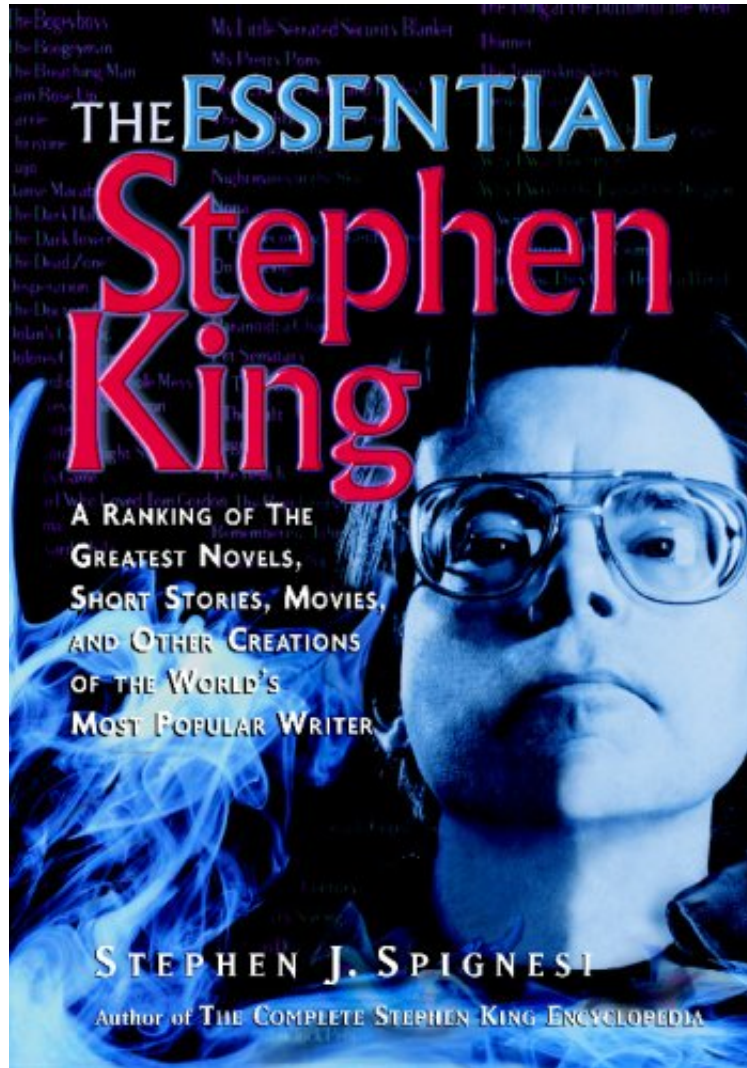


(Read now) The Essential Stephen King

The Essential Stephen King

Stephen J. Spignesi

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Stephen J. Spignesi : The Essential Stephen King before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Essential Stephen King:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Ranking of Kings Work by Maybe His Biggest Fan but a Very Average ReviewerBy James N SimpsonIf you took a random reviewer, collated all their reviews of one author (in this case Stephen King) and asked them to rank the books they reviewed then you'd come up with something like the text book laid out in appearance work, The Essential King. Throw in the fact that Spignesi is as gushing a King fan as a twelve year old girl is of her favourite boyband lead singer and what we've got in this collection are biased positive reviews by someone who thinks everything his idol wrote is a masterpiece, these reviews aren't critical at all. I've read

