



# Dreambender

*Ronald Kidd*

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## **Dreambender** Ronald Kidd

Everyone in the City is assigned a job by the choosers--keeper, catcher, computer. Callie Crawford is a computer. She works with numbers: putting them together, taking them apart. Her work is important, but sometimes she wants more. Jeremy Finn is a dreambender. His job is to adjust people's dreams. He and others like him quietly remove thoughts of music and art to keep the people in the City from becoming too focused on themselves and their own feelings rather than on the world. They need to keep the world safe from another Warming. But Jeremy thinks music is beautiful, and when he pops into a dream of Callie singing, he becomes fascinated with her. He begins to wonder if there is more to life than being safe. Defying his community and the role they have established for him, he sets off to find her in the real world. Together, they will challenge their world's expectations. But how far will they go to achieve their own dreams?

## **Dreambender Details**

Date : Published March 1st 2016 by Albert Whitman Company

ISBN : 9780807517253

Author : Ronald Kidd

Format : Hardcover 256 pages

Genre : Childrens, Middle Grade, Fantasy, Juvenile, Science Fiction, Dystopia

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# From Reader Review Dreambender for online ebook

## **Karen Gibson says**

I read that this book was like *The Giver* which is one of my favorite books for YA readers. I thoroughly enjoyed this book. My only complaint was that it seemed to end rather abruptly.

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## **Shiloh says**

I was very disappointed in this book. The idea behind it is fascinating, but it was not well carried out. The characters are underdeveloped and unrelatable and the plot is slow and rather boring sometimes.

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## **Hazel Rainfall says**

*Dreambender* is rated low for many reasons. The sentence structure is extremely truncated, and creates some very awkward phrasing. I had to re-read several strangely worded short sentences several times to understand what Ronald Kidd, the author, was trying to say. Another reason I rated this book so low is due to its similarity to the book, *The Giver* and many other dystopian world-based novels.

I also found the narrative style to be very distracting to the flow of the overall story. Each chapter featured a first-person account of what was going on from a different main characters point of view. I have read many books that employ this type of story-telling, however, this script was less than successful.

That being said, *Dreambender* was written so that the target audiences (kids 9-12 years of age) would find it enjoyable and entertaining.

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## **Nancy Kotkin says**

The premise of this novel is faulty. Even if one's dreams are altered, that would not affect one's aspirations while awake. Plenty of goal-driven people don't even remember what they dream at night.

The plot doesn't hold together well either. Jeremy is banished from the dreamscape for a year and warned that he will be banished forever if he disobeys this order. Not only does he return, but he admits to betraying their secret to a dreamer, and then threatens to expose the whole operation. Yet on the very next page the current dreambender leader asks Jeremy to be their new leader???

The voices of both narrators are indistinguishable from one another. I see no evidence that Jeremy and Leif were ever best friends, despite Jeremy's claims. All the characters readily trust strangers, which is especially odd in a dystopia. There are info dumps in the dialogue, as well as long monologues.

I can't really picture the dreamscape, other than its description as a meadow. I also don't understand how the dreambenders are altering the dreams, which is described only vaguely as pulling threads.

Dystopian is definitely not this author's forte.

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## **SerialReader says**

While reading Dreambender I had a Dèjà vu moment..

Here's my face expression while I realized I had already read this story.  
The Bible meets Divergent?

Read more on [The Serial Reader Blog](#)

\*This book was kindly sent to me via NetGalley by Albert Whitman & Company\*

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## **Isis says**

I would like to thank Albert Whitman & Company + NetGalley for a copy of this e-ARC to review. Though I received this ebook for free, that has no impact upon the honesty of my review.

Goodreads Teaser: "Everyone in the City is assigned a job by the choosers--keeper, catcher, computer. Callie Crawford is a computer. She works with numbers: putting them together, taking them apart. Her work is important, but sometimes she wants more. Jeremy Finn is a dreambender. His job is to adjust people's dreams. He and others like him quietly remove thoughts of music and art to keep the people in the City from becoming too focused on themselves and their own feelings rather than on the world. They need to keep the world safe from another Warming. But Jeremy thinks music is beautiful, and when he pops into a dream of Callie singing, he becomes fascinated with her. He begins to wonder if there is more to life than being safe. Defying his community and the role they have established for him, he sets off to find her in the real world. Together, they will challenge their world's expectations. But how far will they go to achieve their own dreams?"

Beautiful ideas that tempt the imagination while teaching meaningful lessons at the same time. The lessons aren't traditional per se, but rather built into the story and crafted to sink into the reader's conscious and subconscious as they read.

