



No Surrender Soldier

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A young man, an old soldier , and a terrible injustice. Should the punishment be death?

Growing up on Guam in 1972, fifteen-year-old Kiko is beset by worries: He's never kissed a girl, and he thinks it's possible he never will. The popular guys get all the attention, but the worst part is that Kiko has serious problems at home. His older brother is missing in Vietnam; his grandfather is losing it to dementia; he just learned that his mother was raped in World War II by a Japanese soldier. It all comes together when he discovers an old man, a Japanese soldier, hiding in the jungle behind his house. It's not the same man who raped his mother, but, in his rage, Kiko cares only about protecting his family and avenging his mom – no matter what it takes. And so, a shy, peaceable boy begins to plan a murder. But how far will Kiko go to prove to himself that he's a man ? Based on a historical incident, No Surrender Soldier is the story of a boy grappling with ancient questions of courage and manhood before he can move on.

No Surrender Soldier Details

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From Reader Review No Surrender Soldier for online ebook

Ashley says

About The Book:

A young man, an old soldier , and a terrible injustice. Should the punishment be death? Growing up on Guam in 1972, fifteen-year-old Kiko is beset by worries: He's never kissed a girl, and he thinks it's possible he never will. The popular guys get all the attention, but the worst part is that Kiko has serious problems at home. His older brother is missing in Vietnam; his grandfather is losing it to dementia; he just learned that his mother was raped in World War II by a Japanese soldier. It all comes together when he discovers an old man, a Japanese soldier, hiding in the jungle behind his house. It's not the same man who raped his mother, but, in his rage, Kiko cares only about protecting his family and avenging his mom – no matter what it takes. And so, a shy, peaceable boy begins to plan a murder. But how far will Kiko go to prove to himself that he's a man ? Based on a historical incident, No Surrender Soldier is the story of a boy grappling with ancient questions of courage and manhood before he can move on.

What I Thought:

Kiko only wants to play baseball and have fun, but ever since his brother left for Vietnam, he's been helping run the family store. Not only does he help with the store but he also helps with babysitting his grandfather, especially when his grandfather flips and try's to hurt people. But when Kiko's grandfather flipped this time, Kiko finds out something that had never been said before. Something that cut him to the core, something that his mother never wanted him to know. He knows he has to do something about the man that caused his mother this heartache, but how?

Seto feels he has brought dishonor to his emperor and his family, and hasn't came home since the war ended. Even if he was to go home, he would probably get shunned by everyone he knew. So now he lives alone, trying to live the remainder of his life as peacefully as he can but that isn't easy when his past continuously haunts him. Will he ever be able to find himself and start over again?

About The Author:

Christine Kohler, author of NO SURRENDER SOLDIER, Jan. 18, 2014, Merit Press. Kohler is a former journalist and teacher.

Angie says

Very nicely done. Two points of view: a WW2 Japanese soldier hiding in the jungle on the island of Guam, and Kiko, a young native boy whose brother has enlisted to go to Vietnam. Yes, that's right: the juxtaposition of WW2 and Vietnam. The Japanese soldier has been hiding in the jungle for almost thirty years. Japanese soldiers do not surrender wihtout shaming their families, because the emperor of Japan is divine and would never surrender. Seto can either pull the pin on a grenade and put it under his helmet, or continue to barely survive living in his tunnel, hiding by day and hunting snails and shrimp by night.

Kiko is struggling to deal with his mother's heartbreak over her older son's absence and likely death, his grandfather's increasing dementia, and his own growing confusion about life.

Each chapter takes a turn giving the two main characters' perspective on events, memories, and relationships in their lives; two vastly different people, both floundering in the present.

Lizzy Lessard says

NO SURRENDER SOLDIER is a historical fiction set in 1972 and echoes the real life story about a Japanese soldier on Guam that went into hiding instead of being captured by American soldiers at the end of World War II. Especially with the choice to use Chamorro words (language/culture native to Guam), the story feels authentic. It also addresses the racial tension post-war between the natives on the island, the Japanese who used to own it, and the American who control Guam now.

Despite it being 208 pages, I finished NO SURRENDER SOLDIER in the time it takes me to read a novella. In fact, my main complaint about this book is the length. When the last page was finished, I wasn't yet ready to let go of the characters. I have so many questions about Kiko and his family's future. I wanted another 200 pages. The only thing that will slow your devouring of NO SURRENDER SOLDIER is the non-English words scattered in its pages. Fortunately, these words are easily deciphered through the context of the sentences.

It's refreshing to have only male POVs in a YA book. There is a scene that involves the slaughter of an animal for food, but it's done with enough humor that most readers won't get squeamish. I especially enjoyed the evolving relationship between Kiko and his tatan (grandfather). The romance in the book is secondary to the problems Kiko faces and minor enough that hardcore romance fans might feel disappointed.

