



Those Rebels, John & Tom

Barbara Kerley, Edwin Fotheringham (Illustrator)

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A brilliant portrait of two American heroes from the award-winning creators of *The Extraordinary Mark Twain (According to Susy)!*

John Adams and Thomas Jefferson were very different.

John Adams was short and stout.
Thomas Jefferson was tall and lean.

John was argumentative and blunt.
Tom was soft-spoken and polite.

John sometimes got along with almost no one.
Tom got along with just about everyone.

But these two very different gentlemen did have two things in common: They both cared deeply about the American colonies, and neither cared much for the British tyrant, King George.

With their signature wit, impeccable research, and inventive presentation style, award winners Barbara Kerley and Edwin Fotheringham masterfully blend biography and history to create a brilliant portrait of two American heroes who bravely set aside their differences to join forces in the fight for our country's freedom.

Those Rebels, John & Tom Details

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Author : Barbara Kerley , Edwin Fotheringham (Illustrator)

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Download and Read Free Online Those Rebels, John & Tom Barbara Kerley , Edwin Fotheringham (Illustrator)

From Reader Review Those Rebels, John & Tom for online ebook

Ellie says

Delightful, illustrates the beauty of friendships where two people complement each other. Awesome to see this in some of our Founding Fathers. Great explanation of the Revolutionary War and the surrounding situations that led to it. Perfect for elementary school kids who are just getting introduced to the start of our country.

Lu Benke says

Perhaps it was the color scheme of gold, red, blue and white and cartoonish faces for revered historical figures on the cover that put me off initially, but ultimately I thought this an insightful view of two friends helping to create the U.S. constitution. To begin with, showing the human side of two boys growing up and establishing them as Tom and John let me know there was going to be an emphasis on these two men's personalities and the comparing and contrasting between oral and written styles of arguing. Next, the way labels and signs peppered the illustrations with words felt like there was a layer of meaning in just those words. Thirdly, the unique, almost Wordle-way the font size jumped conveyed yet another emphasis.

The illustrations also announced they would follow no rules. (Postmodernism?) On one page the scene would be straightforward and tell part of the story. On another, figures of John and Tom would stand on the lopsided map of the colonies. On yet another, they would be portrayed doing something unrealistic, e.g., parrying with King George using an enormous quill pen. The Author's Notes, bibliography and facsimile of the constitution at the end took just the right space and perspective to be supplementary rather than their own separate story.

Barbara says

I enjoyed just about everything about this picture book biography that focuses on two of the nation's founding fathers, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. In her usual engaging writing style, the author enumerates the many differences between the two men, ranging from their height to their upbringing to the way they handled those around them. But she also shows clearly how those differences didn't matter all that much once they found common ground in their hatred of King George and their love for the American colonies whose rights were being trampled upon by the ruler of their Mother Country. While Adams used his fiery oratory to persuade the delegates to declare the colonies' independence from England, Jefferson used his pen to poke jabs at the king and to create a draft of the Declaration of Independence. Of course, readers will know that the efforts of these two men succeeded, and a new nation was founded. What some may not realize, though, is how much of Jefferson's original draft was cut and edited. Back matter provides more information about the two men, and their disagreement about issues such as slavery. The digital media illustrations are appealing to the eye and allow the men's personalities to come to life on every page. The author's clever use of multiple meanings for words such as racket heightens the reader interest. This is an engaging story told in a riveting fashion so that history seems as personal as it is political. Clearly, John and Tom were every bit the rebels the book's cover purports them to be. Add this title to a text set of individuals who made a difference in the world around them.

Gretchen Rosch says

1. This story is about the alliance that is formed between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. John and Tom were very different. Tom was shy, John was not. They both cared deeply about the American Colonies and neither of them cared much about George. They thought together they could accomplish much more than working alone. Together they created the declaration of independence.
 2. k-3
 3. social studies
 4. Students who enjoy learning about american history will love this.
 5. In groups students can read this book and then write up their own constitution for the classroom.
 6. As a whole class the teacher could read this book as a carpet read when talking about this time period in social studies.
 7. Barbara has written several great books!
 8. You can find this book on audio and online.
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Elizabeth says

Barbara Kerley, award winning author of *The Dinosaurs of Waterhouse Hawkins* and *What To Do About Alice* introduces readers to founding fathers John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, two very different men united in purpose. The book also provides background on the writing of the Declaration of Independence.

This child friendly history book does a good job of providing the basics of who Adams and Jefferson were in history, as well as who they were to each other. Edwin Fotheringham's illustrations use a limited palate to create a retro feel, while the illustrations themselves feel contemporary. The drawings are lively and should hold young readers attention well. The illustrations also do a good job of really pointing out some of the differences mentioned in the text. For example, we see Adams mud-covered with a wheelbarrow, while Jefferson is examining architectural plans while slaves work in the background.

