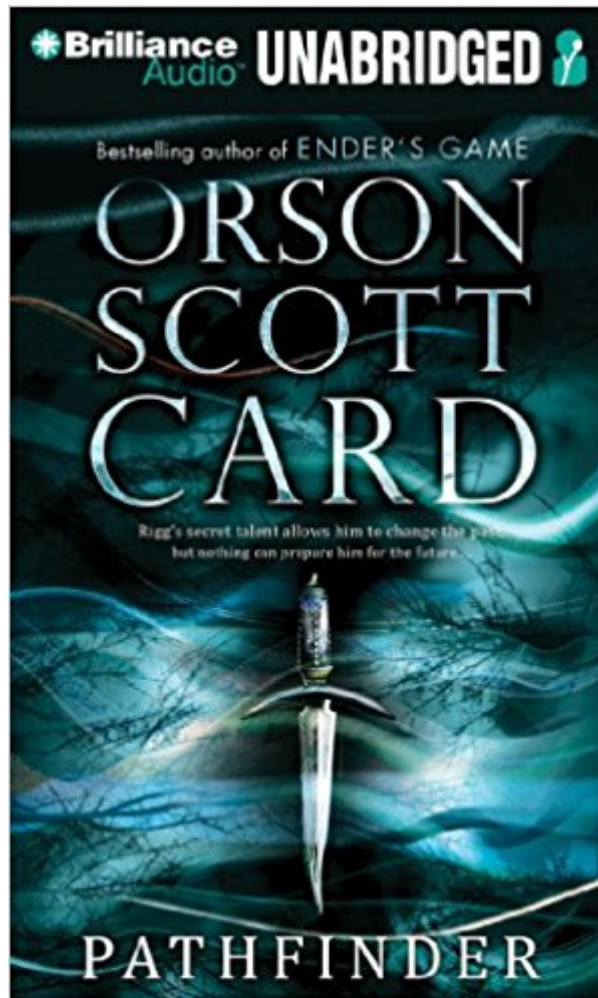




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## Pathfinder (Pathfinder Series)



## Synopsis

Rigg is well trained at keeping secrets. Only his father knows the truth about Rigg's strange talent for seeing the paths of people's pasts. But when his father dies, Rigg is stunned to learn just how many secrets Father had kept from him—secrets about Rigg's own past, his identity, and his destiny. And when Rigg discovers that he has the power not only to see the past, but also to change it, his future suddenly becomes anything but certain. Rigg's birthright sets him on a path that leaves him caught between two factions, one that wants him crowned and one that wants him dead. He will be forced to question everything he thinks he knows, choose who to trust, and push the limits of his talent...or forfeit control of his destiny.

## Book Information

Series: Pathfinder Series (Book 1)

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Best Sellers Rank: #2,954,018 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #23 in Books > Books on CD > Authors, A-Z > ( C ) > Card, Orson Scott #945 in Books > Books on CD > Children's Fiction > Fantasy #1449 in Books > Books on CD > Children's Fiction > General

Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 10 - 12

## Customer Reviews

Gr 7 Up—Card's latest work of speculative fiction twists together tropes of fantasy and science fiction into something fine indeed. Rigg and his father are trappers by trade, but Rigg has been instructed throughout his 13 years in languages, sciences, history, and politics. The teen is therefore somewhat mentally prepared for the quest that his father thrusts upon him with his dying breath—to go to the capital city and find his sister. Both Rigg and his friend, Umbo, have a special ability that aids them—Rigg can see the paths of all living things, regardless of

intervening obstructions or even time, and Umbo can seemingly change the movement of time itself. Needless to say, the two meet various friends and foes and can't always tell which is which as they journey onward. Juxtaposed with this main story is an entirely different narrative, told in a page or two at the beginning of each chapter. This is the tale of Ram Odin, human pilot of a colony ship from Earth, traveling to a new world with the use of space-folding technology. The combination of science fiction and fantasy as well as a surprising revelation at the end harken back to genre classics like Robert Silverberg's *Lord Valentine's Castle* (HarperCollins, 1980) and Roger Zelazny's *Nine Princes in Amber* (Doubleday, 1970). This novel should appeal to Card's legion of fans as well as anyone who enjoys speculative fiction with characters who rely on quick thinking rather than violence or tales of mind-bending time-travel conundrums. --Eric Norton, McMillan Memorial Library, Wisconsin Rapids, WI. (c) Copyright 2010. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

