



Changes for Julie

Megan McDonald

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Julie is in school detention for passing a note to Joy, a deaf student who has trouble understanding what their teacher is saying. Indignant, Julie decides to run for student-body president so she can make changes to the detention system. But the other students are put off by Joy, her choice for vice president, and Julie worries that she ll have little chance of winning if she partners with someone who seems so different. With persistence and creative campaigning, Julie wins over the students--and wins the election without compromising her principles. The "Looking Back" section discusses the 1976 presidential election. Author: Megan McDonald. Paperback or Hardcover. 104 pages.

This book is the final one in a series of six historical books filled with inspiring lessons of compassion, courage, and friendship. Julie s entire book set includes: *Meet Julie*; *Julie Tells Her Story*; *Happy New Year, Julie*; *Julie and the Eagles*; *Julie s Journey*; and *Changes for Julie*.

Changes for Julie Details

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Author : Megan McDonald

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Lola says

Five of My Thoughts on Changes for Julie

1. Why is this teacher so mean? Shouldn't she be more aware of the disabilities of one of her students? Shouldn't she at least look at the note?
 2. Julie, clearly your school has bigger problems than useless dentition. I feel for you though because we also had to write lines in my high school. In fact, we had to copy sections from the student handbook.
 3. Joy is probably one of American Girl's best characters. I'd really like to see more stories with Joy in them.
 4. Student elections clearly haven't changed since the 70s.
 5. Recommended!
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Chloe (aka Crystal) says

My Review:

Changes for Julie is the last book in the Julie series and it is way better than the first book. Of course, I haven't read any of the other books in the series so far. To be honest, the only reason I chose to read this book was because a deaf girl (Joy) was in the story. It was a cute story, and like I said, better than the first one... but I wish the author had put more information in the back. I expected a page or two of some American Sign Language, since Joy is starred in the book, but nothing. There's only info about the presidential election in 1976 and quick mentions of disabled children. There is a picture of a deaf actress who is using the "I love you" sign, but a little disappointing that there was nothing more about ASL. The story was cute, and I suppose good for younger girls, but I got the impression it was unrealistic in a way. I suppose, in general, I feel like the whole series is unrealistic, based on the two books I read.

No content warnings. Only mentions of Julie's parents being divorced, girls making fun of Joy (the deaf girl), and mentions of a bully flushing other students' lunch bags down the toilet. :/

This review was written in my own words and opinions.

Sarah says

Changes For Julie is written by Megan McDonald. It is about how Julie Albright runs for student body president against the most popular boy in the school. The main characters are Julie and Joy. With her vice president Joy who is deaf, Julie thinks she has a good chance of winning. When the election starts Julie realizes that the children will not listen to her thoughts and speeches because Joy is deaf. Julie thinks about dropping out of the election, but what would she tell Joy? Will Julie stay in or leave the election? I

recommend this book to anybody who likes to read books about American Girls.

Kathryn H says

Julie wanted to make a change for the detention system at school. Her schools' detention was all about writing lines of I will not... lots of times. Julie wanted to use that time to do something useful or good for the school. She becomes school president after beating the most popular boy in school. When she becomes president she gets to make her changes.

Leona Carstairs says

This story is not original, I mean none of the American Girls books are exactly mind blowingly unique, but this series was boring and I've seen this story quite a lot in other children's books. Bleh. Pretty damn awful series. Don't recommend at all.

Shelli says

The American Girl Series is a wonderful series for mothers to share with their young daughters. Each of these books have led to varied and meaningful conversations with my own daughter. In this series Julie has tackled many obstacles such as: dealing with change after a divorce, equality for women in sports, social awareness of the environment, and in this latest book discrimination for people with disabilities. Julies friend Joy is deaf. Since many of their fellow classmates do not understand Joy they don't know how to approach her or even comfortably share space with her. As so often happens when people are unsure they become afraid and act out meanly toward Joy. Julie has to make some difficult decisions about what is right vs. what is easy.

Taylor says

Julie in in the 5th grade, and in some big trouble! Julie was being the kind and loving girl that she is and helping out her blind friend Joy. But her teacher doesn't even care! After spending time in detention, julie is off to set some change in the system. To make this happen she is going to run for student body prestident, against the most popular boy in school. As the election is getting fired up, julie is trying to get kids to listen to her ideas, but they don't like joy. Joy is her choice as a VP, she considers dropping out of the election. But the last thing she wants to do is hurt Joy's feelings or worse loose her as a friend. GREAT BOOK! really suspenceful!

Emily says

I like the julie books. But I often forget while reading them that I'm reading a story that took place in a different decade. There's usually not too many mentions of anything that pulls me back to the correct era

until the end when I read the looking back section and it talks about events that we're going on at the time that may have made the characters act the way they did. I think it's hard with that era being so much more similar to the present than say the civil war or colonial eras to really make the story set apart without a lot of pictures to remind us people dressed differently and without that looking back section to really tie it all together.

Maggie says

I knew it! I knew it! I knew Julie and Joy were going to win, not Mark and his running partner. I think they won because Julie said she was going to change detention from writing sentences 100 times to learning sign language. And I'm serious... 100 times! I'm glad I've never had detention at her school!

Jennifer says

The last book in the Julie series from American Girl, this wraps things up rather tidily. Neither this book nor the 5th one had any divorce issues at all which seems rather unrealistic and there are some choices rather obviously made to allow for marketing tie-ins of crafts and doll accessories.

Elizabeth says

3.5

Sarah Crawford says

The story has to do with Julie's decision to run for student body president. In doing that, she has to run against the most popular boy in the school, a boy whose supporters will use whatever dirty tactics they can to stop her from winning.