NO SURRENDER SOLDIER weaves together the stories of Kiko transitioning into a man with Seto's desperate struggle to survive without shaming his family. Anyone interested in a well-written historical fiction that focuses more on the people than the romance should read this book.

This review first appeared at [http://www.parajunkee.com/2014/01/14/...](http://www.parajunkee.com/2014/01/14/)

YA Reads Book Reviews says

Originally posted on www.yareads.com, reviewed by Nichole.

No Surrender Soldier is a powerful read, but I have to admit that I was pretty bored throughout the whole thing. It reads as a historical nonfiction book. I don't know if that was the ultimate plan, but blah. I felt like I was reading an assigned book for class. I could tell that the writing itself was strong, but I just need more adventure and connection to the characters than this book offered.

I really enjoyed that the main character was not your typical white character. It offered diversity and insight to a whole other culture. No Surrender Soldier is a book that I will be quick to recommend to all student age children to immerse themselves in other cultures/religions/mind frames. However, it is not a book that I would recommend to a huge YA lover. It's more of an educational read.

The characters in No Surrender Soldier were also spot on. Everyone had their own individual voices and personalities. In books like this one, I often worry that the characters will just sort of blend in to each other. That wasn't the case at all. As I said before, the writing was very strong. It just.....fell a little flat for me.

Overall, I did enjoy reading this one, but I think this is a genre that I will be staying far away from. *No Surrender Soldier* is a book that I would recommend teachers and parents supply to their students/children, but it's not a book I would offer up to the YA community.

Gayle Rosengren says

I loved this book. LOVED IT. It's so powerful and at the same time so beautiful. *No Surrender Soldier* is an exquisite example of historical fiction. From the first page we know we've entered a world the author knows intimately. The dialog is enriched with just enough local dialect to make it more realistic without distancing the reader. The story flows naturally from the culture. And the setting--especially the jungle--is like another living, breathing character possessing the same pent-up ability to either destroy or sustain life.

Told in alternating chapters by two seemingly disparate characters *No Surrender Soldier* is fast-paced and with enough suspense and dramatic action to keep even the most reluctant readers interested. At the same time, it touches on matters that are incredibly important--war, yes, but more importantly forgiveness, compassion, brotherhood--topics that we should all think and talk about more than we do, and would provide fodder for lively discussions in high school classrooms.

Fifteen year-old Kiko may live in another time and place than most of the book's readers, but his concerns and problems are universally "teen", from frustrations with his family and his longing for his first romantic relationship, to his questions about the role religious faith will play in his future. Seto, the old war-ravaged soldier-in-hiding is so damaged, and his experiences are so unique, that few would think readers would be able to relate to him, but Kohler's portrayal of him is so sensitively and skillfully done that we ultimately see past his "sins" to his humanity and find him a sympathetic character worth saving.

The boy and the man come from and live in very different worlds, even if only separated by the distance of a baseball's flight. Kiko lives with loving family in the sunshine. Seto lives like a mole, deep in the ground, with fear and regret as constant companions. Told in alternating chapters in the first person voice of Kiko and from the third person point of view of Seto, we see Kiko evolve from a slightly selfish, immature boy to a thoughtful, compassionate young man at the same time that Kiko's spirit finally crumbles along with his body. The two make life-long impressions on each other, just as *No Surrender Soldier* has the potential to make a life-long impression on its readers. I can't recommend it highly enough.

*Note: I purchased this book and am under no obligation to review it.

Cheryl says

Kiko is just like any other teenager. He wants to hang out with his best friend, and maybe get a kiss from his crush. Unfortunately Kiko has to keep an eye on his grandfather. His grandfather has dementia. Also Kiko learns that his mother was sexually abused. Lastly, Kiko finds a soldier hiding in his back yard.

I did really enjoy this book. It had a great human aspect to it. One that will make you feel for Kiko and his family. It may be about the military but it is more about the civilians that have to endure life as their loved ones are away fighting a war. In the beginning though I was confused by what was happening. I was trying to make all the connections and had a little bit of a hard time doing so. It took me getting about a third of the way in before I figured everything out and then was like "ok, this is a pretty good book." My favorite parts

were involving Kiko, his grandfather, and the soldier. I felt the most connection with all of them.

Victoria Coe says

Wow, what a setting! And wow, what a story! I thoroughly enjoyed my first and only visit to lush, tropical Guam and being transported back in time to 1972 (M*A*S*H, The Partridge Family!). But mostly I was awed by the stories, particularly that of the No Surrender Soldier - based on a true yet unbelievable story of survival. Thank you, Christine Kohler, for expanding my world view.