Jeremy is a character most kids will relate to on one level or another. Between his incessant questions and his clear promise of great talent he appeals to younger readers and adults alike. Callie is more of an adult character, though she is a major player in this story, and one of the main instruments through which the life lessons are shared. But her sensation of being trapped in a job she doesn't have any passion for speaks to most adults I'd expect. Her journey is her lesson for readers of all ages.

Though couched in a futuristic story, the ideas shared in this book are valid for readers of any generation. Mr. Kidd does an excellent job of crafting a tale to engage readers, young and old, and building important life lessons into the very bones of the story. The world he created is a beautifully woven mix of reality and fantasy, but not so far out that it becomes difficult to imagine. If anything he's made it too easy to imagine, and that simply makes the messages instilled within that much more powerful. Without a doubt this book should become a core requirement for all middle school reading lists. Indeed every library, both school and public, should have at least one copy; they should plan for multiple copies given how popular it is bound to become!

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### **Mia says**

honestly, i was excited about this book. it's such a cool concept and it had so much potential, but i feel like very little of that was used. granted, it is a kids book which is why i didn't give it 2 stars, but i still felt like it was disappointing overall. i didn't really like the characters, either—they were predictable and boring. this isn't a bad book, just not a very interesting one

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### **Kelis Fraser says**

This book was amazing!,it had wonderful writing style it showed how the characters felt in all the issues and problems that they were facing throughout the story.The vocabulary is very well writing and linked into all the right places.

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### **Vibha says**

I would rate Dreambender by Ronald Kidd 4 stars for many reasons. First of all, the book isn't written in a biased tone because it is from the point of view of 2 different characters from both sides of the story. This way, you get to look at 2 different interpretations of the problem. Next, this book educates you on important things, such as the true meaning of freedom. The characters teach you that proper freedom is when you have the freedom to do something rather than being free from something. Finally, I took one star off because the author didn't explain some important facts (which led to the beginning of the plot) that were mentioned quite frequently in the book. For example, what was the "Warming"? Why did it lead to the banning of machines? That is why I would rate Dreambender by Ronald Kidd 4 stars.

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### **Hasvita says**

I rate this book 4 stars because of how this book was developed. It had an interesting plot but it was slowly developed. I like how the two characters showed their point of view in the book, one of the characters (Callie) has to her life as a "computer" Who is someone who is very good at math, They have to play with the numbers in their head and write them down in books. The other character is Jeremy, who is a dream bender... their job is to bend or change dreams so people won't be thinking of things before the warming. Callie dreamed about music and how she felt the feeling of fire dancing, but they soon blanked out. Jeremy saw the dream and wanted to know what's out there so he decided to find that feeling. This story is like any

other utopia book, this didn't really have anything separating it from other books other than how they had different jobs and also how the plot is about changing dreams.

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## **jessica says**

I received an ARC of this book in exchange for an honest review. Big thanks to Albert Whitman & Company.

*"Watching Dreams was like looking into someone's heart. It was magnificent, and it was awful."*

In this post-apocalyptic world, devoid of artistic expression and machinery, Jeremy is a Dreambender. His job is to manipulate dreams to keep people on the straight and narrow by doing so. And he has an amazing gift for it... until he's forced to bend Callie's dream. She's a computer, who is slowly discovering there is more to life than working with numbers in the bland, muted, two-dimensional world they live in. Upon hearing Callie singing in her dream, Jeremy finds it too beautiful to correct. Both Callie and Jeremy are coming to discover the same things about the world they live in: the things they are told to be dangerous and wrong are actually nothing of the sort. In fact, they make life better.

Nearly every form of creative expression is acknowledged as a distraction rather than art. Callie had believed this her whole life until she meets a group of girls who sneak out at night to paint pictures. And now Callie is questioning the only life she's ever known. Was she really born to work with numbers, or is she destined to be something more?

Dreambender is a wonderful story that focuses on hope and understanding. You're rooting for both main characters from the very beginning, which makes this book easy to absorb yourself in.

Something I particularly loved was that every restriction in this world had a reason to exist. In the aftermath of The (Global) Warming, no machines were allowed of any sort. Things like painting, singing, bright colors, etc. were considered distractions, as everyone is born to do a job and those jobs help keep order and prevent catastrophe like The Warming from happening again, so long as everyone follows the paths they're assigned. Readers aren't forced to accept something just because it helps the story. Everything had a reason as to why it was what it was. It's writing suited it's targeted audience... there was just a lot to appreciate within these pages.

However, I wish there were more character development happening in the first few chapters, rather than so much of the first thirty or so pages filling us in of strictly backstory. And the ending was abrupt and lacking. It didn't wrap things up well. It gave closure, but rushed it. I wanted more detail and I still had a lot of questions. This was really disappointing, because I enjoyed the story so much.