**\*Starred Review\*** The first in a series, Card's latest title has much in common with his Ender Wiggins books: precocious teens with complementary special talents, callously manipulative government authorities, endlessly creative worlds, and Card's refusal to dumb down a plot for a young audience. Here he takes the notions of folding space and time, embracing paradox, "adopting a rule set in which . . . causality . . . controls reality, regardless of where it occurs on the timeline." Thirteen-year-old Rigg is a Pathfinder, one who sees the paths of others' pasts. Rigorously trained and thoroughly educated by his demanding father, Rigg is horrified when Father dies unexpectedly after a final order to find the sister he never knew he had. Rigg is accompanied on this journey by a small group of friends who have powers of bending and manipulating the flow of time. Card also skillfully twines a separate story line into the plot, featuring earth's colonization of distant planets, led by the idealistic young pilot Ram Odin. Fast paced and thoroughly engrossing, the 650-plus pages fly by, challenging readers to care about and grasp sophisticated, confusing, and captivating ideas. As in *Engle's Time Quartet*, science is secondary to the human need to connect with others, but Card does not shy away from full and fascinating discussions of the paradoxical worlds he has created. Grades 8-12. --Debbie Carton --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A young boy has a gift: the ability to sense the paths taken by people and animals, both recently and long-ago. A second character also has a gift: the ability to manipulate time. These gifts are

integral to the story, but the story itself is about far more than those two special gifts. Like other books by this author, a primitive world has been created and populated by interesting characters, some of whom may or may not be who they seem to be. Pathfinder is a well-written, intelligent story. However, a few negatives are: (1) The last quarter of the book was less interesting because by then many of the plot twists had been unwound -- and so it was becoming clear how the story would end. (2) In the post-script, the author added brief explanations of a couple basic plot points. If he felt some readers would be confused, perhaps some re-writing should have been done instead. (3) As Pathfinder is the first of a set of books, its final chapter was both an end of one story and the beginning of another story.

I haven't read a book that sat quite so poorly with me in a while. And I think it's Rigg's fault. He's too much of an uber-gifted clone of Ender, but in a setting that reads as a fantasy, his hyper-rationality is too jarring. And to be frank, nearly 700 pages is a long time to spend with an insufferable know-it-all stock main character. Also, the way he can willfully shift drastic roles, like going from humble trapper to conniving business douche in a half second flat because his father taught him "rhetoric," makes him all the more unlikable. It makes me feel like I'm reading about a sociopath. A boring one. The shift between the spaceship and Rigg's world also gets old fast. I love when people can combine fantasy and science fiction, but this has got to be one of the clumsiest, most heavy-handed attempts I've witnessed. Too jarring, much too jarring. And the pseudo-science feels like it's just in the story to look clever and take up word count, regardless of how much sense it makes, which is none. What's disappointing is that this book starts out so well. It's a whimsical mishmash of time travel, esper abilities, a fantasy backdrop, an almost Merlin-like character if he were more sci fi, space colonization, natural disasters and a youth's quest into the greater world. But then Rigg gets out into the wider world and everything falls apart as Card tries to rationalize all these tropes into one coherent story, and then fails as the story falls into tangents and dull scenes. One whole chapter was devoted to nothing but banking. Banking! What is this, Spice & Wolf? I was very disappointed to find out there's sequels, as well. Organically changing the past seems like a 300 page premise at best, and Phillip K. Dick already did it much better in 200 pages or so in Ubik. Save yourself the headache and just go read or re-read Ubik.

Rigg is special. He can see where living things have been, and how long ago. He sees their paths, even hundreds of years afterwards. This helps him track game, as he travels with his forester father to collect meat and hides for sale. It also gets Rigg into a lot of trouble. Orson Scott Card has

created a world in which the human brain is able to transcend time and space. Humans like Rigg need not be limited by the unidirectional flow of time, and the chains of causality can be quite surprising as a result. The story is interesting throughout. Despite the elements of science fiction that shape Rigg's adventures, the meat and potatoes of Pathfinder are a story, characters, and a world that left me wishing I could be one of those characters, in that amazing world.

The Pathfinder series is just another example of how excellent a writer Orson Scott Card is. He does tend to wax a little too technical at times throughout the trilogy; portions of all three of these novels are somewhat dry and difficult to read as Card delves into the physics of how and why timeshaping works the way it does. Overall, though, I love these books. All three are captivating, and I couldn't put them down. The trilogy has a solid seat on my list of favorite sci-fi series.

I thought this book was a very well thought out and interesting book. It starts off with Rigg in the forest with his father using his ability to see where animals and people have moved through in the past. After a few important events (that I don't want to say to spoil the book for you) Rigg sets off on his own with his friend, Umbo, who has a special ability to slow time. The book continues on with Rigg and Umbo fusing their abilities to use time travel. They eventually end up at a tavern, where they meet a recently retired army soldier, who decides the kids are nuts and ends up leading them to where they need to go throughout the book. He first takes them to "O", a city with the great tower of "O", where they try to get money and shelter for a while. A few days into staying there, some people try to capture Rigg and take him to a city a while down the river called Aressa Sessamo. He eventually meets his long lost mother and sister that he never even knew about. A lot more important events that I can't tell you happen. I guess you will have to read the book to find out. I think that this book has several interesting perspectives on time travel, and although it may be a little confusing to grasp the knowledge of time travel in this book, it seems to make sense near the end of the book. Orson Scott Card made a very great book and I would definitely rate this book a 4 because even though it is confusing, it has lots of cool happenings and is altogether a really interesting book.

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