



Traitor: the Case of Benedict Arnold

Jean Fritz

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Benedict Arnold always carried things too far. As a boy he did crazy things like climbing atop a burning roof and picking a fight with the town constable. As a soldier, he was even more reckless. He was obsessed with being the leader and the hero in every battle, and he never wanted to surrender. He even killed his own horse once rather than give it to the enemy.

Where did the extremism lead Arnold? To treason.

America's most notorious traitor is brought to life as Jean Fritz relays the engrossing story of Benedict Arnold -- a man whose pride, ambition, and self-righteousness drove him to commit the heinous crime of treason against the United States during the American Revolution.

“A highly entertaining biography illuminating the personality of a complex man.” —*Horn Book*

“A gripping story. . . As compelling as a thriller, the book also shines as history.” —*Publishers Weekly*

An ALA Notable Book

A New York Times Book Review Notable Book of the Year

A School Library Journal Best Book of the Year

An ABA Pick of the Lists

A Horn Book Fanfare Title

Traitor: the Case of Benedict Arnold Details

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From Reader Review Traitor: the Case of Benedict Arnold for online ebook

Jayden Wellman says

It provides A great insight into Benedict's early,middle,and old years also it tells the reader why he betrayed his own country and who helped him do it.

Katie says

This book is well written for middle grade kids, but is seriously lacking in maps and other graphics that will help the kids understand the content.

Fredrik Meyer says

The book tells an interesting story of Benedict Arnold from his youth all the way to the moment of betrayal. Benedict Arnold was an astounding leader as he proved by several successful attacks on British Forts for the Americans, but other people took his credit and Benedict Arnold was never repaid the money he had used on war efforts. Due to this, Benedict Arnold defected to the British Army, but before doing so he planned to surrender a fort to the British. This plot was revealed, however, and Benedict had to flee to London.

This book tells a good viewpoint on the life of Benedict and makes us understand why he committed his act of betrayal. From his youth, we could understand that he might do something like this if aggravated and it is what ended up happening, this could have hurt the American revolution greatly if it had gone the wrong way. We must be careful with who we trust, for honor is not what drives everyone to fight for their country, but rather for prestige and money.

Mary says

I remember when I first learned that Benedict Arnold had actually been a hero of the Revolutionary War and how surprised I was. While normally I have little to criticize in a book by Jean Fritz (Just a Few Words, Mr. Lincoln; the story of the Gettysburg Address) is one of my all-time favorites), I did not expect the author to basically characterize Arnold as a jerk from the get-go. There seemed to be very little balance in how he was presented. The most valuable part of the book, for me, would be its portrayal of the colonies as they emerged to become states that united to form a nation. I think it would be eye-opening for kids to read how the residents of the states initially felt about each other, and how a state would appoint its own commander of an army. Finally, because I live in Fairfield County, I think students here would be very interested in just how much time Benedict Arnold spent here and in what is now Westchester County. This was an informative book that read like a novel.

Garrett Longman says

"Traitor: The Case of Benedict Arnold" by Jean Fritz was an over all OK book. This was definitely not the best book i've read, but what can you expect from a biography? I really enjoy the books that contain stories and tales, not so much the factual type. If there really was a second book in the series I would have turned it down.

This biography takes place in the revolutionary war. A young boy named Benedict Arnold goes on many wild adventures as a boy, and was only interested in being a hero as a soldier. Arnold was told he'd become a bad egg, but he turned out to be one of America's bravest heroes and most deceitful traitors.

This book is, like I said, full of facts about Benedict's life. Sure this biography is a great source of knowledge for anyone researching the topic. I, however, was not reading this for that reason and I was condemned to a slow biography.

I would recommend this book to anyone interested in the study of Benedict Arnold, and to those who are just looking for a good biography to interest themselves in!

Barb says

I liked this biography, it included interesting details about Arnold's early life, his difficulty getting along with people, his quest to impress and his craving for a thrill.

I also appreciated the author's inclusion of the possible motivation for his treasonous behavior being that he was trying to bring an early end to the war and spare America unnecessary hardship and suffering. Whatever his thinking it was clear that Arnold's mind didn't work in quite the same way most minds work.

Jean Fritz obviously doesn't share the same favorable view of Arnold as Steve Sheinkin, author of 'The Notorious Benedict Arnold: A True Story of Adventure, Heroism & Treachery'. Sheinkin portrays Arnold as mostly misunderstood.

I enjoyed reading both takes on the life of Benedict Arnold, either way you look at him his life makes for a very interesting story. I wish I could find a novel that features him that would be a good fit for me.