Other than those last two points, I was overly impressed with this book. Solid read.

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## **Samantha says**

This was different. I'm not sure I've ever read anything quite like it before, at least in the way that it is so general a location. It's weird to think of someone controlling your dreams and thinking it is okay. I also can't imagine a world without music and art. Thought-provoking.

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### **Michelle Taylor says**

#### **Simple but so so beautiful**

I am a teacher. Right now I teach English and Theatre. But I've also taught music: choir, dance, band. So many times when scores are low on dreaded standardized tests, the threat is lobbed that these things I teach will be the first to go. What a dreadful deed to do to ourselves? What a gift to have the option to keep them instead. To see the blossoming of hearts and minds when they are there. Keep them.

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### **Elizabeth Tharp says**

Rating: 1.5 stars

Review: I almost did not finish *Dreambender*, but I struggled through anyway so that I could clearly articulate what I disliked about the book from the perspective of having heard the author out to the end before making my judgment. From the beginning of the story, *Dreambender* failed to impress me. Almost immediately after starting the book I could not only determine the book's main theme, but I could predict exactly how the book would end with unfortunate accuracy. Rather than weaving the book's themes about the power of music and dreaming throughout the story so that the themes subtly influenced every aspect of the plot, Ronald Kidd screamed the themes from every sentence so that I as the reader was left feeling frustrated and annoyed. The book's premise showed only slight originality, with a dystopian future that relied heavily on Global Warming and a strange version of the biblical Flood. Additionally, the writing style itself lacked artistry, and, despite being told from two different perspectives, the characters all sounded the same and underwent simplistic character journeys. I wanted to like *Dreambender* when I picked it up at the library, but the sheer quantity of problems with the story made me liking the book next to impossible.

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### **Sarah says**

Thank you Netgalley and Albert Whitman and Company for selecting me to read and review a digital ARC of this book.

*You don't know me. You don't see me. But I am there. Watching. Helping. Bending your dreams.*

--*Dreambender* by Ronald Kidd

After a catastrophic event called "The Warming" destroys Earth as we know it. Life has begun again, but with a very different structure that is guided by "The Plan". The plan is a specific path and rules that were created to keep the world from another "Warming," and to help keep the people and the world safe. There are no machines, no music, no arts, nothing frivolous or creative is allowed.

The people are divided into two separate groups that do not mingle and are separated by a wilderness called

The Between. One group lives in “The City” and have no idea that there is anyone else out there. They live a very structured existence where they are directed into an appropriate occupation based on their skills and the community’s needs. There are rules, laws, curfews, and watchers who keep things in line. The people wake up go to work, go home and start again the next day.

In “The Meadow” live the other group of people called Dreambenders. Their job is to visit the dreams of the city people each night and make sure that their dreams are in line with the goals of “The Plan”. If they do not align with the plan or show signs of ideas that would draw the people into frivolity, hope or creativity, it is the Dreambenders’ job to change their dreams and help guide their thoughts back into line.

Callie is from the city; her role is as a computer. Her job is to work with numbers. She lives with her family, follows the rules, and knows her place in the community. But in her dreams she is beginning to feel differently.

Jeremy is a new Dreambender from the Meadow, and he knows the rules: “Never meet the dreamer. Never harm the dreamer. Always follow the plan.” He is a natural, and quickly finds that bending dreams is something he enjoys and is good at. The others in his community see that he has a gift, and he quickly becomes the prodigy that the elders see as the future. All is going according to “The Plan” until Jeremy stumbles into Callie’s dream. A dream filled with music and hope and beauty. Music is forbidden, it is against “The Plan”, but how can something peaceful and beautiful be a bad thing? Jeremy makes a decision to not bend Callie’s dream, and this starts a ripple of changes, and begins his shift to breaking every rule and searching for what is really is right. Should a small group of people with a plan be able to control the minds and plans for the rest? Is everything he has ever known and been taught really wrong and harmful?

As I began reading Dreambender I made instant connections to Lois Lowry’s The Giver. The two books are different but have similarities that provoke the same questions and concerns in the reader. The book is well written and the tone takes on a relaxed and dream-like feel. Even through the chaos, the author keeps a sense of calm in the reader as they are taken into a world that is completely changed after “The Warming”. Jeremy and Callie’s thoughts and journey will force readers to question what is right and what is fair. Should one person or group’s idea of what is best for the community be forced on others? What if they are doing it with the best of intentions? I recommend Dreambender to those looking to read a solid middle grade fantasy. It also will especially appeal to those who understand the power of music and arts and their impact on the world.

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