



# Apeshit

*Carlton Mellick III*

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## **Apeshit** Carlton Mellick III

Friday the 13th meets Visitor Q. Apeshit is Mellicks love letter to the great and terrible B-horror movie genre. Six trendy teenagers (three cheerleaders and three football players) go to an isolated cabin in the mountains for a weekend of drinking, partying, and crazy sex, only to find themselves in the middle of a life and death struggle against a horribly mutated psychotic freak that just wont stay dead. Mellick parodies this horror cliché and twists it into something deeper and stranger. It is the literary equivalent of a grindhouse film. It is a splatterpunks wet dream. It is perhaps one of the most fucked up books ever written. If you are a fan of Takashi Miike, Evil Dead, or Eurotrash horror then you must read this book.

## **Apeshit Details**

Date : Published October 22nd 2008 by Avant Punk Books/Eraserhead Press

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Author : Carlton Mellick III

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# From Reader Review Apeshit for online ebook

## Albert says

I only started reading Bizarro fiction a year ago or so, mainly because I wanted something different, and you can't get more different than Bizarro. Apeshit was ok, there were some memorable moments and overall this was a fun read, with the last 20% of the book getting totally crazy, and the ending was pretty sweet, however I prefer Mellick's other works for the sheer outrageousness that he injects into every aspect of his writing.

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## Bob Milne says

The back cover describes Apeshit as "perhaps one of the most f\*cked up books ever written." That's an apt description. This is either the most revolting, graphic, offensive piece of splatterpunk horror I've ever read, or the most brilliant, original, insightful piece of satire upon the genre ever written.

Then again, maybe it's both. Or neither.

As far as basic plotting goes, this is part Friday the 13th, part Evil Dead, and part The Hills Have Eyes. Basically, a bunch of teenagers (the requisite mix of cheerleaders and football players) decide to head out for a weekend of drunken partying at a cabin in the middle of the woods (where, of course, there is no cellular service).

Right from the star, however, Mellick begins messing with the conventions of the genre.

Beware, spoilers abound from his point on.

First of all, the three hot cheerleaders are seriously messed up. One is a tattoo addict with a bright green mohawk, involved in a threesome relationship with two of the football players (more on them in a moment). One is a total germaphobe, completely unwilling to be touched, who gets off on erotic abortions (I don't even want to know if that's a real fetish). The other is obsessive-compulsive, pregnant by her own brother, and afflicted with the mythological condition vagina dentata.

As for the football players, let's start with the 'normal' one - he's your typical jock, hyper masculine, aggressive, and the son of a sadistic father who has tortured the fear out of him. As for the other two, one is a loving sex-addict who would rather infect the threesome with AIDS than tell them the truth about his affairs and thus lose their friendship. The other is a nice guy who is about to break up with the cheerleader part of their threesome, and who has been using the cover of a urinary tract infection to hide the fact that he's healing from a sex-change below the waist.

As for the mutant monsters in the woods, they're your typical horror movie fodder - cranked up a few notches on the weirdness scale. Either lovers or siblings (or, as is suggested, both), they're hideously deformed, with half-formed fetal limbs growing out of their heads, completely wild, and maniacally bloodthirsty.

What follows is a few days of absolute carnage, with acts of dismemberment, torture, and rape that strive to top each other with new levels of depravity. Adding to the weirdness is the fact that (as we learn later)

nothing can die in the cursed territory of the forest. This allows for some disgusting sexual adventures with a headless cheerleader, and for a disemboweled cheerleader to use her dragging entrails as a rope for rescue and bondage. What puts it over the top, though, is the sex-change jock who gets impaled upon a tree branch that rips through to his mouth, but who still desires human penetration.

It's a story that would be comic, if it weren't so revolting . . . that would be absurd, if it weren't so sincere. As a straight-forward horror novel it's simply too much, but as a satiric take on the genre, it's an interesting read.

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### **John says**

After reading this I feel the need to scrub my brain with Lysol and a steel wire brush!

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### **Tonya Breck says**

Speaking as someone who's read --and completely enjoyed-- a lot of crack fic, parody novellas, and disturbing horror stories; this was extremely badly written crack fic at its worst. Perhaps there are people who want to read stories where none of the characters are relatable, redeemable, or even remotely realistic. It tries so hard to shock while not realizing that you have to care to some degree to be shocked. The characters are so removed from reality that it's impossible to care for them even on a basic 'they are supposed to be living sentient creatures' level. That, coupled with the fact that the violence and gore are written like a badly done parody to actual extreme violence and gore, the story ends up reading like mundane trash trying to be a disturbing commentary on society's consumption of said violence and gore.

