

Rant & Rave

Book reviews for you, by you!

As we close out *RANT & RAVE*'s third year, our reviewers introduce you to three excellent fantasy series, a bone-chilling ghost story, and a drama-filled mystery series. As the days get darker and colder, why not choose one of these books to keep you company?

How does *RANT & RAVE* work? Four times each year, we collect book reviews from teens across Asheville and Buncombe County and publish them here. Our reviewers rate books on the following scale:

Terrible Okay The Best!



Anyone ages 11 to 18 can submit a review. Look for a submission form at your local Buncombe County public library. (Or write a review in your own style – just make sure to tell us your name, the author's name, and the title of the book.) The deadline for the Winter 2014 issue is Nov. 25, 2013.

***Abarat seires*, by Clive Barker**



What is the book about?

Sixteen-year-old Candy Quackenbush lives a boring existence in the small town of Chickentown, MN. This all changes when she meets a thief named John Mischief, who wears his brothers on his head, who then takes her to the strange archipelago of the Abarat, where she discovers that the Lord of Midnight, Christopher Carrion, is after her.

What did you like?

It sounds like a fairly same old, same old storyline, but Barker makes it seem completely fresh and new. I also liked the names of all the characters. They are particularly creative.

What did you NOT like?

Nothing much, really. Except at times, there was a little bit too much violence.

Would you recommend this book to your friends?

Sure!

Lasting thought you took from the book. . .

It's amazing how such an old storyline can be entirely revitalized, but the author does it very well. The series is a trilogy, so the books are kind of long. Oh, and I forgot. The illustrations are by the author, and in full color.

— Sagan Thacker, 15
Enka-Candler Public Library

***Graceling*, by Kristin Cashore**



What is the book about?

A girl named Katsa and a prince named Po are trying to find out who kidnapped Po's grandfather, but their journey turns into trying to save princess Bitterblue. Po has a secret and Leck does, too.

What did you like?

- Amazing! Katsa's journey with Bitterblue and Po is outstanding. It is a great book and well-written!
- You don't have to read the books in order.
- New cast

What did you NOT like?

Nothing (lots of fighting).

Would you recommend this book to your friends?

YES! (YA only—teens and up) Read *Fire*!

Lasting thought you took from the book. . .

Girlpower (girls are strong, too!)

— Noela Moraga, 6th grade
East Asheville
Public Library



**Wait Till Helen Comes,
by Mary Downing Hahn**



What is the book about?

A thrilling ghost story about 12-year-old Molly and her brother, Michael. They both dislike their stepsister, Heather, as she seems to invent tales to get them in trouble. Then she starts talking to a ghost she calls Helen and threatening Molly. Worse, she twists their attempts to help. And then . . . Helen comes.

What did you like?

It was a very nice story, and the characters well-formed. (I always admire a writer who can shape good characters that suit the story.)

What did you NOT like?

[SPOILERS] Helen was portrayed as doing evil, but she was easily defeated by Molly. It seemed that M.D. Hahn was building up to a big attack that never came.

Would you recommend this book to your friends?

It's possible.

Lasting thought you took from the book. . .

The dead aren't always gone.

— **Sara Acz, 13**
East Asheville Public Library

Pretty Little Liars, by Sara Shepard



What is the book about?

It's about four friends who lost a best friend that died, and they all think this A person killed her. They all are trying to find out who A is.

What did you like?

I like all the drama that's in the book and the show.

What did you NOT like?

There is nothing not to like. It's all good.

Would you recommend this book to your friends?

Yes, I would.

Lasting thought you took from the book. . .

Nope.

— **Courtney Powers, 17**
Fairview Public Library



**Alanna: the First Adventure,
by Tamora Pierce**



What is the book about?

A young girl named Alanna switches places with her twin brother, who is going to a palace to train for knighthood. She cuts her hair and pretends to be Alan. She goes through hard training and makes new friends, but if her true identity is uncovered, she could lose it all.

What did you like?

How Alanna works really hard. Even though she's a girl, she's going to show those boys. This book is brilliantly written! AWESOME! This book helped me in school.

What did you NOT like?

Nothing, really, just the chapter Black City (not long). No spoilers from me.

Would you recommend this book to your friends?

YES. (Along with—*In the Hand of the Goddess.*)

Lasting thought you took from the book. . .

Girls are as good as boys.

— **Noela Moraga, 6th grade**
East Asheville Public Library

**Buncombe County Teens
Online**

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www.buncombecounty.org/Governing/Depts/Library/Teens.aspx

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