

Fear the Fantastic Short Guide

Fear the Fantastic by K. A. Applegate

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.



Contents

Fear the Fantastic Short Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Overview.....	3
About the Author.....	4
Setting.....	5
Social Sensitivity.....	7
Literary Qualities.....	9
Themes and Characters.....	10
Topics for Discussion.....	13
Ideas for Reports and Papers.....	14
For Further Reference.....	15
Related Titles/Adaptations.....	16
Copyright Information.....	17



Overview

Christopher, David, April, and Jalil have journeyed a great distance through Everworld, meeting several very unfriendly gods, enduring thirst and hunger, being befuddled and bedazzled by Senna, and hearing throughout about the god eater, about something called Ka Anor who is so terrifying that even the most terrifying of the gods is terrified of him, her, or it. In *Fear the Fantastic*, the four teenagers come face-to-face with the ultimate horror, the most frightening thing in all of Everworld, and their living to tell about it is very much in doubt.

About the Author

Katherine Alice Applegate is simultaneously one of America's most famous authors and one of America's most mysterious. She guards her privacy, as does her publisher, Scholastic. Applegate was already a well-established writer of books for young readers, mostly romance novels, when she proposed the "Animorphs" series to Scholastic. She wanted to write a series of books that showed how the world might look from the perspectives of different animals; the result has been a series of fascinating novellas for middle-school-aged children.

Having moved around the United States several times, the Michigan-born writer now resides in Minneapolis. Applegate was born in 1956. She has published over a hundred books, writing them at an amazing pace.

Her "Animorphs" series started in 1996 and numbers over forty books plus several spin-offs by 2001. Her series intended for adolescents, "Everworld," began in 1999 and numbers nine volumes by the end of 2000. Sally Lodge, in *Publishers Weekly*, quotes Applegate, "A series writer has to develop plotting and pacing that become a well-oiled machine. You don't have the luxury of spending a year on a book and absolutely cannot indulge in writer's block.

Yet I knew I had to write in perfect Language and choose just the right images, to make sure that my middle readers fell in love with the characters and returned again and again." The two hundred letters from young readers Applegate receives per week, as well as the one hundred e-mails she receives per day from youngsters, attest to the success she has had in reaching her intended audience—children love her characters.

In spite of Applegate's success, her writing has received scant attention in the press, perhaps because of a prevailing view that books written so quickly cannot be worth writing about, or perhaps because the immense difficulty in keeping current with all the books Applegate publishes. In spite of the great pace at which Applegate has written her books, they tend to be of higher quality than other mass-market writings. In the "Animorphs" series, the perspectives of characters as animals are artful and informative, whether fleas or birds. The "Everworld" novels offer fine introductions to the mythologies of the world. In both series, the suspense is captivating and the characterizations are sharp but rounded.

Applegate does not shy away from the tough questions about growing up and building sound, honest relationships. For instance, the nonseries title *Sharing Sam* (1995) deals with the prospect of a close friend dying and how to love in spite of the pain of the loss of loved ones. In *Everworld*, the relationships among the principal characters are essential to the appeal of the novels. The art of characterization is one that Applegate has mastered, and it is perhaps the most important reason her rapidly-written works stand as good literature as well as entertaining reads.



Setting

Everworld is a place that Christopher and the others were drawn to when Fenrir, a giant wolf, tried to kidnap Senna from earth so that Loki could use her for his own cruel purposes. The rules of physics as they apply on earth do not necessarily apply to Everworld. For instance, the force of gravity in Everworld is not constant but varies from place to place. When the teenagers plummet from an opening in the wall of Loki's castle in Searchfor Senna, they slowly plunge into the pool below. What should have been a bone-crushing disaster on earth is instead a splashing but harmless dive. On the other hand, a fall in Ka Anor's land is a nasty business, with sharp, upward pointing stones seeming to be under every precipice.

"That's Everworld," Christopher says.

"A universe within or beside or next door to the real universe. Totally different rules."

Magic works in Everworld. Dragons with huge bodies and wings fly about like birds.

