



## The Other Book

*Philip Womack*

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## **The Other Book** Philip Womack

Edward Pollock lives an ordinary life at his ordinary boarding school, where the food is bad and the teachers are way too serious. But one day he's inexplicably drawn to a strange and powerful book, and suddenly the boarding school isn't quite so ordinary anymore. Capable of boosting men to heroism or destroying them in malice and evil, The Other Book has laid dormant for 400 years, waiting for someone to restore it to its original glory. While Edward must do his best to keep The Other book safe, a mysterious new teacher at the school becomes intent of getting a hold of the Book for her own sinister purposes. This dark and thrilling new fantasy takes a look at what happens when bad people control the forces of magic.

## **The Other Book Details**

Date : Published February 19th 2008 by Bloomsbury USA Childrens

ISBN : 9781599902012

Author : Philip Womack

Format : Hardcover 272 pages

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## From Reader Review The Other Book for online ebook

### Bix says

*The Other Book* will appeal to older fans of Harry Potter and *The Golden Compass*. Even darker in tone than *The Deathly Hallows*, this relatively short novel set in an English boarding school follows its hero as he struggles to keep unlimited power out of the hands of those who would use it for their own evil ends. While the characters are more thinly drawn than in either of the aforementioned series, there is plenty of dark magic and adventure here to satisfy young readers."

CIP: "Edward Pollock, an orphan in an English boarding school, discovers The Other Book, which has infinite power for good or evil, and knows that he must keep it safe from a new teacher who wants to use it for her own sinister purposes."

Kirkus: "Womack works familiar fantasy elements into a tale with a distinctly penumbral atmosphere for his debut... Fans of Jenny Nimmo's Charlie Bone series and similar dark-flavored fare will be drawn in."

I wasn't able to find any other major U.S. reviews of *The Other Book*, but the UK Telegraph had this to say: "[T]his is an impressive debut for a writer going into a very crowded field. It's too early to say whether Bloomsbury have found the next You Know Who in Womack, but they should nurture his talent and edit him better. He will definitely repay the investment, and I very much look forward to the sequel that beckons from the last page."

Note: Strangely, the CIP describes Edward as an orphan, and the primary cataloging subject heading is "Orphans -- Fiction," though according to the text his parents are still alive.

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### Sam says

Edward attends a boarding school in England and leads a fairly normal life. He is often in trouble, frequently bullied, and generally miserable living with horrible teachers, awful food, and lackluster friends. One day, he is magically led to a mysterious book known only as "The Other Book"- a book that gives him horrible visions when he touches it. He soon discovers that the protector of the book has chosen him as a pure soul- the person responsible for delivering the book from evil to its rightful owner.

I'm a huge fantasy buff and love nothing more than a good magic tale, but given the current run of excellent fantasy tales out there this one is sub par. Womack attempts to cram too much into his under 300 page tome, like an author who has so much to say but is afraid his book won't be popular enough for him to spread it out over time. The story could be truly engrossing if expounded upon, but Womack truncates the character development. The language in the book is too difficult for younger readers but the story is not quite developed enough for the older teen set. Overall, a lackluster inclusion- worth reading if you're into fantasy but not a good recommendation for someone who isn't into the genre.

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### **Lisa says**

Another kind of Harry Potter--a boy at boarding school finds out he is special, and has a few adventures. The idea was okay, but some of the passages struck me as out of place. For example, at one point, the boy imagines playing video games when this is all over, and sure, kids like to do that kind of thing, but almost nowhere in the book are electronics mentioned or used. Another thing that didn't ring true was the fact that this kid had wonderful loving parents who he never tried to reach when he was in trouble. Oh, well.

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### **Alex says**

Edward really does not like boarding school, but when he finds a mysterious tome in the library, his life is forever changed. The Other Book, the book he finds, is the written accounts from Merlin and Vivien, and it is up to Edward to keep the book safe and out of the hands of the evil Lady Anne. Just a fun good read.

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### **Mel says**

Actual rating: 2.5 stars

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### **Reita says**

Too many inconsistencies in the story. Because the guardian of The Book was corrupt, the book could not be used by the next in line (his son) but had to be buried for 400 years so the evil could be leached out. Then in 400 years time, another person would try to corrupt the power of the Book but there would be someone to restore it to its full glory and power. So a boy, Edward has the Book and the bad guys are after the Book, and the bad guys can sense the Book but not always, and Edward runs from here to there, yadda yadda yadda. It gets old and boring and it could have been a great story if written differently. I'd like someone else to review the book and let me know what they think. Thanks.

