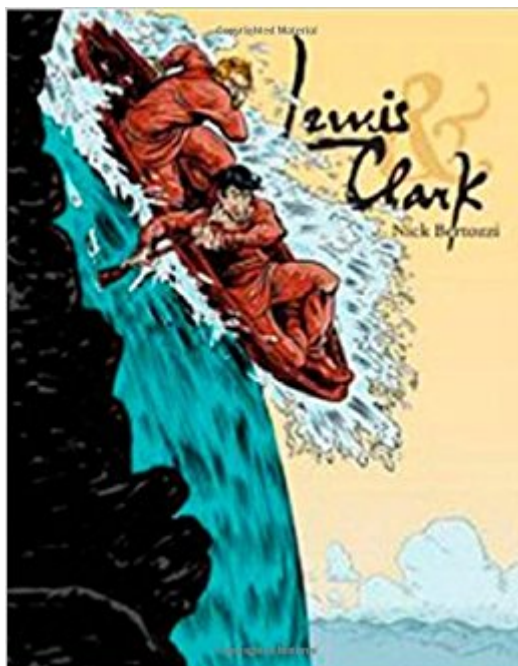


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Lewis & Clark



Synopsis

Two of America's greatest explorers embark on the adventure that made their names – and sealed their fates. In 1804, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark departed St. Louis, Missouri, for one of the greatest adventures this nation has ever known. Appointed and funded by President Jefferson himself, and led by a cadre of experts (including the famous Sacajawea), the expedition was considered a success almost before it had begun. From the start, the journey was plagued with illness, bad luck, unfriendly Indians, Lewis's chronic depression, and, to top it all, the shattering surprise of the towering Rocky Mountains and the continental divide. But despite crippling setbacks, overwhelming doubts, and the bare facts of geography itself, Lewis and Clark made it to the Pacific in 1806. Nick Bertozzi brings the harrowing – and, at times, hilarious – journey to vivid life on the pages of this oversized black-and-white graphic novel. With his passion for history and his knack for characterization, Bertozzi has made an intimate tale of a great American epic.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 18 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 7 Up • Meriwether Lewis, a complex and fascinating figure in American history, was a bold explorer and a man haunted by demons. Both sides of his personality are revealed in this saga of his search for a Northwest water passageway to the Pacific. This retelling begins as Jefferson informs Lewis that Congress has approved this expedition. After recruiting William Clark and

obtaining necessary provisions, the expedition departs St. Louis in 1804. Death, stampeding buffalo herds, steep-sided canyons, large bodies of moving water, and encounters with multiple Native American tribes must be negotiated. The author makes excellent use of the generous page size. The vertical orientation of side panels frames a deep chasm and scale the heights of a tall tree. Prairies are depicted with long horizontal panels spanning the gutter, and full-page spreads show the expansive country, contributing to readers' understanding of the vastness of the journey. Traditional panels and speech balloons are used to portray the points of view of the explorers. Shapes and outlines of panels alter significantly when the various Native communities are depicted, with a different design for each tribe. Inventive use of differently shaped speech balloons help readers identify each individual tribe that the explorers encounter. This story continues beyond the conclusion of the expedition; it ends three years hence, detailing Lewis's tragic end as well as suppositions regarding Sacajawea's whereabouts.

—Barbara M. Moon, Suffolk Cooperative Library System, Bellport, NY (c) Copyright 2011. A Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

This important and often retold episode from U.S. history—the scientific exploration, federally supported by President Jefferson, to find a water route from the Missouri to the Pacific—receives an accessible, humorous, and accurate rendering by cartoonist Bertozzi (Houdini: The Handcuff King, 2007). Relying on good research and his own clarified sense of what these historical figures might have felt, Bertozzi shows us Lewis's depressive psyche, Jefferson's devotion to scientific inquiry, Clark's mediation skills, the slave York's self-perception, Sacajawea's role and personal considerations, and the attitudes, fears, and certainties of the general populace of the exploration party, Native American villages, and white townspeople. The small, black-and-white panels provide clear and action-packed detail as well as insightful poses and facial expressions. The different languages being spoken and even hand signs are creatively distinguished by different balloon outlines. An excellent supporting choice for the American history curriculum and a fun and edifying read in itself. Grades 7-12.