Everworld was created by the old gods of earth, who for some reason grew tired of living on earth. They created Everworld, apparently in a universe different from that of earth, and moved there. "The thing with gods is, they need an audience," Christopher observes, so the gods brought with them followers and worshipers. This does not fully explain why Galahad and the knights of Camelot are in Everworld, because their God would have been the Christian one, although the wizard Merlin may have exercised a few godlike powers of his own on their behalf.

In daylight, Ka Anor's land appears to be something very different from the rest of Everworld, which has features like one may find on earth: It was flat, basically. Flat as Kansas. Except that someone had come along with a gigantic ice-cream scoop and hollowed out deep, plunging, almost perfectly round valleys. Then the ice cream had been piled up here and there in improbably rounded hills one, two, three scoops high.

The analogy to an ice cream scoop is typical of how Christopher describes what he sees. He uses aspects of his everyday world as a teenager in a suburb of turn-of-the-twenty-first-century Chicago.

The land of Ka Anor is not all alien unpleasantness. For instance, the trees of the forests sing. When April breaks out into the theme song for the television series Friends, the trees eventually join in, clapping during the clapping part of the song.

Eventually they sing the song on their own.

Even sour-mood Christopher feels pleasure from the forest's singing. The trees also warn of trouble, emitting a screeching noise as large beasts chew through them. "Army ants," Christopher records. "That was the first impression. Only these were way too big to be ants. These things were the size of ponies. And roughly a third of that size was



devoted to a mouth about as big around as a manhole cover." These creatures chew through the forest like reapers, walking right over the teenagers. What at first seems a catastrophe for the singing forest turns out not to be; the trees grow back in a matter of hours.

Applegate has had a good deal of fun with the fantastic setting of Everworld, but Ka Anor's tower is extraordinary. Ka Anor has been the source of fear, and therefore curiosity, through much of the "Everworld" series, and Christopher's description of Ka Anor's home is fitting for the greatest evil among many awful evils in the universe of Everworld: From the center of the crater rose what I guess could be called a tower. Or a city. Or the hypodermic needle a junkie sees in his nightmares. It was, conservatively, a mile across at its base. Probably more.

In keeping with Christopher's dyspeptic attitude: "It rose at an angle that mirrored the crater walls, only more acute still. The tower, the city, whatever it was, seemed to have been squeezed up out of the bedrock.

It was living rock the color of dried blood."

The tower is in a crater, a giant ice cream scoop valley, with almost sheer walls and plenty of pointed rocks along its bottom.

That the tower should be made of stone "the color of dried blood" is appropriate for a place associated with violent death.

Eventually, Christopher and his companions find their way into the tower, penetrating to the angled cut, and "We looked out into a space so vast it could have been used to park the entire fleet of Goodyear blimps and still have room left over for the Blue Angels to do flybys." The tower is cylindrical with curved honeycombed walls.

"Thousands, tens of thousands of open holes, tunnels like our own."

Ka Anor's tower is a wonder worthy of a novel by itself. Yet there are more wonders to be seen before Fear the Fantastic ends, especially Olympus, home of the Greek gods: the floor has marble squares "caulked with gold" and a mosaic of silver, ebony, sapphire, emerald, and gold that form "scenes of gods at play, chasing nymphs, riding winged horses, kicking ass on other gods." By the time he describes this scene, Christopher has descended into the darkest part of himself, yet it is too marvelous for him to ignore. The action of Fear the Fantastic takes place in settings of mystery and wonder.



Social Sensitivity

Christopher's jokes have at least once offended David with a cruel slam about being a schmuck, and Jalil about being black.

In *Land of Loss*, he manages to offend both Jalil and April by suggesting that they are stereotypical figures from badly made adventure movies, with Jalil being the black guy and April being the babe. The black man, Christopher suggests, always dies, as he—Christopher, the hero's sidekick, also must die. He seems blind to how his remarks are offensive to his companions. Yet he has not only cast Jalil in an ethnic stereotype but he has additionally suggested that because of that stereotype Jalil must die.