Personally, I'm offended that someone had the nerve to say that a person who loved Evil Dead must read this, or had the nerve to say it's the literary equivalent of a grindhouse film. It's more like the literary equivalent of a badly written rip-off film done by high teenagers with a hand-held camcorder and no budget. I've seen that movie, and it's not worth the VHS tape it was recorded on.

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### **Kaisersoze says**

Carlton Mellick III may not be my favourite writer, but he sure is intelligent. I know this because in his Author's note which prefaces **Apeshit** he defends against the obvious accusation that the book is shocking for the sake of being shocking by saying this couldn't be further from the truth. Instead he suggests he's trying to be interesting for the sake of being interesting.

Well if this is the type of "interesting" Mellick III is pedaling, I think I'll get my wares else where, thank you kindly. Because overly simplistic, almost childlike writing about grossly despicable people doing grossly despicable things gets tiresome and boring very fast. It's also next to impossible to care about any of the characters, so that when they die (or at least when I thought they did), I could muster up little more than a tired cheer that there was one less grossly despicable person I had to keep reading about.

Seriously, I found this one to be extremely painful. It's bizarro, so nothing is supposed to make any kind of realistic sense, but at least with the other Mellick III novel I read, *Zombies and Shit*, there was a sense of outlandish fun to be had. **Apeshit** just feels like Mellick III is desperately trying to get his name changed to

Mellick !!!

Not for me; may be for others. Enjoy if you can.

1 Cabin in the Woods Story Unlike Anything Else You've Ever Read for **Apeshit**.

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## **Rose O'Keefe says**

Most fucked up book I've ever published

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## **Mark says**

3.5/5

Maybe I've read too much splatterpunk. Folks like Skipp/Spector (John Skipp and Craig Spector), David J. Schow, and later authors like Edward Lee and Bryan Smith. And the granddaddy of them all: Clive Barker and his Books of Blood, Vols. 1-3. In splatterpunk, writers seek to push the envelope of good taste off the side of a desk, light fire to the envelope (and the desk), kick the smouldering ashes into the face of the first passerby, and - in some cases - stick out and wiggle their collective tongue at said passerby as he or she attempts to put out their newly afire hair. If you have a strong stomach, splatterpunk is great fun. If you have a weak stomach, it's fun for others to watch you attempt it. But after a while you feel like you've seen it all. And then what was once shocking to some, humorous to others (however perverse), and titillating to a small few (you know who you are, you sickie) becomes commonplace.

As fun as Apeshit was to read, as quickly as the story moved, there was so much of this that I felt I've seen before. The book is blurbed as: "[the author's] love letter to the great and terrible B-horror movie genre. Six trendy teenagers (three cheerleaders and three football players) go to an isolated cabin in the mountains for a weekend of drinking, partying, and crazy sex, only to find themselves in the middle of a life and death struggle..." Okay, if you've seen any 80s horror flicks, you know the plot. If you don't, watch *The Evil Dead* and see why Sam Raimi, though now making big budget, fairly snoozy movies, will forever be a badass for unleashing into the world this low budget horror masterpiece in which blood literally runs down the screen.

Having read some of Mellick's work before and knowing his penchant for the bizarre, I was expecting this to be a lot weirder than it was. This read like any modern splatterpunk novel. There's a tinge of bizarre fantasy, a couple of is-that-all-you-could-come-up-with? 'bizarro' character traits, but it's nothing of the caliber that Mellick is known for.

But then, maybe I've read too much of both genres. Maybe after a certain point there's nothing shocking or bizarre enough to make me say, Damn, yall, you gotta try this shit, this shit is crazy!

The good thing about this is that it's a brisk read and does bring back fond memories of 80s splatter flicks. If you go in expecting a typical splatterpunk novel, this more than works. If you go in expecting, as the blurb claims, "perhaps one of the most fucked up books ever written," you may be disappointed. Because like *Friday the 13th*, this one is pretty typical.

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## **Paul Nelson says**

What the fuck can I say about Apeshit, well pretty often, almost as easy as the flip of a coin, the story went from flat-out batshit crazy to head shaking incredulous wonder.

We have six college kids taking off for a break to a country retreat, one of the kids grandfather has died and left him the cabin. So that's where they are heading. There's plenty of weirdness in this story, on the way up the perilous mountain road to the cabin they run past an area full of dead animals and a random dead bloke at the side of the road. The animal apocalypse it seems but that's pretty tame as expectations should go.

Now these aren't your average college kids, one's a tattooed cheerleader sporting a mohican who happens to be in a relationship with two of the guys. She spends the majority of the book running round with her intestines hanging out, performing the odd lasso trick. There's a couple who don't have sex and it might be said, get up to some pretty funny sexual activities. That's not funny haha, that's fucked up funny. One guy has had an alleged urinary tract infection for a number of months that's prevented him taking part in the shagging Olympics going down but oh! fucking no, stupid boy, he's had an altogether different operation that... yeah you'd have to read it.

