

# open shelf

september  
2001

## mesa public library young adult advisory council book review newsletter

### letter from the editor

Well, September has rolled around again, and to the surprise of many people (including myself) I am still editor. This means that you are subjected to yet another year of my ramblings. This year looks promising. We have a great group working day in and day out to provide you with reading suggestions. Take advantage of our work. Escape the tedium of the daily grind! Until next month...



**Leon Eubanks**  
open shelf Editor

Send comments and suggestions to  
YaacEditor@hotmail.com



### rating system

bad ★  
so-so ★★  
good ★★★  
excellent ★★★★★

Visit the Library's NEW Web Site:  
[www.mesalibrary.org](http://www.mesalibrary.org)  
and see the **Teens** page!

### The Fellowship of the Ring

By **J.R.R. Tolkien**

Hobbits. Who doesn't like hobbits? Apparently the forces of evil. Who da thunk? This eponymous fantasy book (it basically started the genre) follows the travails of Frodo Baggins and his crew of merry creatures in their quest to destroy the One Ring of Power. It is the first book in the **Lord of the Rings** trilogy.

I felt terminal guilt for years because I had never completed the **Lord of the Rings** series, so now I have started it. J.R.R. Tolkien is great; this book is great, so read it.

—**Erin Hutchinson** ★★★★★

### The Dragonslayer's Apprentice

By **David Calder**

In this fantasy story we follow the exploits of a dragon slayer, his female apprentice, Jackie, and his assistant, Ron. This dragon slayer can really pick 'em too. Jackie is incredibly outspoken, fearless, absolutely despises the formalities and boredom of high-class life, and though she has never mentioned it, the Dragonslayer knows she is a princess. On the other side of things, Ron hardly ever speaks and yet gets a lot across by nodding and shaking his head.

### This month:

*The Fellowship of the Ring* by J.R.R. Tolkien

*The Dragonslayer's Apprentice* by David Calder

*Nim's Island* by Wendy Orr

*When I Was Puerto Rican* by Esmeralda Santiago

*Understand the Unknown* by K.A. Applegate

*A Stranger is Watching* by Mary Higgins Clark

*Totally Confidential* by Sally Warner

*Beast* by Donna Jo Napoli

*The Night Life of the Gods* by Thome Smith

This party has contract after contract including disposing of a gigantic kitten, two killer birds, and of course a dragon. The thing is, they don't always kill the monsters. Unsatisfied customers tend to be the only thing any of them are afraid of, but then again Jackie's father could be trying to find her and kings aren't known for being very kind.

—**Elizabeth Steimle** ★★★★★

### Nim's Island

By **Wendy Orr**

Your father is away, you are stuck on an island by yourself, and you have to get your own stuff; what would you do? This is the situation Nim is in. She has an iguana, a sea lion, and a turtle to help take care of her. The only way to communicate is through a cell phone, e-mail, and a satellite. Nim's father doesn't want anyone to know about the island, yet when he returns there is someone else on the island, besides Nim. Who is it? It's a long story, and I think the book tells it best.

—**Jasmine Williamson** ★★★★★

### When I Was Puerto Rican

By **Esmeralda Santiago**

Esmeralda Santiago is a young girl growing up in Puerto Rico. Her story begins when she is living in the countryside

with her two sisters and parents. Throughout her childhood and teenage years Negi (her nickname) learns to cope with her parents' fighting, living with her eleven brothers and sisters, growing up, moving to different cities, and even ushering a dead baby to heaven. But all these conflicts seem to be manageable compared to her move to New York. Negi's arrival in New York was a change that brought many eye opening experiences that affected the course of her life. I feel that this book is so touching. I could often relate to some of the situations Esmeralda dealt with. I believe that everyone should read this book because it is unbelievably true and will leave you with emotions of happiness and understanding.