--Francisca Goldsmith

This is a waste of time. I liked Bertozzi's Shackleton, and I'm used to his style of modernizing history, but really. This is a humdrum treatment of the Lewis & Clark expedition, downplaying the courage and achievements. Some of the lighter parts of the book were too jokey, esp the mistranslations. The book focuses too particularly on Lewis's mental state. Good points: The wildlife

is drawn wellThe Mandan village and the Fort were depicted very well.We did the L&C trail several years ago as a family. If you need a graphic book on the expedition, try Rosemary Schanzer's. For a personal favorite, try Lewis and Clark and Me by Laurie Myers.Other L&C materials at this Listmania.https://www..com/Lewis-and-Clark-Summer-Vacation/lm/R1Y42NR2JZBEVM/cm_lm_byauthor_title_full

As excited as I was about getting my hands on Nick Bertozzi's LEWIS & CLARK, I have to say that it turned out to be a sad disappointment to read. Full of inaccurate historical details and incorrect details in Bertozzi's illustrations; the book fell far short of my expectations. Bertozzi's uniforms are pretty sad. His Indians are cookie-cutter stereotypes, both in appearance and in their speech. Lewis comes off as a raging lunatic (hardly the sort of man that Thomas Jefferson would have had as a Private Secretary...or sent to lead an expedition!). Having participated in the recent L&C Bicentennial observance, I just found myself wondering where Bertozzi got his information and his ideas? It seems to me that Nick Bertozzi took a fantastic tale of true adventure and tried to 'improve' on what is already a great story. Sometimes you just cannot make a great story better by exercising 'artistic license'. Looking at the bibliography on the last page of the book, I found myself wondering if the author READ any of the volumes he cites???Nice 'comic book'. Disappointing historical graphic novel.

Beautiful illustrations, fantastic story.

Gave this as a gift... Haven't read it myself, but enjoyed glancing through it and seeing their journeying portrayed in such a lively way.

It's fairly shameful that I went to a college named after these guys, and I know very little about their expedition. So when I came across this in a search for stuff for my 3rd-grader to read, I figured the least I could do was spend the hour to read it myself. It's kind of an impressionistic take on what really comes across as an astonishing trailblazing venture. The artwork and approach is quite good at conveying the sense of some of the hardships involved. There's a lot going on, with minor threads involving Clark's slave, Sacajawea, Lewis' depression, and more. It's kind of a lot to take in, along with tonal shifts (including fart gags) that are occasionally jarring. Probably the most interesting aspect, which is kind of confusingly rendered here, is all the interactions with various tribes they encountered along the way. It kind of sparked my appetite to learn a little more, and maybe pick up

one of the standard histories, such as Stephen Ambrose's *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West*. And although I lament the absence of a more detailed map of the route, the book's overall design and repeated commitment to inventive double-page spread layouts made it a little more interesting than the standard graphic book.

When I read this I thought, "Well, that's the good, the bad and the ugly of the Lewis and Clark story." Fun to read, but definitely comic book fiction, this will probably appeal most to middle school boys, after all it's a story about a bunch of men basically living together for a long period. I was disappointed that Sacagewea's prowess was not applauded. Most of the story is about Meriwether Lewis, who deteriorates into a not-so-likeable guy. Mild-mannered Bill Clark seems to get lost in the shuffle. Dare I say that although Native American tribes are named and differentiated, they blend into the same stereotype. However, dates, territorial maps, and historical informative bits are helpful to those who have forgotten or were never taught about this expedition: Jefferson is president, the USA ends at the Mississippi River, the date of the expedition is 1803/4 to 1806.

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