They arrive at the cabin and its total madness, total fucked up mayhem and yes the review does completely deserve this many expletives, there's mutants and a heap load of freakish, rifuckingdicularly queer and downright outlandish shit going on.

Did I enjoy it? I don't think I'll ever be able to answer that, it felt weird and it's written with an extremely simplistic writing style. This author is as nutty as a dive bomb into a swimming pool full of peanuts and he certainly entertains but I'll be forever torn between genius and padded cell.

Also posted at <http://paulnelson.booklikes.com/post/...>

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## **Bandit says**

As a long time horror fan, I'm tough to gross out and/or disturb, but this book just about managed to do it. Mellick's take on the classic "teenagers go to a remote cabin in the woods, crazy things happen" is so amped up, so extreme, so incredibly messed up, that's sort of mesmerizing in a way. I think what I liked the most is how the author peels back layers upon layers (figuratively and literally) from the main characters revealing the ugliness and profound degree of "messedupness" that makes you wonder who the monsters really are. It's be a tough book to recommend, but I liked it and I'd be interested to read more of the author's work.

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## **Matthew Fryer says**

Stop me if you've heard this before...

Six teenagers go to an isolated cabin for a party weekend of booze and sex, only to discover themselves being stalked by a mutant freak lurking in the woods.

Familiar? Of course it is. The author is an unapologetic fan of bad slasher B-movies, and this book is his indulgence. The problem can be that parodies of this kind often end up as a checklist of clichés masquerading as homage. But not here. We have Carlton Mellick III at the helm, and his imagination is far too out of control for that.

Much, in fact most of the content wanders from this beaten path. The author has countless nasty and hilarious tricks up his sleeve, but I'm not going to let on what they are. After all, the back cover blurb had the decency not to spoil anything for me. And to be honest, that is the only remotely "decent" thing about Apeshit.

The original idea was for a screenplay, which would be stunning if there's anybody out there with the balls to film it uncut. The prose creates an appropriate cinematic feel, being comprised of short sentences and told in the present tense. This can be a risk, but it clearly comes naturally to the author.

But the real strength is the characters. The six teens - your average bunch of horny jocks and pretty cheerleaders at a glance - are so intriguing and damaged that we barely need any murderous slayers lurking in the woods. There's so many neuroses, deformities and vile festishes bubbling beneath their clean-limbed exteriors that after a while, the mutants aren't necessarily the main focus. They become just one thread amongst many, and the pace is powered by sharp dialogue as well as action. This author shines when nailing the subtle nuances of human interaction, and there are times when I was surprised by the level of insight and maturity in such a proudly "fucked-up" book.

One element of Apeshit I particularly admired, was that the idea of it being a parody fostered a deceptive sense of security. But there are times when the black humour takes a back seat to the horror, and this played cheeky mind games with my comfort zone. It's a device I hadn't yet encountered in the author's work, and it added a welcome edge to the experience.

Other than a couple of annoying errors (I do wish these books were more thoroughly proof-read) I have no complaints. The elements are combined with the skill of a bestselling author, and at 170 pages of well-spaced text, it doesn't outstay its welcome. Like any good showman, it leaves you wanting more. While considerably less bizarro than much of Carlton Mellick III's canon, it soon descends into an outrageous gorefest, constantly surprising you with new highs (or lows!) of twisted imagination. And once you've got your breath back, the explanatory epilogue neatly ties up the sick little package.

The back cover declares it is perhaps one of the most fucked-up books ever written. For much of it, I thought "Nah, it's not that bad". By the end, I thought "Actually, maybe they've got a point..."

Recommended. If you're a little tweaked in the head, buy it and enjoy. Then give it to your mum for Christmas.

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## **Michael says**

As soon as I read the blurb I had to buy this. As a fan of Mellick and cheesy b-movies it was an obvious no brainer. You can look at Apeshit as an homage to cheesy horror or a parody and both would be correct. To be fair this book is a nasty yet fun mess.

Mellick has perfectly blended splatterpunk and bizarro and offers no apologies. There are quite a few

disturbing scenes and the second half of the book is a gore fest. People that should die don't and as Apeshit winds to its conclusion you are thrown balls deep into bizarro.

It doesn't really matter what Apeshit is because it all works. The splatterpunk and bizarro mesh well and the story itself has the perfect hook that keeps you reading despite the insanity that Mellick throws at you. This is by far my favorite Mellick book and hated to see it end.