Tara says

I was lucky enough to read an ARC of this fantastic debut. Kohler plunges the reader into the world of Guam, her descriptions of the beaches, "boonies," and food truly bringing the setting to life. But even better are the characters. Kiko, who narrates the book, feels absolutely authentic as a teenage boy trying to find his place in high school, his family, his religion, and his culture. I loved spending time with him, his friends, and his beloved Tatan (grandfather), who is slowly succumbing to dementia. And the chapters devoted to Seto, the Japanese "straggler" hiding out behind Kiko's house, feel both urgent and poetic.

Despite this book tackling many real-life issues and historical happenings, it never felt didactic; above all, the story and characters keep the pages turning. I think that teenagers looking for something a little bit different will really embrace this book!

Liz says

Christine Kohler's debut novel is a historical masterpiece in a contemporary setting. A unique take on the Vietnam War and a welcome addition to the growing list of POC main characters!

Ybgenny says

I was given an copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

It was a really enjoyable to read, and I think anyone who is interested in a well-written historical novel would really enjoy this book.

NO SURRENDER SOLDIER is a historical fiction set in 1972 and is about a Japanese soldier named Seto who hid on Guam instead of being captured by American soldiers at the end of World War II. And a 15 year old named Kiko who is dealing with his life being turned inside out.

A truly enjoyable story that, as I close its cover, left me feeling like I've learned more about the world. The way the two stories flowed side by side then merging, carrying me with them.

I really hurt for Seto as he laid in his tomb suffering guilt, heart rending fear, flashbacks of the war and

haunted by the ghosts of the dead. When I found out that his ordeal was based on a real man named Shoichi Yokoi my heart truly broke for the man.

As for Kiko I have to say that there is nothing like the heartbreak and rage of a youth that finds out things that have been hidden from them. And the rage of finding out that someone has hurt someone they love. And the heartbreak of watching a love one slip away due to Dementia and watching them become violent from time to time because of past hurt. Its almost enough to drive a kid mad which at times it did. I liked that there was a girl that he has a, at times, awkward crush on. That never turns into something tragic or sexual but stays sweet and awkward. :)

I liked how the author used Chamorro words (language/culture native to Guam) though out the story. Mostly it was used when talking about family (like mother is nana) but it is really easy to work out what the words mean. The book also addresses the racial tension post-war between different groups on the island.

One thing I do have to say is that I wish the book was a little longer. It ended nicely but what happens to his Grandpa? What about his brother? And Seto, what happened to him? If there is ever another book later on picking up where this one left off I'll be one of the first to get it.

Now if you would excuse me, all of the talk of food and parties in this book has made me hungry. xD

Melody Maysonet says

No Surrender Soldier by Christine Kohler tells the true story of Seto Yokoi , a Japanese soldier who was stationed on Guam during World War II. When Americans liberated Guam in 1944, Seto never surrendered, instead spending the next 28 years hiding in the jungle. To help tell this fascinating story, the author takes us to 1970s Guam and introduces us to Kiko, a fictional teenager, who finds Seto living in what is practically his backyard. I love the way No Surrender Solider gives us details about Kiko's way of life. He learns to slaughter a pig, for example, and discovers a landmine leftover from WW II buried in his yard. But just like a modern teenager, he still has to summon courage to talk to his crush, and he still gets frustrated with the adults in his life .Also, by immersing us in the Japanese solider's head, we realize that we're all basically the same—that no matter our backgrounds or cultures, we share the same hopes and fears. Throughout the story, Kiko and Seto Yokoi deal with their prejudices and anger in different ways, but ultimately No Surrender Soldier is a story of growth and forgiveness.

Celeste_pewter says

Thinks that calling another author out for Islamaphobia/general racism is "bullying".

https://twitter.com/Celeste_pewter/st...

No thanks!

Liviania says

It's 1972, and Kiko is a Chamorro boy on Guam living with his mother, father, and a grandfather suffering from dementia. His older brother is fighting in Vietnam. Between the Vietnam war and his Tatan's flashbacks, the whole family is remembering what happened during the Japanese occupation, secrets to Kiko (who wasn't born at the time).

The narration flips between Kiko and Seto, a Japanese soldier who hid in the jungle rather than surrender. Seto has no idea how the war ended since he hasn't interacted with civilization in years. But his resources are running out and he's getting sloppier, soon to be found or starved. Much of the tension in **NO SURRENDER SOLDIER** comes from the wait of the two narrators meeting.