Meanwhile, Christopher objects to being stereotyped as a redneck because of his ethnic and gender wisecracks. In *Fear the Fantastic*, he faces his own views on ethnicity and makes uncomfortable choices. When applying for a job at a downtown copy shop, Christopher is questioned by the manager, Mr. Trent, about his ethnic background.

Is the last name Hitchcock changed from another, a more ethnically revealing name?

No. "You can't be too careful," Mr. Trent declares. "I mean, this is still America. But it's not all America. You know what I mean."

The earthly version of Christopher accepts the job and just tries to ignore the weird materials about race and racism he is sometimes asked to copy.

Christopher is not managing to escape the consequences of his casual racial remarks: "David snapped, 'Damn it, Christopher, can you just cut out that crap? I mean, what are you, just stupid? You're here in the deep weeds with a black man and a Jew, and you're a racist, an anti-Semite? How smart is that?'" This may not be the best way to approach Christopher on the subject, because Christopher is marred by self hatred. His jokes may be self-destructive because he is self-destructive; they also are expressions of his discomfort with his relationships with people.

Fear the Fantastic offers some information for the sources of Christopher's discomfort.

His family life is scarcely alive. He does not feel equipped to fend for himself on earth, much less *Everworld*. His passion for Dionysus's wine may stem from his desire to escape his life and to escape himself because he despises himself for not coping with his life. On earth, he turns to booze to escape what has become his self-loathing, even though he knows that getting drunk will only make him a worse person, an even more self-pitying person. He hates such people.

Even so, there are a couple of signs of hope for him. When Mr. Trent finally says outright, "This is a government [U.S.A.] run by the Jews and the mud people," Christopher takes an upright, courageous course of action and turns down an offer to participate in a campaign of ethnic hatred even though it will cost him his job. He needs



the money; his parents are not feeding him. Whatever his silly wisecracks may imply, Christopher shows that he does not harbor racism in his heart. He values Jalil.

His wisecracks about David's Jewish heritage turn out to be no more than just foolish wisecracks; he actually admires David's courage.

Another faint sign of hope comes when he chooses not to tell Jalil why he lost his earthly job. Perhaps, amid all the gloomy events of his life, Christopher is learning to be a grownup about his personal problems, that they are not always everybody else's problems but sometimes problems that he must deal with by himself. He has spent much of his time blaming others, including Jalil, for his disappointments, but this time, when given an ideal opportunity to blame Jalil once again, Christopher holds back and does not.

Conversely, his determination to atone for not helping Ganymede by turning down the chance to become immortal seems too much like self-pitying. He would be wiser and more mature if he put the blame for what happened to Ganymede on the perpetrators of the outrage, Ka Anor and the Hetwan, with perhaps a dash of blame for drunken Dionysus who thoughtlessly drew attention to himself and the others by conjuring up drink and companionship. Christopher did not kill Ganymede and is not responsible for it; he will not reach maturity until he places blame where it belongs. This would enable him to take positive action, much as David has been doing, and it would mean that he has at long last taken his focus off himself and expanded it to include the lives of others.

The issue of homosexuality also appears in *Fear the Fantastic*. April objects to Christopher's sexist jokes, but teases both Christopher and David for their evident attraction to the angelic Ganymede, apparently failing to realize that she is acting somewhat the way Christopher does. April's wisecracks are cheap and, like Christopher's ethnic remarks, they serve primarily to alienate people from her. Christopher himself reserves most of his comments about homosexuality for his narration, not expressing them aloud to his companions. He is honest enough to admit that Ganymede possesses a womanly attraction, but he plainly has heterosexual impulses. When he makes comments about fags, an offensive term for homosexuals, he mostly does so ruefully, comparing Ganymede's manliness to his own seeming cowardice. When Ganymede is murdered, Christopher despises himself for having held Ganymede in contempt for being a homosexual.