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## **Ross Lockhart says**

"Friday the 13th meets Visitor Q" promises the back cover copy of Carlton Mellick III's Apeshit, and that's exactly what the book delivers; this is the literary equivalent of a Takashi Miike slasher flick, reveling in the conventions of B-movie horror, yet layering on enough gore, gristle, and grotesquerie to make even Kane Hodder squeamish. At the heart of the novel's plot is the requisite group of horny teenagers, heading out to the requisite isolated cabin in the woods for the requisite weekend of partying and debauchery. But this is Bizarro territory, so this cast of teens includes a Mohawked cheerleader covered in full-body butterfly tattoos, an obsessive tooth-brusher with a *vagina dentata*, and an abortion porn aficionado. Yeah, it's *that* kind of book. Characterization is a bit uneven\*, and many of the protagonists become downright unlikable over the novel's course, but then again, the fact that the aforementioned horny teens are monsters themselves is kind of the point. Apeshit is, at turns, strange, disgusting, surprising, disturbing, and riotously funny.

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\* Particularly with regards to Buddy the Lobster Boy, Apeshit's killer mutant. While Buddy does appear to share some literary DNA with John Gardner's Grendel ("It sees lights in the distance. Lights in a place that is usually dark. There is something bad about these lights. Something evil. It has to make the lights go away. It has to make the evil, all evil, go away."), ultimately, Buddy is underdeveloped and underutilized as a character, making his transition from villain to victim far less satisfying than it might otherwise be.

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## **Dan Schwent says**

Six teenagers go to a cabin in the woods for a weekend of sex, drugs, and rock and roll. Little did they know they'd end up with a psychotic monster trying to kill them...

Wow. This was the goriest, craziest, goriest book I've read this year. I realize I said "goriest" twice but this book is so gory I thought one "goriest" wasn't going to cut it. It started out like a typical slasher movie. Three guys, three girls, various sexual entanglements. Then the inbred mutant showed up and things got turned upside down. I devoured it in two sittings. Luckily, not while I was trying to eat.

Seriously, there's enough weird sex and gore in this book to sate anyone's bloodlust. How many books have you read that feature a woman with her intestines hanging out for half the book, a woman with an abortion fetish, and another with teeth in her vagina? And all that's in the first forty or fifty pages! Much weirder things happen later.

The twist at the end was nicely done. I was wondering how everyone was still alive and the ending wrapped things up very neatly.



While it's definitely not for the squeamish, Apeshit is a crazy tribute to slasher flicks and is quite a wild ride. Just don't try to read it while you're eating.

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### **Francesca says**

This book started really well for me. The story was already fairly obvious which kinds of teen slashers it was going to be spoofing and the characters were breaking all the stereotypes of the horror movie group of teens. I was sold. However, as the story progressed further I felt like I wanted a refund. The story remained entertaining throughout but not necessarily in a good way. More in a 'oh my god, what the fuck?' kind of way. Which, I guess means the author still did their job but the more crazy and random and 'shocking' it got, the less interested I actually became. By the end I was just skimming most of it because I was bored. Bored? Of a book that has people with weird sexual fetishes, a girl with her intestines hanging out for most of the book, one twist and turn and surprise in nearly every moment? Yes! Because it became too much. Do you know when things become less shocking and interesting? When they're over done. That was what happened with this book, in my opinion. It was all too much. There was too much wedged into this one story. You know how so many people complained about Spiderman 3 because they thought there were too many villains in it? Well, that's how I felt about this book. There were too many random plot points and rather than adding to the story, they took away from it. I am aware that this is bizarro fiction and having a lot of weirdness in it comes with the territory. I get that. I usually love that. However, I feel like it works best when they take one weird concept and just run with that. Clogging it up with too many other things doesn't make the story funnier or more interesting, it just takes away any impact that the rest may have. The plots used in this book could've been split into at least 3 or 4 different books which would've all worked probably quite well as their own concepts but when combined, rather than creating some super powered up story of awesome it becomes a big mess of average.

It still managed to stay at 2 stars and didn't fall down to 1 because there were parts of it that I found amusing and entertaining and the beginning was done so well. Even for all my complaining and the fact that I got bored with parts of it, I still carried on reading it because it did hook me in and for that it deserves to stay at 2 stars.

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### **Angus McKeogh says**

My first foray into "bizarro fiction". I wouldn't call this book a masterpiece, and it's certainly not the pinnacle of literary form or storytelling. But it was ridiculously campy, overtly disgusting, and cornily entertaining. I never reached a section where I considered setting it aside because I'd lost interest which for the moment is something to be said for whatever I've been reading. At least something fun enough to finish compared to the over-the-top boring "literary" works I seem to be immersed in recently. I'll definitely read something else by him in the future.

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