

Of Special Interest

The logo to the right is by Lilyy03.

Monkey won the YWS Mascot Contest.

It's now Spring in the Northern Hemisphere!



General Announcements

Inside

Claudette talks about not critiquing critiques on page 2.

YWS Mascot Contest details on page 3.

Griffinkeeper has some internet safety tips on page 4.

Information on the March book of the month by Meshugenah on page 4.

And more...!

Poem of the Month

Snoink chooses the Poem of the Month for each issue of Squills (from now on at least!). For March, the poem of the month is "[A Silly Work Called Monsters Under My Bed](#)" by [Goldenheart](#).

Featured Member

Big Brother would like to congratulate write me and Cassandra for winning the

bi-weekly points contests.

To be the featured member, you could have a high point count, do some extraordinary posts, or bribe Griffinkeeper into submission.

Submissions

To submit something to Squills, just PM Nate or e-mail it to webmaster@youngwriterssociety.com. Pretty much

anything is suitable from "Who Rules More: Spiderman vs. Superman" to "The Inelasticity of Market Demand In The Publishing World."

YWS Mascot

After three rounds of voting, Monkey beat out Dragon by a razor-thin margin of 106 to 103. Check out page 3 for more details, and also for a contest concerning the YWS Mascot.

Editor's Note

by Nate

One of the things people seem to always ask me is "Why did you start the Young Writers Society?" I did so out of a mixture of wanting to resurrect the Young Writers site format (there were no good sites left for young writers in 2004), but mostly revenge. Stupid penguin.

To be absolutely serious, though, I started YWS because another site, The Young Writers Club (TYWC),

was on its last legs, and I was very sad to see it go. TYWC and the people there is what really got me writing back in high-school, and I think it did a lot to improve my writing as well.

I tried at first contacting the site admin of TYWC to bring it back, but he had other things to worry about, like sending his daughter to college and working at a university in Turkey.

I on the other hand was a college student (at the time)

with a lot of time to spare. So one day, I uploaded a forum to my personal Web site, made some categories, and proceeded to tell other people about it. Within a week, there were fifty members and 500 posts.

Fortunately enough, YWS continues to succeed and I'm glad so many people find the site useful. I really do hope YWS is helping young writers just as much as TYWC did for me.



*"Please, for the
sake of the
writer and for
the sake of
opinions, do not
argue over
critiques!"*

Critiquing Critiques?

by Claudette

We are all writers, and we are all critiquers. And as critiquers we have opinions. But a lot of us seem to fool ourselves into thinking these opinions are more than that: they are facts that can be disputed. What I'm getting at sounds a lot more complicated than what it really is. I'm talking about people who argue over critiques.

You might have seen this happen, or maybe you haven't. Person A posts a critique, and makes a comment about this or that. Their comment is then followed by Person B who decides to contradict Person A, but not only does he contradict them, he goes one step farther and says, "I disagree with Person A". It is okay to disagree, so long as you do not mention that you are directly disagreeing with Person A; instead, present it as your own opinion, as if you have never seen Person A's comments. (This falls along the lines of something I wrote for Squills a while ago about not reading other's critiques until you have given the critique already.)

Anyhow, back to the scenario. Person A notices Person B's comment. Person A is offended and, back to what I said in the beginning,

strongly believes that they are right. Their opinion, or critique, becomes a fact and should not be disagreed with. What does Person A do? They post again. This takes everything to another evil, thread-may-be-locked level. The problem now is that this gentle writer, who was only looking for critiques, is now finding that their work is being spammed with an argument. If a mod sees this, they are often times forced to lock the thread. Not because of one or two posts of argument, but because it is a spiral of unneeded spam and arguing. It's very mean.

This is not how things should be done. It's messy, it creates problems, and it will make you look really bad, no matter what your purpose was. Even as an innocent third critiquer who simply agrees with, and backs up person A's comments, you become a part of the mess. Everyone becomes the guilty party, and often times the writer is left in a confused state. You are only hurting the writer.

There are some solutions to this. The best one and the one that I think no matter what should be taken into consideration is that CRITIQUES ARE OPINIONS! The writer will take what

they want, and use it. If they disagree, they won't. But you have no right to pinpoint Person A and make them look stupid because their opinion was wrong. The second choice is to PM the writer. This should be taken with caution. Tell them that you disagreed with Person A for X, Y, and Z reasons. Tell them you think that A, B, and C are better ideas. Remind them at the end that CRITIQUES ARE OPINIONS and that as the writer they can choose which ever opinion they agree with, and they can go with that one.

What you do not want to do is post in the thread, for the aforementioned reasons. I don't even highly suggest PMing the writer, because you could just as well write your own critique without mentioning Person A, and present only your ideas. It is best to leave it as is, the writer can handle it. Please, for the sake of the writer and for the sake of opinions, do not argue over critiques! Do not argue through a story's thread. It's childish. And besides, opinions aren't facts!

YWS Mascot

by Nate

Since March 2006 or so, there has been a YWS Mascot debate going on, although it didn't get heated up until February 2007.