Shanna says

A deeper look at Arnold's background and character, which led up to his decisions to turn traitor. I was expecting more entertaining writing from Fritz. This was an informative account, but it sometimes seemed to get sidetracked with specific details about side events. I had a hard time maintaining interest. This book would have benefited by having more maps to help understand what was happening.

Mark says

This is not a children's book. Yes, children can read it but it is more for midteens. A great addition to a high school U.S. history class. Because what did we all learn about Benedict Arnold growing up? Only that he was a traitor. But, in reality, he was so much more than that! Unmatched heroism, brilliant leadership and ultimately unredeemable greed both for money and status. Now he makes sense... and so does his treachery to a certain extent. This country has all but erased Arnold's memory. Fortunately, this book exposes him that the reader may learn from his mistakes.

Volkert says

A fascinating study of the life and character of the brilliant Revolutionary War general who deserted to the British for money. First half moves quickly to set up the detail of the second half, which deals in more detail with his traitorous activities and consequences.

Mr. Gottshalk says

Is this a book for a 11-13 year-old, or adults? I couldn't tell. At a level "X", I was expecting to learn more about Benedict Arnold, instead of reading how the author wends together sentences with opinions and statements I only half understood. Yes, the end is interesting, and I could follow it. However, the first 3/4 of the nearly 200-page book had me tuning in and out, drowsily plodding on to chapter breaks which never seemed to happen. This one should not be in a school book room.

Melody says

Really interesting to see Benedict Arnold fleshed out and become more than his treachery. The text gets bogged down with excessive characters and battle details in the middle, but the beginning and end were engaging. I read this aloud to my 13yo for school, and we kept thinking how much he sounded like someone we know - made it all the more interesting!

Jeni Enjaian says

A review from my old blog...

I had to double check on this book when I started reading because I assumed, rightly as it turned out, that this book is a children's book. This book does not read like any children's history book that I have ever read.

I enjoyed the book, do not get me wrong. I actually learned a lot about the man known as probably the greatest traitor in American history, though technically I do not think he actually was such.

The book is well written and most probably aimed at an upper middle school age child or underclassman student in high school. The average student though would not pick up this book unless extremely motivated or simply a history buff like myself.

I recommend the book although the cover disturbed me just a bit when I realized what it depicted. (I'm not sure if this cover is the same as the edition that I read)

Anna says

This was an interesting book, though the battles dragged on and on with details I didn't care about. The other part I didn't love was the main character obviously being Benedict Arnold. I wanted to like him because he was the main character, but I didn't was to like him either because he betrayed our country and was altogether a dislikable person. It drives me crazy, though, when I can't decide whether or not I like a character. The book did present the information well, and aside from the battle scenes, was an engaging read.

Moaning says

I really enjoyed this detailed account of Benedict Arnold and his life as a hero and a traitor. There seemed so many points where if he had been treated differently he could have been one of our greatest heroes. I also enjoyed learning about the unfortunate events that led to John Andre being hung as a spy when popular sentiment would have rather traded him for Arnold. Where is the line between prisoner of war and spy?

Peter Stewart says

"Traitor" by Jean Fritz is a very interesting book about Benedict Arnold. I feel that this book is an excellent read for any history "buff" or anyone looking to learn more about one of the most famous traitors in American history. This book isn't meant to be a thriller but an informative book. To understand This review you need to understand that this is a story of Benedict Arnold's life and goes through his childhood and life.

The reason I gave this 4 stars is that The story had many facts about Benedict Arnold that I personally didn't know about, as well as the time period is personally fascinating to me. In chapter one we are told a fact about benedict Arnold, "At school he was known for his hot temper and for his loud voice." This is a fact that personally I didn't know because In school we haven't ever talked about benedict Arnold other than just saying he was a traitor. The book also mentions a woman named Peggy who was acquainted with Arnold on many occasions. With the amount of history around him we don't speak often about his Friends. Benedict Arnold was an extremist after his schooling, He would often get into fights with men that were bigger than him. Once while setting a bonfire Arnold stole barrels of tar and then was addressed by the constable, so Arnold took off his jacket and rolled up his sleeves, and challenged him to a fight. This fact is almost entirely unknown, the fact that he was a daredevil. Unfortunately because of the basic knowledge of Benedict Arnold being a Traitor, we don't get a sense of foreshadowing. What we do get is a sense of suspense, wondering when he will commit the "crime".

"Traitor" by Jean Fritz is an interesting read and will teach anyone a fact about America's most notorious traitor, Benedict Arnold. The book is a very timid and calm read with a few battles in it. I would recommend

this book to any history buff, but this may be a boring read for people who don't enjoy slow pace books. I would read any other book by Jean Fritz because I enjoyed her writing style.