The book can obviously be used for it's explicit purpose of meeting these two men, but it also does a good job as an example of compare and contrast. The first few pages tell us all the ways the two men are different, but then shows us ways in which they are the same. This would be a good addition to an English teacher's cross curricular plan.

While the book is entertaining and informative, this is information that is available through other sources. Therefore, I recommend this book for elementary schools and public libraries as supplemental material. If your library does not have other books on this topic, it is a good choice.

Maureen says

Twin text: *We the Kids*, David Catrow, 2002

Twin Text: I chose *We the Kids* as the twin text for *Those Rebels, John and Tom* because the basis is about "those smart guys" who wrote the United States Constitution and Thomas Jefferson wrote the first draft.

Although Adams was not present when the Constitution was debated and passed (he was in Great Britain during that particular Constitutional Congress), he was an integral part in the founding of our country. We the Kids is a fun story with lovely illustrations and is a great way to introduce the subject of United States history in something other than a dry lecture.

Content-area crossover: Social Studies because both titles deal with the history and founding of the United States. Those Rebels, John and Tom talks about the relationship between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson and how though they were very different, they pulled together to form a new nation. Both books discuss aspects of United States history in a fun, engaging manner. The 'fiction' title introduces the preamble to the Constitution but told through an adventure story, while the non-fiction title explains the events leading up to the United States breaking away from England through the relationship of the two primary characters rather than simply spouting facts at the reader.

NCTE ORBIS PICTUS AWARD - Honor book 2013

Titlewave indicates an interest level of between third and sixth grade with a reading level of 4.6. My library has this book cataloged as an easy reader (primary) non-fiction book.

The Library Lady says

I shouldn't have bought this because I wasn't crazy about Kerley's "Alice" book and I HATED the one with Suzy Clemens. And since this has come out right at the same time as the same time as Suzanne Tripp Jurmain's very similar (and far better) book Worst of Enemies I can compare this and find it wanting.

The Jurmain book is just as engagingly written without becoming cutsey. The layout is clear and attractive. The color palette here jumps from one background to another from page to page making this jarring, and the ENDLESS BITS IN LARGE TYPE don't help either.

Kerley concentrates on Adams/Jefferson just up to the Declaration then just winds everything up with an afterword, which encompasses their future careers, their political differences that led to a decade long break in their friends, their final reconciliation and their deaths. It's one long page in tiny type and no jocularly and doesn't go with the rest of the book.

AND as a final insult, while Kerley quotes Adams dying words of "It is a great day, it is a GOOD day", she manages to omit Jefferson's dying words that same day: "Adams lives". This is something poignant and moving and she misses it!

Skip this one and buy the Jurmain book instead. With my limited book budget this year, wish I had.

Lauren Anglin says

1) Book summary, in your own words (3 pts)

This book by Barbra Kerley is an informational book about how our nation became. It is based off a true story about Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. It tells reader's about how they were growing up. They were pretty different. One thing they did have a common ground on was they both shared the same dislike for George.

They also both cared a lot about the American colonies. With their differences they came together and came up with The Declaration of Independence.

2) Grade level, interest level, lexile (1 pt)

This book is appropriate for 4th grade.

3) Appropriate classroom use (subject area) (1 pt)

John Adams and Thomas Jefferson are both historic characters that played a huge role in the way we live freely today in America. It would be a great reference to use this book in a history lesson.

4) Individual students who might benefit from reading (1 pt)

Anyone struggling to grasp the concept of what these two men did. This book would help with visuals to tell the story.

5) Small group use (literaturecircles) (1 pt)

There are other books by the same author. It would be neat to do literature circles in a fourth grade classroom with all the books. They all tell different stories of people who made a difference.

6) Whole class use (read aloud) (1 pt)

This book could be read out loud to the class during a history lesson.

7) Related books in genre/subject or content area (1 pt)

"What Would Alice Do?" "The Extraordinary Mark Twain"

8) Multimedia connections (audio book, movie) available (1 pt)

No multimedia for this book

Rebecca says

Another fun look at the important introvert/extrovert friendship between founders Thomas Jefferson and John Adams (see also: Worst of Friends: Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and the True Story of an American Feud). I like the wordplay and limited-color illustration style in this one; it focuses more on the budding friendship of the two men as they crafted the Declaration of Independence, and only mentions their falling out in the thorough Author's Note. Their fighting and division of ideas after the Declaration echoes so much of today's political arguing that it's almost funny. The more things change...

Also includes a facsimile of the Declaration (so you can see how big John Hancock's signature really was!) and citations for the many quotes.

Also check out The Declaration Of Independence by Sam Fink for a full-text version of the document, illustrated phrase-by-phrase for kids! Thanks to Katie R. for pointing me to this!