Literary Qualities

Applegate maintains a precarious balance between juvenile witticisms and serious personal problems. The tone is uneven but is in character with Christopher, who hates his life on earth enough to find Everworld to be a relief, but also who hates himself so much that he despises his achievements in Everworld. By the start of *Fear the Fantastic*, these achievements are considerable. His love of the give-and-take of bargaining has bailed his companions and himself out of tough situations, especially in Fairy Land, where his glibness is exactly what fairy merchants expect to hear when a deal is to be made. His questions, even when unanswered, invite thoughtfulness about not only the events in the "Everworld" novels but about the personalities of the characters in the novels, enriching and deepening their development. Why should people throughout Everworld readily understand him? Even the Red Wings know what he is saying. What makes David the leader instead of Christopher, April, or Jalil? Christopher asks these questions and seems to know that David has a source of courage that seems denied to himself. In a series of novels about four teenaged adventurers, a teenaged witch, and a host of magical and godly beings, Applegate manages to make each individual novel the property of its particular narrator, and each narrator deepens from one novel to the next, becoming an ever more fully realized figure. In *Fear the Fantastic*, the bitter, wisecracking Christopher sometimes may put off the novel's audience, but this reflects Applegate's art—the character of Christopher is not compromised but is instead expressed fully, both good and bad, both with funny lines and with gratuitously flippant lines.

Each personality of each narrator shows through in the telling of each book, with Christopher contributing his intense curiosity about his surroundings. The shifting of narrators allows Everworld to be described through David's love of action and interest in logistics; through Christopher's acidic humor and tendency to inquire below the surface of events; through April's good sense and practicality; and through Jalil's analytical mind that finds the logic that links events.

The novels also continue to introduce mythologies, and in the process Applegate creates a new mythology of her own, in which human endeavors are placed in a vast cosmic scheme in which everyone is important, even though in any individual novel they may seem like pawns. Once the youngsters meet Merlin in Land of Loss, the grand contest of universe-shaking powers begins to reveal itself, and dreams really do seem more real than life. *Fear the Fantastic* advances the unifying plot of the "Everworld" series by taking Christopher, David, April, and Jalil into the center of Ka Anor's power, revealing how truly terrifying, evil, and cruel Ka Anor is. This shows that the gods of Olympus have a dangerous foe to fight at the end of *Fear the Fantastic*.



Themes and Characters

The narrator of *Fear the Fantastic* is Christopher Hitchcock, who narrated *Land of Loss* earlier in the "Everworld" series. In that novel, he made wisecracks and jokes as his way of coping with the stress he felt, but the jokes too often served to alienate his companions from him rather than draw them to him as he hoped. Even so, he has his good moments as a narrator: And gee golly gosh, life would have been just swell, just keen, just peachy, except there were a whole bunch of folks after us: Loki, Norse god of insane offspring; Hel, his half-dead, half-babe daughter; his middle child, the Midgard Serpent (who makes Nidhoggr look like a tadpole); Fenrir, Loki's wolf son who's big enough to crap a sofa; and Merlin, who isn't Loki's kid and probably isn't evil but can nevertheless make dead sheep jump up and bite your throat out.

This smart-aleck way of presenting the situation in which Christopher, David, April, and Jalil find themselves conveys the difficulties the teenagers face through a seemingly off-handed tone, as if the matters were inconsequential.

At 180 pounds, Christopher is a little bigger than David, but he lacks David's take-charge force of will. Part of what inhibits him is a poorly disguised self-hatred that amplifies into outright self-loathing that David recognizes. "What was Christopher Hitchcock?" Christopher asks of himself. "Nothing. Fear and hatred and lust and jealousy," he decides.

Like the others, he leads two lives: "There was a real-world Christopher. And an Everworld Christopher. Whenever Everworld me went to sleep I sort of snapped back into the continuing saga of boring, real-world me." Applegate seems to be exploring the effects Christopher's voice can have on her audience, because the easily dismissed whining turns out to be another of the ways Christopher deals with what are in fact severe stresses, on earth as well as in Everworld.