—*Sarah Bahri* ★ ★ ★ ★

## Understand the Unknown

By K. A. Applegate

This is the 10<sup>th</sup> book in the series **Everworld**, which is about some teens who get sucked into a place called Everworld, where mythical creatures are real. In this book, they travel (by accident) to Atlantis. The people there are the most human-like they've encountered yet, and also the nicest. They also find out that the leader of Atlantis is from the real world, and that Senna (a witch in their group) is a huge threat to everyone.

If you haven't read the series, read it start to finish now! It's by the same author as **Animorphs** but it's better. Read it now, but don't read them out of order if you're going to read more than one.

—*Alyssa Ratledge* ★ ★ ★ ★

## A Stranger Is Watching

By Mary Higgins Clark

Steve Peterson's son, Neil, and Sharon Martin are kidnapped by the man who only months earlier killed Steve's wife. A boy named Ron Thompson was convicted and sentenced to death for that same murder. Ron will be executed in two days. The kidnapper (the real murderer)

now has Sharon and Neil and plans to have them killed at the same time Ron is to be executed. Can Steve find them in time to save Ron's life as well? This book is very suspenseful and keeps you on the edge of your seat waiting for their lives to be saved.

—*Lisa Barcon* ★ ★ ★ ★

## Totally Confidential

By Sally Warner

What would you think if you saw an ad for a professional listener in your newspaper? Would you think, that's crazy? Or would you simply think, hmm? Well, apparently the people of Lake Geneva, California thought, hmm. The story goes a little something like this. Quinney is very good at listening so she decides to go into the listening business without telling anyone. She charges one dollar to listen to you for 15 minutes. Her first mistake was not telling anyone, her second is yet to come. She meets her clients at the library 15 minutes before it closes, so the appointments end promptly.

Her two friends are not getting along very well and she is in the middle of it all. Then, a new guy in town calls her to make an appointment. The only problem is; one of her friends likes this boy. Oh, what trouble this could be. You betcha! Quinney's friend writes her a letter, now knowing that it is Quinney, because they had a big fight over the new guy!

Well, I guess you'll have to read the story to find out what happens. I think you will enjoy it. But remember, it's totally confidential!

—*Jasmine Williamson* ★ ★ ★

## Beast

By Donna Jo Napoli

Everyone has heard of **Beauty and the Beast**. Some people have read this classic story from Beauty's point of view. But, have you ever heard of a story told from the Beast's point of view? **Beast** is about a young prince who was turned into a lion when he angered his gods. He is horrified at first, until he learned to live as

a lion. He gradually accepted his new life, until...a strange man came to the Beast's home, where he stole a rose that the Beast had grown in his garden. In a fury, the Beast demanded that the man bring him his youngest daughter. You know the rest of the story. **Beast** is told in an exceptionally moving way, and I would recommend it to anyone who likes retold fairy tales.

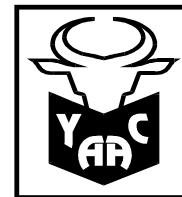
—*Beth Dormady* ★ ★ ★ ★

## The Night Life of the Gods

By Thorne Smith

Hunter Hawk is a mad scientist who loves to blow things up. He often rattles the house with explosions. His sister and her family are fed up, except for his niece Daffy. One day, he invents a potion that turns people to stone and back again. He turns his annoying nephew to stone, and his sister as well. With the help of a lady leprechaun named Megaera, he goes to the museum and turns a plethora of statues into life. This book was incredibly funny, but it was not very involving.

—*Andrea Alonge* ★ ★ ★



What is  
YAAC?

The Young Adult Advisory Council (YAAC) is a group of teens from many of Mesa's junior and senior high schools. They hold meetings twice monthly to review books for this newsletter and to plan special activities. They also help the librarians in Mesa Public Library's Young Adult Room at the Main Library as volunteers and assist with programs.

If you are interested in becoming a member of YAAC, call (480) 644-2734 or stop by the Young Adult service desk and ask for an application.



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Great People, Quality Service!