Jim Ereksen says

The stylized characterization based on historical sources was interesting. In a simplistic way, the writing complicated Jefferson's slave ownership. A caricature of King George reminded me of the short Schoolhouse Rock "No More Kings" video, and when I looked it up on youtube it looks like a lot of the illustrations were quotations of the animation. There's an old caricature that might hint at the origins. My favorite thing was the contrast between Jefferson and Adams in the writing, and Fotheringham's complementary illustration style. Like some others, difficult to tell it was computer illustration.

Marijka Kostiw was the designer on this book, and showed a clear sense of pacing and voice in how the text

is sized, placed, and spaced on each page.

Again, get ready for 50% of kids' books to be genres like this under CCSS! Every publishing house in the country is going to try to be first to get all the basic informational text covered.

Kathryn says

4.5 STARS

This is a wonderful story about the birth of America framed in the friendship of two of America's founders, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. I've been trying for weeks to find time to write an adequate review but it is not going to happen so suffice it to say this is one of the more satisfactory picture books on this subject that I've read (and I'm a big fan of this point in history) and I was very impressed with how well actual quotes from Tom and John are woven in. She manages to highlight some weaknesses in the characters such as Adams being generally "obnoxious" and Jefferson's complex dilemma of believing slavery to be wrong and wanting to ban it when he wrote the Declaration yet later freeing only a few of his slaves. (though I was glad to see she also mentioned a other founding fathers with regards to the slavery issue--Jefferson was no saint but he also seems to have been disproportionately bearing the brunt of it on this issue in the last decade or so). Yet she also shows their remarkable strengths, brilliance and tenacity. The friendship element makes it all the more touching and relatable And the stellar author's note gives details on their friendship in later years, including the rift and repair. Kudos for mentioning the Federalist and Anti-Federalist debates in a kid's book! Though it is too bad it was only in the back matter which younger children may not be as drawn to as it is not in the same style as the story. But, all in all a winner for me, though I wasn't a huge fan of the illustrations

Lisa says

Some writing and historical problems... namely, that Thomas Jefferson surely didn't "squirm and suffer" over his condemnation of slavery."

Surely not. Thomas Jefferson owned over 200 slaves, a fact noted in the Author's Notes at the end of the book.

Kaycee says

"The true story of how one gentleman - short and stout - and another - tall and lean - formed a surprising alliance, committed treason, and helped launch a new nation." Those Rebels, John and Tom is a book that is an accessible explanation of the difficulties of the Continental Congress in deciding whether to declare independence. It follows the contributions of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, explores their differences, and describes how they ultimately came together in their common goal. The story is written with primary source quotes strewn throughout in both descriptive paragraphs and as quotes from the two influential men. The author lists in the back what the sources were that quotes were drawn from, this serves as a way for her to verify what she had written and also as a resource for children to look further into the lives of the two men. Additional resources included an Author's Note explaining about the relationship between Jefferson and Adams after the Declaration of Independence and a photo of the Declaration of Independence itself. The

pictures in the book are colorful with lots of bold primary colors. They depict not only real life actions as dictated by the story but also colorful and often entertaining depictions of some of the ideas or comparisons made by the story. For example there is a picture of the Continental Congress arguing on top of a giant red snail with a picture of King George III hanging on it's shell: this illustrates a line in the book that has John Adams write his wife and say it is "slow as snails". Overall this story did a very good job of the difficult task in the political side of the war and would be a good introduction on the topic for 2-4 Grade students.

Jennifer says

Like *Worst of Friends* this covers the relationship between John Addams and Thomas Jefferson, but this focuses specifically on how the Declaration of Independence came to be and ends there. I found the backmatter to be much stronger here than in *Worst of Friends* with a page-long Author's Note, a facsimile of the Declaration of Independence, and direct and specific quotation sources. I thought the text was pretty good, but I found the main weakness to be the illustrations by Edwin Fotheringham. The style of drawing was appropriate with the people looking almost like caricatures, but the color palette of dark blue, red, white and gold was overwhelmingly heavy. I would have loved this as a kids though thanks to my obsession with the musical *1776*.

Kris says

Another excellent children's non-fiction book by the dynamic duo of Kerley and Fotheringham. I love how they work together so well to bring people and events of the past to life for children! This time, they take two leaders of the American Revolution -- John Adams and Thomas Jefferson -- and tell their story. Written in language that will appeal to kids -- and using a variety of font sizes to emphasize names and phrases -- this would even make a good read aloud for an older group of students. Well documented, includes a facsimile of the Declaration of Independence and an author's note with more info about Tom and John and their lives after the Revolution -- including the fact that they both died on the same day -- July 4 -- of the same year -- a cool fact for kids. The comical and exaggerated illustrations extend the text very well, I especially appreciated the inclusion of Thomas Jefferson's slaves in many of the illustrations. As a bonus, the story shows an excellent real-life example of how two very different people with very different backgrounds and personalities were able to work together and learn to appreciate each other in order to accomplish a common goal. Very well done.

Two starred reviews: PW and Booklist.

See also reviews at 100 Scope Notes and Kirkus.