I enjoyed how thoroughly Christine Kohler explores the setting of her debut young adult novel. The island's history, culture, and climate informs the characters and their actions. I don't know much about Guam and I didn't know about Japanese stragglers, but this book was a wonderful introduction to them. I did know about atrocities committed by Japanese soldiers. And I do know about dementia, and appreciated Kiko's frustration. He doesn't understand why he's stuck babysitting his Tatan while his parents work, why they don't just send him to one of his mom's siblings in America who would put him in a nursing home. His parents have their reasons, but Kiko isn't totally wrong either.

NO SURRENDER SOLDIER isn't a particularly fast-paced book. It's very character driven. It is, however, a fascinating and original bit of historical fiction. It's well worth picking up, particularly for people looking for Vietnam-era fiction with a different point of view.

Alex (not a dude) Baugh says

No long ago it was announced that the Japanese soldier Hiroo Onoda, who had hold out 29 years in the Philippine jungle, refusing to believe that WWII had ended and that Japan had lost the war, passed away at 91 years old. But Onoda wasn't the only holdout. Soichi Yokoi was stationed on Guam when the war ended, but he also refused to believe that Japan had lost the war and hid out in an dug out underground cave for 28 years. He had refused to surrender, believing he has dishonored the Emperor. He was discovered in 1972 while fishing in the Talofofo River by two hunters.

It is 1972 and Kiko Chargalauf, a 15 year old Charmorro boy who must suddenly deal with a lot of things in his life. His older brother Sammy, who he has always looked up to, is off flying dangerous missions in Vietnam for the US Air Force; his parents have recently bought a tourist souvenir shop and must work long and hard to try and make a success of it; and his grandfather is slowly succumbing to Lytico-Bodig, a disease occurring only in Guam, it is similar to Alzheimer's disease. And on top of all these troubles, Kiko has a crush on a girl named Daphne, but is too scared to ask her out.

At the same time, not far from Kiko's home, a WWII Japanese soldier has been hiding out for 28 years, his body bent from living in a cramped underground cave. Though he hates the idea of giving up, Isamu Seto wants to escape his cave, where he is haunted by the ghosts of his two fallen comrades and tries to comfort himself with childhood memories, though the voice of his father telling him he is weak and can't do anything right constantly intrudes on his thoughts.

When Kiko sees his grandfather attacking a Japanese man, he inadvertently learns that his mother had been raped by a Japanese soldier during WW2. As Kiko's anger intensifies, Seto begins to make mistakes, leaving indications that he is hiding out in the jungle. But though the Chamarro's are accustomed to finding "stragglers" there, Kiko becomes more suspicious and more interested than usual - providing a perfect opportunity for avenging his mother's rape.

In *No Surrender Soldier*, Christine Kohler has drawn from Yokoi's story to create an historical fiction novel in which she manages to seamlessly blend fact and fiction, exploring the wide-ranging thoughts, feelings and emotions of both Kiko and Seto. The chapter alternate between Kiko and Seto, with Kiko's told in the first person using internal and external dialogue to move his story along. Seto's story is told in the third person, mostly using internal thoughts and memories. But the form highlights their parallel doubts, fears and feeling of unworthiness. I thought it was an interesting choice, but one that makes it definitely Kiko's story. After all, it is an coming of age novel, though in an odd way, Seto also comes of age.

I found Kiko to be an engaging narrator and I think you will find him to be a very likable teen struggling with issues not so different from today's teens. I found myself feeling pity and sadness for Seto for wasting 28 years of his life living in an underground tunnel so small, he couldn't even stand up. I began to feel claustrophobic while reading Seto's chapters. It wasn't to the point that I ever wanted to put the book down but I could palpably feel the cramped, narrowness of his entire life.

This is a debut YA novel for Kohler and she has clearly done some intensive research, not just about stragglers, but about life on Guam in 1972. She portrays the culture and customs of the Chamarro people with sensitivity and thoughtfulness. There is one rather graphic scene where Kiko and his grandfather slaughter a pig for a saint's day celebration, but raise pigs for food is/was part of the life of Chamarro people.

No Surrender Soldier is an unusual, compelling, well written novel that should resonate with today's young readers despite the historical setting.

This book is recommended for readers age 12+

This book was provided by the author

This review originally was posted on [The Children's War](#)

Steve says

This remarkable little volume packs a whole treasure trove of factual information for a work of fiction. It accurately portrays the plight of the soldier, long forgotten in the hills of Guam. There is also an exquisite view into life on Guam in the early 70's. I arrived there some months after Seto had been repatriated, but remember the stories about him still circulating at the time. I especially liked the glimpses into family life of the Chamarro people. I got to know some during my time on the island but not quite this closely. I enjoyed it a great deal. This book is well written and captures a unique story in an exciting way.