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### **S.C. Skillman says**

Attracted by the gothic-sounding storyline set out in the blurb, I picked up this young adult book from my daughter's bookshelf, and read it during one train journey. I enjoyed this account of 12 year old Edward's encounters with another, terrifying world and also felt the way the supernatural events interacted with his school life was skilfully handled by the author, and on occasions very amusing. I loved the villainous characters of Lady Anne and Mrs Phipps; they were developed extremely well and became more and more frightening as the story unfolded. In fact Lady Anne reminded me a little of Mrs Coulter in Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials trilogy. The only thing that marred the novel was, for me, the final scenes which I thought a little laboured. Otherwise an intriguing and gripping young adult story which deftly blends history

and the supernatural with the present day.

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### **Colin says**

Poor character development, choppy pacing, and unlikely character choices serving to conveniently tie up narrative threads made this book totally BLAH.

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### **Jennifer Wardrip says**

Reviewed by Carrie Spellman for TeensReadToo.com

Oldstone Manor is a strange old place all by itself. When you add in a boarding school where Greek and Latin aren't dead languages, it gets just plain weird. But something particularly strange, even for Oldstone, is going on. The problem is that no one, other than Edward, seems to be noticing. Well, maybe not no one.

It started with the crazy recurring dreams. Dreams about places he recognizes even though he's never been there, people who seem familiar even though he's never met them. Then there's the strange Lady that suddenly comes to stay and teach. As intimidating as she is, her companion, Mrs. Phipps, is one hundred times creepier. And then there's the book. The one that calls to him, invades his sleep, and magically disappears as if Edward somehow absorbed it into his body.

If only someone would listen to him! That is, someone who wasn't locked up in an insane asylum or someone who wanted to kill him.

This is a creepy, dark book. There is magic, drama, danger, and chills. It may be a bit slow to start, but once it gets going... It's like a roller coaster; you might want to stop and get off, but there's no way you can.

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### **pandamans says**

A boarding school, friends, mysterious magical happenings, suspicious teachers - does any of this sound vaguely familiar? Philip Womack's *The Other Book* combines each of these aspects into an intriguing and dark work that while perhaps lacking in originality, keeps the reader engaged. Edward Pollock, an avid reader, comes across a mysterious book in his school library. Soon after, things start getting wonky around the campus. Edward is ported to another dimension where he is instructed by a knight of the middle ages to protect the book from those who would use it to destroy the world. Edward reluctantly takes up the challenge, often alone and without the aids of his friends or even cousin. There are some rather detailed and gruesome scenes in this piece which I found interesting. Nothing too over the top - just enough so that readers might latch onto it and think awesome. I enjoyed *The Other Book*, but I also found it very similar to another well known YA series.

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### **Sanika Bhargaw says**

This book was pretty good but not as good as a lot of the others I've read this summer.

Basically, it's about a boy named Edward who goes to a boarding school. One day he finds a mysterious old book in the library and takes it. He is for some reason drawn to it. He finds out that this book is the "Other Book", a magical book that has been dormant for a long time. It has many dark powers and Edward must resist them, as he is the guardian of the book.

Then a new teacher arrives at his boarding school and is bent on getting the Other Book for sinister purposes. Edward must try and protect the book. What will happen?

This book is a fairly quick read and is pretty enjoyable!

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### **Tigerlily says**

Creepy, but totally enthralling. 3.5 stars.

Update: April 20th, 2011. I picked up this book from the library and distantly recognized it, read the entire thing, got on goodreads to record it and Lo and Behold, I'd read it 2 years earlier. Obviously it hadn't made a huge impression on me, seeing as I re-read the entire thing and didn't know I had read it before.

I liked it better this time though, I would now rate it 4 stars.

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### **Ricki says**

I rarely rate YA books one star, but I honestly just did not like this book at all. It reminded me of a bad version of The Golden Compass. The story had a good story idea, but I don't think it was effectively written. I noticed inconsistencies in the plot and the characters were very flat.

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### **Kiersten says**

Dreadfully flat. I got most of the way through, but eventually gave up slogging through the recycled storyline, disjointed and confusing writing, and very static characters. The prologue wasn't bad, but the actual story wasn't well-developed at all. I've seen worse; nonetheless, it is not worth the time.

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### **Amy Emler says**

My librarian called this 'good, heavy duty fantasy' and dropped it on my desk for me to read over Christmas break. I'm still not entirely sure what I think of it, exactly. I did have a hard time getting into it; it sat on my shelf for several days. Once I got into it, I did finish quickly. There are still some things that never got explained that bother me, and some characters that just didn't ring quite true throughout. It seems set up for a sequel, which I would be interested in reading. We'll see if he writes one.

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