His parents fight constantly. He has to find work in order to earn money to feed himself. The work he finds is in a copy shop run by crazed racists. His stupid racial jokes that greatly annoy David and Jalil seem to come back to smite him, and he finds the racism reflected in his attitudes to be awful, ugly, and weird. Christopher chooses to give up his job in order to retain what little self-respect he has left. Bright, insightful Christopher, whose persistent questioning of what he sees nearly penetrates the very heart of the mystery of Everworld, regards himself as a coward for not trying to save Ganymede, who he had referred to as a fag but who had saved Christopher's life at great risk. On earth, he tries to kill his internal torment with alcohol, but "it waters the self-pity, grows it nice and strong."

When Christopher mentions Jalil and April, he manages to dismiss them as people without a sense of humor, failing to realize that it is his own sense of humor that needs adjusting. Wisecracks about Jalil being the only African American who cannot dance betray his immaturity and his bitterness.



Christopher compares himself to David, and finds himself wanting. He regards David as humorless for not appreciating jokes about Jewishness, but David, like himself, has an attachment to Senna. Christopher is unsure why April and Jalil hate Senna, but he knows that he and David are subject to Senna's control. He also knows that although he is big enough and strong enough to beat up David he cannot. David is Senna's tool and is very brave.

Curiously, the girl that binds David and Christopher is absent from *Fear the Fantastic* except when Christopher mentions her: "Her name is Senna Wales. I used to go with her.

A strange, gray-eyed, wispy chick with impressive hardware and seriously corrupted software." He knows that she is involved in all the strange experiences he has had in Everworld but is still puzzled by what her precise role in events may be.

Christopher's constant bickering with one or another of his companions grows too loud one night, attracting the interest of a band of Hetwan, creatures armed with weapons that spit wads of burning acid. He and the others are saved from immediate battle by what appears at first to be an angel. This is Ganymede, a man who is beautiful like a woman, and who has been the lover of Zeus himself. To Christopher, Ganymede declares, "I am immortal, but only by the charity of great Zeus. I was born a mortal man." Ganymede talks like this all the time; he is open, without modesty, and without pretense about who and what he is.

Ganymede's companion is a significant contrast. Whereas Ganymede is open about himself, Dionysus is vague and deceptive.

Dionysus was older, partly bald, with white hair around the sides of his head. "He had the red, pitted, Rudolph nose of a confirmed alcoholic, bleary, unfocused eyes, and a smile that reminded me of Alfred E. Neuman." Yet Dionysus has the wondrous power to make parties anywhere. He can conjure up all manner of celebrants, but seems especially fond of buxom women and satyrs.

He draws Christopher close to him and says, "Save me, mortal, and I will make you a god." In spite of his godly powers, Dionysus has been captured by the Hetwan and is to be sacrificed to Ka Anor, the god eater.

Part of Dionysus's problem is that he is, like Ganymede, experienced but innocent. His powers to conjure up imaginary figures who seem solid and real can be used to deceive the Hetwan, but he only has his powers while he is drunk and, when drunk, he is stupid. The very powers that enable him and the others to escape their captors eventually draw the Hetwan to them, resulting in the horrifying death of Ganymede, who is eaten by Ka Anor.

Ka Anor is described as bad enough, "that really bad, really violent, really hard, nasty, evil guys are scared of him." When he at last sees the actual Ka Anor, the god eater is worse than he had realized, flaying Ganymede alive. Ka Anor has "a different thing, a



different face every time you blinked your eyes." It is no wonder Loki wants to run away from Everworld, leaving it to Ka Anor. Christopher summarizes, "Ka Anor was fear."

Ka Anor is served by the Hetwan, described by Christopher as aliens. By aliens, he means in the vernacular sense of being from outer space—off-worlders invading Everworld. "Thin, wispy, about Calista Flockhart size. Maybe a Calista and a quarter. They have bug eyes and insect mouth parts made of three little arm things that never stop grabbing at whatever insect or imagined insect might be flying by. And they have wings." If there is anything good about the Hetwan, and there seems to be little good in them, it is that they are vulnerable; these are not like the endlessly bulletproof monsters of Dr. Who. Christopher can smash them if he can get close enough to them.

