



4-1-2009

## *The Fire* by Katherine Neville, Ballantine Books, 2008

Judi Morrel

Butler University, [jmorrel@butler.edu](mailto:jmorrel@butler.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/las\\_bookreviews](https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/las_bookreviews)

---

### Recommended Citation

Morrel, Judi, "*The Fire* by Katherine Neville, Ballantine Books, 2008" (2009). *LAS Faculty Book Reviews*. 150.

[https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/las\\_bookreviews/150](https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/las_bookreviews/150)

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences at Digital Commons @ Butler University. It has been accepted for inclusion in LAS Faculty Book Reviews by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Butler University. For more information, please contact [digitalscholarship@butler.edu](mailto:digitalscholarship@butler.edu).

## Because Ideas Matter...

The faculty and staff of Butler University's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences presents

### Recommended Readings



#### *The Fire*

by Katherine Neville, Ballantine Books, 2008

Reviewed by Judith Morrel

The Fire, the sequel to Katherine Neville's *The Eight*, has been a long time coming, and it's worth the wait. It has been 20 years since the publication of *The Eight*, a long, intricately plotted novel about an ancient chess set. Fortunately for us, it is not necessary to have read *The Eight* in order to enjoy *The Fire*, although I would recommend reading it as well. In these novels Neville uses both the playing of the game of chess and the powers ascribed to the various chess pieces as metaphors for complex human interactions and the complicated roles played by her characters. In both *The Eight* and *The Fire*, Neville jumps back and forth in time and place with fascinating historical information; in the sequel, which is not as long as its predecessor, the modern protagonists are in the subsequent generation from those of *The Eight*. The pieces of the Montglane chess service, once owned by Charlemagne and originally created over 1000 years ago in Baghdad, have been scattered over the world and buried for years but some have begun to reappear. The principal characters in the novel, as well as others, would like to own the entire set, not only for its beauty and historical value, but also for a rumored secret formula which can be revealed by it. The complex plot will keep you entertained as you try to figure out who's who, who's good and who's bad!

- Judith Morrel is associate professor of Mathematics at Butler University.