The story also deals with Julie's friend, Joy, who is deaf. There's a lot of prejudice against Joy, particularly in relation to what she sounds like when she speaks, and she is running with Julie. The chance of Julie being elected seems low, especially if she keeps Joy as a running mate.

Julie has to deal with that issue, plus come up with some way to convince the students that she is the better candidate.

The book has the usual historical section at the end.

Joey says

I found this book slow to get into but it eventually picked up and got better. It was an interesting story

showing Julie trying to change the injustice that her school offered as their way of punishment.

Julie and her friend Joy get given detention as Joy didn't understand what the teacher was saying. Julie soon realised the system was wrong and something had to be done about it. She signs them up to run for Student body president but faces a tough battle as the competition is the most popular boy in school; and people are scared of her friend due to her being different. Julie gives up defeated until the popular girls in her class bully her friend and gets detention. This gives her the opportunity to show the change she wants to implement.

The last few chapters were really great reads, I loved how she changed the mind set for everyone and stopped the ignorance that was spreading through the school.

Kimberly Brown says

One of my favorite series of the AG series. Earth Day, Chinese New Year, endangered animals, bicentennial, and more.

Ashley says

This book was a good end to the Julie books--she ran for class president with both an unpopular running mate and platform, but she won. I liked that throughout the whole series, if Julie sensed an injustice, she worked really hard to make a difference and change things. I think that is an encouraging message for young girls.

Christina says

I liked this one more than most of the others in the series. It has those Mean Girls (stock characters who appear in every single piece of media intended for mid-elementary to preteen girls) but for once they have a change of heart and turn out to be not so mean in the end. That was refreshing. *Changes for Julie* also has a neater, more interesting story arc than the other Julie books I've complained about.

I guess I'm going to need to turn myself into a big fan of Julie pretty quickly, because Isobel has decided that's the doll she wants for Christmas!

Ciara says

this book opens in such a totally insane way. apparently it's a new school year & julie has a new friend. joy is deaf & i guess we are supposed to assume that she is in julie's class due to new legislation that has been passed, allowing for students with various disabilities to be mainstreamed into regular classrooms (because there is a bit about this in the "looking back" section in the back of the book). joy lip reads & is having trouble following an assignment because the teacher's face is somewhat obscured by the angle at which she is standing. she passes julie a note requesting assistance & julie passes back a note explaining the lesson. the teacher busts them passing notes & sentences them both to detention after school. she does not permit julie or

joy to explain what the note-passing was all about.

julie's experiences of injustice are pretty egregious, aren't they? maybe i am having trouble swallowing it because her stories are set less than forty years ago & deal with laws that are currently on the books, but i really don't understand how any adult in julie's school is managing to hold on to their job.

rather than stewing over this obvious example of egregious discrimination & poor teaching standards while in detention, julie instead frets over how pointless detention is. she has to write "i will not pass notes" 100 times, like she's bart simpson or something. she thinks her time could be better spent doing something to help the school, like cleaning up litter or something. sweetie, that's why they have janitors. maybe julie grew up to be newt gingrich's campaign manager?

a few days later, julie learns that elections for student government are happening soon. the most popular boy in the sixth grade is running for president & everyone assumes he's a shoo-in because, you know, he's the most popular boy in sixth grade. julie swings by the principal's office & learns that fifth graders are certainly welcome to run for student government, although none ever has. what the fuck is wrong with this school? when i was a kid, student government elections were a big deal & the rules for running were carefully explained in every class so that people could decide if they wanted to try it or not. but julie had to hear about this shit through the grapevine. ridiculous.

she decides to run on a "make detention useful" platform. she enlists joy to be her vice president. shenanigans ensue. people make fun of her & her campaign because: she's only a fifth grader. she's not the most popular boy in school. she's a girl. her vice president is deaf. she has a platform that goes beyond just "pizza should be available in the cafeteria". someone defaces her campaign posters. lots of people make fun of joy for being deaf. julie starts to realize that having a deaf running mate is a big liability & wonders if there's some way she can ask joy to drop out of the race without looking like a total asshole. joy picks up on this & things come to a head when julie overhears some popular girls in her grade making fun of the way joy talks. she tries to shield joy from the truth, but joy doesn't appreciate it. the girls do get in trouble. they are sent to detention. but joy spends a few days skipping school.

julie convinces the teacher to let her conduct her own detention with the girls who made fun of joy. she teaches them some basic sign language. they start to think that sign language is really cool ("like a secret code"--listen, bitches, sign language is the way deaf people communicate; it's not some totally awesome secret language for you & your buddies to co-opt) & they want to apologize to joy. julie takes them to joy's house & they apologize in sign language. they also pledge to vote for julie & joy & to help get out the vote on their behalf. which they do, & julie & joy win.

ugh.

Callie Stillion says

Julie is in trouble, BIG TROUBLE! She is running for school body president, and Jules is worried. Joy, the new girl, that is deaf has to talk loudly, and it bothers the other kids. Julie is afraid that because of Joy, nobody will vote for her. She doesn't know how to tell Joy, because she doesn't want to hurt her friends feelings, or, even worse, lose Joy as a friend. But in the end, Julie wins the vote, after Joy speaks up for herself. If there were to be on more book, I think that people would have changed their minds about Joy.

Sharon says

I felt bad for Joy because she didn't really fit in, and people made fun of her just because she was deaf.

Jennifer says

Once again the author is having trouble with the timeline of the series. The books are supposed to be set in 1974. In the fourth book, the timeline jumps to 1976 and is in 1976 again for the fifth book. Now, for the sixth book, we're supposedly back in time to 1974 again. Julie references a new show called "Happy Days" when a quick Google search shows it actually premiered in January 1974. This book is supposed to be set in the fall one year from the first book in the series, which would make it 1975. These inaccuracies in the Julie books lead me to downgrade it even though much of the information weaved into the stories is interesting.