In *Fear the Fantastic*, one of the Hetwan weapons is revealed when some try to arrest the four adventuring teenagers. They have short spear-like blades that fit into their mouths and spit acid, causing painful burns, even burning a notch into Galahad's sword (which, given that earthly laws of physics do not necessarily apply in Everworld, heals itself). Among the Hetwan's strengths is their number—they can reproduce themselves rapidly and tend to swarm over their opponents. An important weakness that David, ever the strategist, notes is their lack of sophisticated technology. How they managed to get to Everworld is still a mystery at the end of *Fear the Fantastic*, but they do not have radios or even the telegraph that the teenagers introduced to Fairy Land in *Discover the Destroyer*. Looking at the imposing tower from the edge of the crater in which the tower stands, David notes its vulnerability to artillery. Perhaps this is foreshadowing.

Through all the amazing adventures in *Fear the Fantastic*, the novel remains Christopher's book, told as only he would tell it.

Lest the thrilling escapes from certain death and the looming war between Olympus and Ka Anor overwhelm Christopher's relentless curiosity and what that curiosity reveals, one of his best questions should be remembered: "Why did they [the Red Wings] understand English? How is it they knew what a foot was—weren't they at least on metric?" He has asked questions of this sort before. Perhaps the answers to the mysteries of Everworld lie in this question.



Topics for Discussion

1. Why does Christopher not rush to Ganymede's aid when the Hetwan overwhelm the Greek immortal? Why would David insist on saving April from the Hetwan in *Discover the Destroyer* but not Ganymede in *Fear the Fantastic*? Is there a significant difference between the two situations?
2. Is refusing immortality a good idea for Christopher? Why?
3. Will Christopher ever understand why his ethnic jokes are offensive to his companions?
4. Are there dreamlike passages in *Fear the Fantastic*? If so, what do they reveal about Everworld?
5. The Hetwan are easily damaged. How could they hope to invade Olympus and capture the gods?
6. Given how unhappy and unrewarding his life on earth is, why does Christopher not make more of an effort to make a better life for himself in Everworld? After all, Ka Anor does not seem interested in eating him, so why fuss?
7. What does the chewing up of the singing forest and then the regrowth of the forest suggest about the trees? What does having trees that sing to the sun suggest about Ka Anor's land? Could there be anything good about the god eater?
8. If Zeus can hurl lightning bolts and Ka Anor's tower is vulnerable to artillery, why would Zeus not have blasted Ka Anor and the tower to dust?
9. Does Christopher's nightmarish episode at the copy shop serve a purpose in the narrative of *Fear the Fantastic*?



Ideas for Reports and Papers

1. Compare the narratives of *Fear the Fantastic*, *Discover the Destroyer*, *Realm of the Reaper*, *Enter the Enchanted*, *Land of Loss*, and *Search for Senna*. Are there notable differences in how the stories are told? Are there notable similarities? What does this tell you about Applegate's artistic achievement in *Fear the Fantastic*?
2. Draw or paint a picture of Ka Anor's tower-city, paying special attention to the layout of its homes and shops.
3. How does Christopher's personality color his account of events and his descriptions of places and characters in *Fear the Fantastic*?
4. In what ways does Ka Anor and the Hetwan of *Fear the Fantastic* resemble Huitzilopochtli and the Aztecs of *Land of Loss*?
5. In *Land of Loss*, Christopher suggests to April that political correctness is inappropriate for Everworld. How is the concept of political correctness developed in *Fear the Fantastic*?
6. Who is Dionysus in Greek mythology? Who were his followers? What were his powers? What were his responsibilities? Did Zeus like him as much as the Dionysus in *Fear the Fantastic* thinks he does? How well has Applegate incorporated Dionysus's traits in Greek mythology into *Fear the Fantastic*?
7. Who was Ganymede in Greek mythology? How did he come to the attention of Zeus? What became of him? What characteristics of Ganymede from Greek mythology does Applegate incorporate into the Ganymede of *Fear the Fantastic*? Does she add anything to Ganymede's character?
8. Why would Ganymede be sick of hearing questions about Hercules (or Heracles)? How does this tidbit of information enrich Ganymede's characterization and Christopher's narrative?