The first round of voting lasted for almost a year, during which more than 190 votes were tabulated. In the end, Dragon came in first with 32% of the vote, Monkey came in second with 20% of the vote, and Kangaroo came in third with 12%.

During the second round, over 160 votes were cast. Dragon came out with 45% of the vote, Monkey came in with 42%, and poor Kangaroo did worse with 11% of the vote.

In the third and final round, 209 votes were cast. Monkey won 50.7% of the vote while Dragon had 49.3%.

While Monkey won, it was just a razor-thin margin, and both Monkey and Dragon had spirited support. Monkey tended to be supported by the established members at YWS while Dragon tended to be supported by the newer members (there were notable exceptions on both sides).

So what happened to make Monkey come in first after losing the first two rounds? Most people who voted for other mascots besides the final two tended to end up supporting Monkey, including a lot of the Kangaroo voters.

All in all, it was a very interesting debate that I think everyone enjoyed. But where do we go from here?

YWS Mascot Contest

So YWS now has a mascot: Monkey, right? Well now it's

time to come up with some logos to use. Since I stink at making graphics, I'm going to hold a contest.

Since this is going to be very involved, I'm going to create a new forum in the Community Forums called "YWS Mascot." Each person who enters should create their own thread with their design.

Also posted will be the YWS logo Bobo created in case you want to incorporate that. Also, please feel free to include any other animals (fantasy or otherwise) in the drawing. Just be sure a Monkey is the most prominent.

The winner of the contest will win a t-shirt or mug (their choice) with their logo on it. Second place will also win a mug with their logo on it.

Good luck to all who enter! PM me (Nate) if you have questions.



Final Results:

209 votes

Monkey: 106, 50.7%

Dragon: 103, 49.3%

YWS Book Club Announcement

by Meshugenah

The YWS Book Club is proud to announce a special event run by Meep in preparation for the release of the seventh and final Harry Potter book, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*.

The *Harry Potter* Read-A-Long divides the 17 week

period left until the release of the seventh book into segments for the reading and discussion of the first six books in the series. Please see the Book Club Forum for more information.





Safe Surfing Tips

by Griffinkeeper

We all like to have fun online, but we should also keep in mind that we don't really know who is on the other side of the computer.

Here are some tips to keep you safe online.

#1. Never give out any personal information. This includes your name, phone number, and location.

#2. Be wary of posting

pictures on the internet. Sure, we all like to see you, but keep in mind that we can get all sorts of information about you from it. If you are wearing school attire, it is possible for a predator to find out where you live.

Before submitting a picture, always look over it carefully to see if there is any information that a predator can use to find you.

#3. Report suspicious

behavior to moderators and/or administrators. Even if it's just an uncomfortable feeling. Gut instincts are perfectly good reasons to talk to Big Brother.

Remember, this isn't Myspace. Have fun and stay safe!

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March's Book Of The Month

by Meshugenah

The Book of the Month for March was *Beauty* by Robin McKinley. This tale is a retelling of the classic Beauty and the Beast, with a new spin on magic, family and circumstances regarding Beauty's marriage to a beast of a prince.

The Book of the Month for April, in tune with April Fool's Day, is *Good Omens* By Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett, your parents what you're reading! Please note

that the publisher's tag says 13&UP. The quote the first half of a much better summary than my own (from Wikipedia), "It is the coming of the [End Times](#); the [Apocalypse](#) is near, and Final Judgment will soon be cast on the human race. This comes as a bit of bad news to the angel [Aziraphale](#) (who was the [angel](#) of the [Garden of Eden](#)) and the [demon](#) [Anthony Crowley](#) (who was the [serpent](#) who tempted [Eve](#) to eat the apple), the respective representatives of [God](#) and [Satan](#) on Earth, as they've

actually gotten quite used to living their cozy, comfortable lives and, in a perverse way, actually have taken a liking to humanity. As such, since they're both good friends (despite supposedly being polar opposites, representing [Good](#) and [Evil](#) as they do), they decide to work together and keep an eye on the [Antichrist](#), destined to be the son of a prominent American [diplomat](#) stationed in Britain, and thus ensure he grows up in a way that means he can never decide simply between Good and Evil and, therefore, postpone the end of the world."

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"We are a species that needs and wants to understand who we are. Sheep lice do not seem to share this longing, which is one reason why they write so little."

- Anne Lamont

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Reverse Psychology

by Claudette

I learned a fantastic, and successful, way to proof read your work. I forget who told me this, so I won't be able to give due credit.

Read your story, poem, paper, what ever backwards. You should be able to catch single spelling mistakes, and typos, so this is probably best used when hand-writing, or maybe when you don't have a spell check.

It will probably do you no good with grammar, punctuation, and homonyms (they're/their/there), but is still worth a shot if you're over obsessive about editing, like I am.

About The Young Writers Society

Created in November 2004, the Young Writers Society (YWS) is the largest dedicated site for young writers.

As part of the site's ongoing

efforts to promote writing as a pastime, dozens of forums for all types of writing from poetry to screenplays are available.

Since the site started, YWS

has morphed from a simple forum without its own domain name to a full fledged website that makes other young writer websites look extremely puny by comparison!