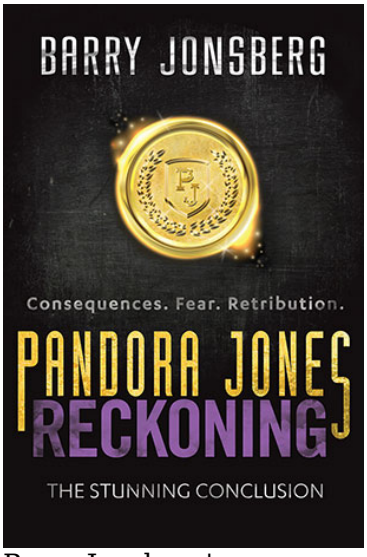
Gretta Yuide, "Entry on: Pandora Jones. Reckoning (Pandora Jones, 3) by Barry Jonsberg", peer-reviewed by Elizabeth Hale and Daniel A. Nkemleke. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/111. Entry version as of September 14, 2026.

Barry Jonsberg

Pandora Jones. Reckoning (Pandora Jones, 3)

Australia (2015)

TAGS: Cassandra Pandora



Barry Jonsberg's *Pandora Jones: Reckoning* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin Children's, 2015). Courtesy of the Publisher.

General information	
Title of the work	Pandora Jones. Reckoning (Pandora Jones, 3)
Country of the First Edition	Australia
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2015
First Edition Details	Barry Jonsberg, *Pandora Jones. Reckoning*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin Children's, 2015, 336 pp.
ISBN	9781743318133
Genre	Alternative histories (Fiction), Bildungsromans (Coming-of-age fiction), Dystopian fiction, Novels, Science fiction
Target Audience	Young adults
Author of the Entry	Gretta Yuide, University of New England, dolly331@bigpond.com
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Creators

Barry Jonsberg , b. 1951
(Author)

Barry Jonsberg was born in Liverpool, England. He moved to Australia in 1999 and became an Australian citizen in 2007. He has a B.A. Hons in English Literature and a Master of Philosophy in English Literature from Liverpool University. He was a lecturer in English in the UK and a high school teacher in Darwin, Australia where he now lives with his wife, and two children. He started writing when he moved to Darwin in 2001. Jonsberg still teaches occasionally, but now prefers to write fulltime.

He has completed nine books for young adults and three books for younger readers. He writes across a variety of genres including comedy, detective fiction and young adult dystopian fiction. His book *My Life as an Alphabet* was shortlisted for the Prime Minister's Award in 2014. It also won the Children's Peace Prize, the Gold Inky, the Victorian Premier's award for YA fiction and was shortlisted for the Adelaide Festival award. Likewise, his book *Being Here* was shortlisted for the Prime Minister's Literary Awards 2012 and won the Queensland Premier's Literary award for YA fiction. *The Whole Business with Kiffo and the Pitbull* and *It's Not All About YOU, Calma!* were short-listed for the Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year, Older Readers, awards. *It's Not All About YOU, Calma!* also won the Adelaide Festival Award for Children's Literature, *Dreamrider* was short-listed in the New South Wales Premier's Awards for the Ethel Turner prize and *Cassie* (Girlfriend Fiction) was short-listed for the Children's Peace Literature Award 2009.

His books have been published in the USA, France, Poland, Germany, Hungary, Turkey, and China. His book *Am I right or am I right?* was published in the USA; *The Crimes and Punishment of Miss Payne* has been translated into Chinese, Hungarian, German and Polish. *The Dog that Dumped on my Doona* was translated into German; *Cassie* was translated in German and Turkish, *It's not all about you Calma!* has been translated in Polish, German and French, and *My Life as an alphabe*t has been translated in French and German.

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Source:

Official website (accessed: July 2, 2018).

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Additional information

Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs	Previous book: *Pandora Jones* (Series, Book 2): *Deception*.