For Further Reference

Bradburn, Frances. Review. Booklist, vol.

91, vol. 14 (March 15, 1995): 1321. Bradburn says of the nonseries book *Sharing Sam*, "While adults will find the premise uncomfortable, teenage girls will be fascinated."

Heppermann, Christine. Review. Horn Book Magazine, vol. 74, no. 1 (January/February 1998): 53-56. Heppermann says of the "Animorphs" series that "the promise of unique challenges accompanying every new morph—would the Animorphs lay eggs next? Spin webs? Eat maggots?—

kept me going through the otherwise formulaic, cartoon-style theatrics of the plot."

Lodge, Sally. "Scholastic's Animorphs Series Has Legs." Publishers Weekly, vol. 244, no. 45 (November 3, 1997): 36-37. Lodge reports on the popularity of the "Animorphs" series: "Now approaching the 10-million-copy in-print mark, 'Animorphs' resides at the top of PW's children's paperback series bestseller list, where booksellers predict it will roost for the foreseeable future."

Review of *Search for Senna*. Publishers Weekly, vol. 246, no. 25 (June 21, 1999): 69. The reviewer states, "With her blend of accessible story and mythological, cast of characters, Applegate is sure to attract a host of new fans. Due out the same month is the series' second installment, *Land of Loss*."



Related Titles/Adaptations

Applegate likes to experiment, and her novels tend to be lively exercises in ideas and techniques. In the case of *Everworld*, she creates a place where all the world's ancient mythologies coexist, and she creates adventures that mix the mythologies.

For the "Everworld" series, she creates four adventurers who are snatched from fairly ordinary teenaged American lives, although Jalil's psychological problems are somewhat out of the ordinary. Through these characters, she experiments with techniques of narration by having each one narrate novels. David narrates *Search for Senna*, which introduces Vikings, Loki, and Norse mythology. Jalil's *Realm of the Reaper* delves more deeply into Norse myths about life and death and the underworld than *Search for Senna* does. Christopher's *Land of Loss* focuses more on Aztec mythology than Norse mythology and introduces the CooHatch, aliens from yet another world. April's *Enter the Enchanted* tells of the survival of Arthurian culture in *Everworld* and shows that the various cultures and their gods know about each other and mix with each other. Jalil's *Realm of the Reaper* tells of hell and where Thor is to be found. David's *Discover the Destroyer* tells of Fairy Land, the treachery to which Senna will sink, and how capitalism thrives in *Everworld*. In *Fear the Fantastic*, Christopher again shoulders the narrative, telling about an aweinspiring journey into the heart of the tower of the god-eating Ka Anor.



Copyright Information

Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction

Editor

Kirk H. Beetz, Ph.D.

Cover Design

Amanda Mott

Cover Art is "Pierrot," 1947, by William Baziotès Oil on Canvas, 42 1/8 x 36 Donated by the Alisa Mellon Bruce Fund, ©, 1996 Reproduced with Permission from the Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction

Includes bibliographical references and index

Summary: A multi-volume compilation of analytical essays on and study activities for the works of authors of popular fiction. Includes biography data, publishing history, and resources for the author of each analyzed work.

ISBN 0-933833-41-5 (Volumes 1-3, Biography Series)

ISBN 0-933833-42-3 (Volumes 1-8, Analyses Series)

ISBN 0-933833-38-5 (Entire set, 11 volumes)

1. Popular literature—Bio-bibliography. 2. Fiction—19th century—Bio-bibliography. 3. Fiction—20th century—Bio-bibliography. I. Beetz, Kirk H., 1952-

Z6514.P7B43 1996[PN56.P55]809.3—dc20 96-20771 CIP

Copyright ©, 1996, by Walton Beacham. All rights to this book are reserved. No part of this work may be used or reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or in any information or storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the copyright owner, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. For information, write the publisher, Beacham Publishing Corp., P.O. Box 830, Osprey, FL 34229-0830

Printed in the United States of America First Printing, November 1996