a lot of Stephen King, enjoyed most of it but come on there are some novels and short stories in anthologies that aren't quite up to par including a lot which Spignesi rates highly. I would take in the ranking of an authors work much more critically if done by someone who is prepared to admit their idol has flaws. Also if you're going to rank his work you've got to at least provide a list of the other stuff that didn't make the list. Spignesi also suffers from the bad reviewer quality of thinking there's nothing wrong about including spoilers in a large number of his reviews which means you may become interested in tracking down a story, well that is until the ending or a major twist is ruined for you. Other than a summary Spignesi provides little reasoning for why each piece of work makes the cut or why he likes the stories with most explanations of this only being one or two sentences. Spignesi's list also contains a lot of rare stuff but often he provides no information which magazines or whatever to locate these for the person who has become interested and wants to track them down. I picked up this book as I thought it would be an interesting look at King's novels and discuss the major differences in the books from their movie adaptations. There's not much of this here. Flip through it at your local library if trying to put on hold a book and you can't remember what its called but don't waste money on this disaster. 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. garbageBy Bryant BurnetteThe idea for this book isn't a bad one: the ranking of the Top 100 of all Stephen King's works. However, in order for such a conceit to mean anything, there has to be some thought, skill, and insight involved on the part of the ranker. Spignesi showcases none of these qualities. Instead, what you are left with is something that goes no deeper than you might find on any fan-based website. Spignesi's knowledge of King's work is admittedly considerable, but in order for a work of literary criticism -- which this is, no matter how poorly-thought-out and poorly-presented -- to be worth reading, it has to cut a bit deeper than mere knowledge. There has to be insight. Perhaps Spignesi has such insights, but if so, he has no interest in demonstrating it in this book: his typical mode is to simply list what he liked in each work, and usually this consists of saying that he liked the characters, or something similarly facile. Spignesi himself is a TERRIBLE writer. This book is peppered with poor writing, with the misuse (or nonuse) of commas being especially prevalent. Why should we accept the critical judgment of a writer who himself cannot write? There is an attempt to make it plain that the idea behind this book is for it to stimulate discussion about King's works. Well, really, the best way to do that is to simply read them for yourself. You don't need a writer who ought to properly be confined to fanzines to tell you what King's best works are. And if you don't need that, then you don't need this book. Thank God, it was given to me as a gift; no dollars of my own were wasted on this sad excuse for criticism. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Not awful, but not great. By Ashley E. M. M. As another reviewer stated, this work is great for a casual or new fan, wanting to learn more about individual S.K. works and whether he or she might like to read them. For serious fans such as myself, this work is just one glaring error after another, coupled with the lackluster opinions of a self-proclaimed super-fan. In particular, the numerous factual errors that I have found in this book are at the very least distracting, and make me question Spignesi's assessment of S.K.'s writings, especially since he can't seem to keep his literary facts straight! For example, in his entry on "Bag of Bones," Spignesi asserts that Mattie Devore, one of the main characters, is divorced. She is actually widowed, and this facet of this story is important. Another error can be found in Spignesi's entry on "The Dead Zone" (a personal favorite of mine). In this work, Greg Stillson is a third-party candidate for the House of Representatives, not the U.S. presidency! This seemingly minor amount of power initially courted by Stillson is vital to the story. These are just two of many errors, both literary and grammatical, that I found when I read this work. By all means, check it out at the library or borrow it from a friend if you want to know which S.K. book to start with (or just ask an S.K. fan...there are lots of us!).

Spignesi selects and ranks the top 101 works out of the more than 550 created by Stephen King during his prolific career. Each chosen work is synopsisized and reviewed by the writer who Entertainment Weekly has called "the world's leading expert on Stephen King."

From Publishers Weekly Spignesi, credited with over 20 books (The Stephen King Quiz Book; The Celebrity Baby Name Book; The Beatles Book of Lists; etc.) in the past decade, views Stephen King as "our greatest living author." With his staggering 18,000-item Complete Stephen King Encyclopedia, he was labeled "the world's leading expert on Stephen King" by Entertainment Weekly, and he again beelines for his favorite destination. This time he itemizes 553 works by King and selects his 101 favorites from among King's novels, short stories and nonfiction (with one poem). His top 10 picks are all novels, including *It*, *The Stand* and *Bag of Bones*. Each selection is shoehorned into a template that includes, for example, rank (and justification for such), publication date, King's comment about the work, Spignesi's brief personal reaction ("what I really liked about the book"), film adaptations and a short excerpt from each work. The author's colloquial style is peppered with such sentences as "Yikes!" and "Great fun." Personal anecdotes, parenthetical digressions and Spignesi's worshipful approach signify mammoth first-draft fanzine more than serious critical study. Short pieces by Spignesi's friends and colleagues, including an interview with a King collector, add to this effect. Agent, John White. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Wiater and his coauthors, all writers deeply involved in sf and horror writing or criticism, here aim to show that King's stories are interconnected by theme or character and that the "Dark Tower series is the core of the Stephen King universe." In

their investigation of linked themes, the authors limit themselves to King's published titles, including his early work only if a specific title has been published in a collection. Appendixes include a chronology of Stephen King's life and works, a bibliography of King's writings, a list of recommended web sites, recommended reading, and an index. Taking a different tack on King's corpus, admitted King fan Spignesi (*The Complete Stephen King Encyclopedia*, *The Lost Work of Stephen King*, and two Stephen King quiz books) specifies King's 101 best works and also lists all 553 works with publication status at the end of the volume. (His index was unavailable for review.) Like Wiater, Spignesi discusses story lines and main characters, also including little-known tidbits and a comment from King regarding each title. Both books include information about film adaptations with Spignesi listing the movie's cast and Wiater presenting movie reviews. Wiater also indicates when a story has been released in other formats. Both titles will appeal to serious King fans, but Wiater's will be an especially useful addition to academic resources on contemporary authors. Recommended for those libraries with a need for in-depth information on King and his work. Laurie Selwyn, San Antonio P.L., TX Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.