Summary

Reckoning is the third book in the Pandora Jones Trilogy and it draws on both Pandora and Cassandra in the characterisation of the main protagonist, Pandora Jones. Pandora regains consciousness in "The School" infirmary where she is told that she has unleashed an air-borne virus that will wipe out humanity within three months. (It was designed to put humanity out of its misery.) The children at "The School" had all been abducted and bought there because of their special skills to build a new society. They were all given the virus and the anti-virus so they would be safe when the virus was going to be released on humanity.

Pandora is told she was responsible for unleashing the virus, even though her friend, Jen, was also responsible. Jen has had her memory wiped. She has had new memories implanted which, confirm that the world outside has already been hit with a pandemic and everyone is dead. Jen's memories are the future. Pandora is told that no one will believe her if she tries to tell them the truth, as Jen will not back her up (this intersects with the Cassandra myth). However, Pandora's prophetic gifts develop and she can get inside people's heads to access information stored in there and alter what they see in their minds, provided she can touch them or something that belongs to them. She, therefore, alters Jen's memories, making her remember what happened. She and Jen then inform their school group. Even though they are initially sceptical, Pandora finds a way to enter their minds and convinces them. Her school group then attempt an escape through the infirmary, where they download computer information on the virus on a USB. Once outside "The School," they are met by two helicopters, and numerous army personnel who shoot at them. Pandora is eventually able to commandeer one of the helicopters and by touching the pilot before he dies, download information on how to fly it from his mind. She then rescues her classmates and they fly away. One of the students recognises where they are and says her family have a holiday house nearby, they ditch the helicopter at sea. At the holiday house, the girl contacts her father, a scientist and trained medical doctor, leaving him a cryptic message that only he

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would understand in case the phones were tapped. He comes to the house views the information on the USB and believes Pandora and the other adolescents that the world is in danger of a virus that will kill them if they don't get an antidote soon, so he alerts other scientists. Also, one of the other school friends is a computer hacker: he hacks into all the major world health organisations to alert them of the need to vaccinate. Ultimately, then, Pandora defies the Pandora and Cassandra myths, by giving hope to the world and having everyone believe her.

Analysis

Reckoning is the third book in the Pandora Jones Trilogy in which Barry Jonsberg uses classical myth to explore the adolescent condition in a dystopic environment. This book clearly refers to both the Pandora and Cassandra mythological beings. Professor Goldberg from "The School" tells Pandora that her "name is reminiscent of one mythological character, Pandora," but as he has planted false memories in the other students' minds he tells her that "this situation reminds me of another. Have you heard of the Prophet Cassandra?... She was a tragic figure, really. Her curse was that she had the ability to see the future and always see it accurately. Everything she told people was the truth. The trouble was she was destined never to be believed. That was her curse, Pandora: to tell the truth and be universally known as a liar...It destroyed Cassandra be careful it doesn't destroy you Pandora." Initially, Pandora is not believed when she tells her classmates the truth, but then her prophetic abilities change and she can get inside their minds and change things around so she is believed. She later tells herself that she has "resisted the Cassandra prophecy. There are those who believe in me, Now I must fulfil the Pandora promise. Yes, I brought destruction to the world, albeit unwittingly. But there is something remaining in the box and it is mine to free even if I die in the attempt. I will not abandon hope." Pandora, therefore, decides to bring hope to the world and tries to save it from the virus that she has unwittingly released on it, by escaping and letting people in authority know how to find and administer a vaccination. There is a third direct reference to mythology when she is inside one of the other student's heads, reading his thoughts he thinks; "Pandora. Save the world. Live up to your name. Deliver hope." By the end of the book, she has lived up to her name and given hope to the world. The overall message the book conveys is the all-pervading sense of hope that Pandora has, can get

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	things done even when faced with many obstacles. The theme of hope that pervades Young Adult dystopian literature intersects within the book with Pandora's personal empowerment and her coming of age.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Cassandra Pandora
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adversity Coming of age Science Survival Teenagers Utopia and dystopia

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