

# Open Shelf

September 2005

## This month:

*Daughter of the Lioness series*  
by Tamora Pierce

*Hawksong* by Amelia Atwater-Rhodes

*The Icewind Dale Trilogy* by R.A. Salvatore

*Lovelock* by Orson Scott Card

*Howl's Moving Castle* by Diana Wynne Jones

*Equal Rites* by Terry Pratchett

*Jude* by Kate Morgenroth

*Dragon and Thief and Dragon and Soldier*

by Timothy Zahn

## city of mesa library young adult advisory council book review newsletter



### Letter from the editor(s)

This year, I'm lucky enough to have my friend Mary Beth helping me out with the fun-filled task of editing this newsletter. We'll be switching off writing the "Letter from the Editor" portion, so y'all will get the chance to experience her witty personality in that portion as well as in her reviews. Yay MB! ^\_^

Alas, those dratted school days have returned in force! The cycle begins again, and we are subjected to its whims. However, there is hope. It is provided in the form of a distraction. Well, several distractions. If you're searching for an excuse, any excuse, to avoid that pile of history homework, these books will grant you a nice reprieve. Salute!

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### Daughter of the Lioness series

By Tamora Pierce

Aly never thought she'd find a purpose. Amazing what being captured by slavers can

change. Bald and beaten, she is sold to a family on the Coppers Isles, a country with a bloody and racist past. Though at first only focused on using her skills to get herself home, she catches the eyes of Kyprioth, the downtrodden Rakan race's patron god. The god strikes a wager with Aly: keep her owners' children alive through the summer and he'll send her home. As soon as she accepts, she's plunged into the Raka's struggle for freedom against their pale Luarin rulers. Turns out the girls she's supposed to protect are the prophesied saviors of the Rakan natives—more than Aly bargained for, but a deal's a deal. Racism, political wrangling, and magic swirl together to make one gripping read.

Fans of Tamora Pierce's *Song of the Lioness* series won't be disappointed by this story following Alana's daughter. However, even if you've never touched a Pierce book, pick up this latest series. It's an escape from cookie-cutter fantasy if nothing else.

— Mary Beth Hutchinson

★★★★★

### Hawksong

By Amelia Atwater-Rhodes

Danica is a teenage Avian shapeshifter, and heir to the bloody throne of a country that has been at war with the Serpientes for so long, no one remembers why they're fighting. Danica has only one, almost hopeless, chance to bring peace to both lands, but to do it, she has to do the impossible: trust Zane Cobriana, heir to the Serpiente throne and her blood enemy.

*Hawksong* is this really cool book written by a fellow teen, and I swear, she is on her way to being the female Steven King of the young adult world.

— Patricia Langevin  
★★★★★

### The Icewind Dale Trilogy

By R.A. Salvatore

The *Icewind Dale Trilogy* is pretty much for hardcore fantasy readers, but it's very good. The first book, *The Crystal Shard*, starts with, go figure, a crystal shard. Now, this ain't your ordinary run o' the mill crystal shard, this is an ancient, sentient, EVIL crystal shard. So, of course, chaos ensues and one of the coolest



### rating system

- bad; needs work ★
- so-so ★★
- average ★★★
- good ★★★★
- excellent; perfect ★★★★★

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

characters ever to grace the pages of fantasy is born: Drizz't Do'Urden, drow elf extraordinaire! (Also featuring Wulfgar, Bruenor and Cattie-Brie, but that's okay.) So... read it now!

– Luke Lambert

★★★★★

## Lovelock

By Orson Scott Card

It is the far future, and a colonization ship is being sent to a new planet to start a new colony. That's fine for Lovelock, an enhanced monkey, because no one asked him. His master, a famous Gaiaologist, is leaving, and it's up to Lovelock to record everything with a camera built into his head. He is sentient, able to type to communicate, and gets his only joy in life from serving his master. Until, of course, he discovers that he is a slave, and the life he lives was thought out when he was purchased. Now, he'll have to risk and sacrifice everything he knows to discover what he really is and if he has a future.

– David Millar-Haskell

★★★★★

## Howl's Moving Castle

By Diana Wynne Jones

Admittedly, I only picked up this book after seeing Hayao Miyazaki's animated version of the story.

Now that the disclaimer's done with...

Sophie Hatter is the eldest of three sisters, which, of course, means that she's going to fail first and worst. That doesn't leave her with much to look forward to, just sitting in her mother's hat shop, sewing on flowers and fake fruit, talking to the hats as she goes because she lacks any other company. Change comes in the form of the Witch of the Waste, who pops up in the shop and slaps a spell on poor Sophie, turning her into a ninety-year-old version of herself. In a state of shock Sophie leaves her mother's house and heads out into the wilderness in search of Howl, a powerful wizard said to eat the hearts of young girls. She figures that, well, she's not young anymore, and he ought to be strong enough to remove the spell—right?

Man, oh, man, this book was good. It's witty, original, and entertaining. Jones's descriptions leave brilliant images in the mind—a great feat for any author. I highly recommend seeing the movie, then reading the book to fill in

the gaps. (I found it very satisfying that way.) Any way you choose, this is a great read.

– Jenny Knatz

★★★★★

## Equal Rites

By Terry Pratchett

A wizard can only be the eighth son of an eighth son. On the day Eskarina is born, the eighth child of an eighth son, a dying wizard bestows his powers on her, thinking she's male and will be able to use them. Whoops. As she grows up, Esk's powers begin to emerge. But—women can't be wizards! So, Esk and Granny Weatherwax, an old witch, set off for the wizards' Unseen Academy to change that and make Esk a wizard. Unbeknownst to some, creatures are trying to control both Esk and Simon, a boy genius Esk meets along the way. But when they are yanked into the creatures' world, they must fight for their lives and, in Esk's case, control of her mind.

– Paige Davis

★★★★★

## Jude

By Kate Morgenroth

When Jude's drug-dealing father takes a shot gun blast to the chest, Jude stares back at the killers with a calm, blank face he's fine-tuned for years. Instead of killing Jude too, the shooter offers to trust him. The teenage takes one look at his father's blood seeping across the linoleum and swears to keep his mouth shut. Slumped in a police interrogation room, Jude meets a stranger: his mother. He is transported to a level of wealth he's only imagined while living in festering apartments with his father. But this is young adult fiction—we know that can't last.

When a student dies of an overdose at his prep school, the blame falls swiftly on Jude. His bitter mother (who's a district attorney running for mayor—whoops) decides to crush him with the full weight of the law. Promised a painless appeal if he doesn't fight the charges, Jude puts his life in the hands of the deputy commissioner. The luckless teenage is set for a long and wrenching fall.

There are no white knights in this tale. It is a story of trust, rage, pain, and (with a main character called Jude—short for Judas—what

else would it be) betrayal. These people are harsh and brutal and cruel, with little kindness to cut through the gloom. When it does, though, it's blinding. Jude was worth every bit of homework I abandoned to read it. I will promise the same for you.

– Mary Beth Hutchinson

★★★★★

## Dragon and Thief and Dragon and Soldier

By Timothy Zahn

What could be better than a thief looking for intergalactic justice? A thief with a dragon. That's right—a 2-D dragon, and sentient programs. But that's just the first book. The second book is all that, and a bag of mercenaries.

Anyway, Timothy Zahn is a ridiculously good author who deserve your adulation and praise, so read this series, which is shaping up to be the best sci-fi I've read in a while.

– Luke Lambert

★★★★★ and ½

## 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.

Learn more at:

 [mesalibrary.org](http://mesalibrary.org)  
City of Mesa Library on the Web



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