

Our Dream Cast

EW's humble thoughts on who should star in the *Hunger* films

KATNISS
Lyndsy Fonseca
Nikita's Fonseca has the look and kick-assitude necessary for the trilogy's heroine.

HAYMITCH
Robert Downey Jr.
Tony Stark proves he'd be perfect as the hard-drinking (but still lovable) District 12 mentor.

EFFIE
Elizabeth Banks
Banks can play the blond and bubbly Games escort, but she can also bring a nice note of malice.

GALE
Ben Barnes
Gale isn't a prince like Caspian, but Barnes has the tall, dark, and handsome thing down.

PEETA
Josh Hutcherson
Okay, so he's not a blond. But the *Kids Are All Right* star has the build... and the charm.

to save her sister—hasn't yet reached the cultural saturation of **Stephenie Meyer's** megahit, comparisons are inevitable: Both are addictively readable young-adult series about a female teen in a complicated love triangle. But the similarities end there. *HG* is more thoughtful and much, much darker. The books (which hide a compelling antiwar message behind the veneer of a tween thriller) are exceptionally well written and expertly paced, with near-constant suspense. And unlike *Twilight's* passive, angsty Bella, Katniss is a self-possessed young woman who demonstrates equal parts compassion and fearlessness. With a protagonist as appealing as

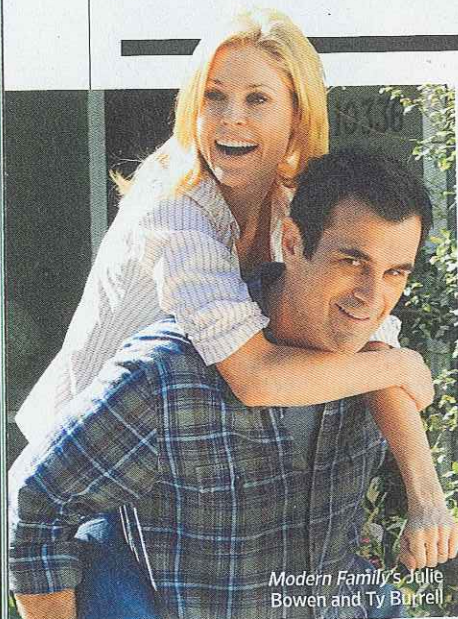
Ms. Everdeen, it's no surprise Hollywood has come courting. Besides, with both the Harry Potter series and *The Twilight Saga* winding down, the studios desperately need a new young-skewing franchise with a rabid fan base. Luckily for Lionsgate, it optioned the *Hunger* series back in March 2009. Veteran scribe **Billy Ray** (*Shattered Glass*) recently turned in a draft, and director **Gary Ross** (*Seabiscuit*) is in negotiations for the first film. If all goes well, the studio hopes to be in production by next spring.

But despite its vividly cinematic language, *The Hunger Games* won't be easy to adapt. EW has seen an early copy of the script, which includes a note-by-note retelling of the Games.

"It's an intense subject matter, but you can tell the story with some restraint."

—Producer **Nina Jacobson**

How can the studio show brutal kid-on-kid violence and still pull off a PG-13 rating? "It's always going to be an intense subject matter, but you can tell the story with some restraint," says producer **Nina Jacobson**, who praises the books for appealing to both girls and boys. "The only people these books are *not* for are those under 12. The movie will be the same."
—Nicole Sperling, with additional reporting by Keith Staskiewicz



Modern Family's Julie Bowen and Ty Burrell

THE MODERN FAMILY EFFECT

NBC, CBS, and Fox search for their own versions of *Modern* success

Pilot season is in full swing, and one trend is emerging: Dad-driven family comedies are all the rage. Why? Broadcast networks seem anxious to replicate the success of *Modern Family*, ABC's sophomore smash, which waltzed away with the Outstanding Comedy Series Emmy in August and is averaging an

enviable 12 million viewers this season. NBC, CBS, and Fox all have shows in development for fall 2011 that have a *Family* feel: NBC is working on *Man of the House*, which is described as a Mr. Mom role-reversal show; CBS is shepherding an untitled sitcom from Peter Knight (*Sweet Valley High*) that focuses on the outspoken

suburban father of a blended family; and Fox is turning the buzzy non-fiction book *The Council of Dads* into a half-hour comedy chronicling a group of six men who raise the daughters of a friend who died of cancer. After this year's crop of lackluster shows, here's hoping *Father does* know best. —Tanner Stransky

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