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Laurie Halse Anderson

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It's late summer 1793, and the streets of Philadelphia are abuzz with mosquitoes and rumors of fever. Down near the docks, many have taken ill, and the fatalities are mounting. Now they include Polly, the serving girl at the Cook Coffeehouse. But fourteen-year-old Mattie Cook doesn't get a moment to mourn the passing of her childhood playmate. New customers have overrun her family's coffee shop, located far from the mosquito-infested river, and Mattie's concerns of fever are all but overshadowed by dreams of growing her family's small business into a thriving enterprise. But when the fever begins to strike closer to home, Mattie's struggle to build a new life must give way to a new fight—the fight to stay alive.

Fever 1793 Details

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Author : Laurie Halse Anderson

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From Reader Review Fever 1793 for online ebook

Ana says

Fever

Laurie Anderson is the author of this wonderful book, which has an outstanding content. The author uses a romantic technique of writing which is bonded to the fearful story of the fever in 1793, an example of this romantic writing is the following "I threw my arms around Nathaniel and planted a big kiss on his cheek." (Anderson 232). The story begins in Philadelphia when we get introduced to a girl with such a life. The author gives us an excellent use of language which describes the book so much; you can be able to make imagery fast. An example of this is the following "The front room was a jumble. Tables and chairs lay helter-skelter. The clock was missing from the mantels; the pewter candleholder where nowhere to be found..." (Anderson 122). As the author tells us this wonderful story we understand the horrible life this poor child had, this story also makes us reflect so much on how someone so simple and little can make us feel such sadness, "A small child cowered in the corner, her blond hair loose and tangled, her feet bare and black with dirt...-Is this yours?-I asked.-Broken- she said...-Mama's broken too-she said." (Anderson 162) the power of the writing is so big you can feel this happening.

Kristi says

Fever 1793 is based on the actual yellow fever epidemic that hit Philadelphia and wiped out some five thousand people. One of those people affected by the fever is Mattie Cook. Mattie's mother and grandfather own a coffeehouse in Philadelphia and that is where Mattie spends most of her days.

She has plans of her own for the coffeehouse someday and often day dreams of what it would be like when she ran the establishment. Mattie's day dreams are shattered when the epidemic hits.

Mattie's mother falls ill with yellow fever and Mattie and her grandfather flee the city to take refuge in the country.

As they never make it to their destination, uncontrollable hardships fall on Mattie and her grandfather. When Mattie finally returns to the city she finds it deserted and the coffeehouse ransacked.

Mattie tries to find the courage to manage her life and the coffeehouse after the yellow fever has taken everything away.

This is the third novel by Laurie Halse Anderson that I have had a chance to read. I love her writing style, and I especially loved this historical fiction. I had remembered learning about the yellow fever epidemic, but I never knew the real impact that it had. It was also interesting in learning about the true history that Anderson portrayed in her book. I became immersed in Mattie's daily activities and for the fight of her life. Although *Speak* is still my favorite novel by Anderson, I highly recommend *Fever 1793*.

Emmy says

I just sped up the narration on the audiobook to finish this faster. That speaks volumes since I've never done that before.

This wasn't terrible or anything, it was just kind of boring. It's just a series of people getting sick. One gets sick, gets nursed, and gets better. Then another falls sick, gets nursed, etc., etc. For almost 300 pages that's all that happens. The one time it started to get interesting for me was when Matty was describing Philadelphia a month or so after the epidemic started, once half the city had fled. Other than that nothing stands out to me as particularly memorable.

Jamir2012 says

Have you ever read a story and it was so good. So good you didn't want to put the book down. So good you read it from day to night. So good you read it almost four times. Well that was the case with the book "Fever 1793". This book has history, happiness, and heartache. this book is one to remember.

The story "Fever 1793" takes place in historic Philadelphia in the year 1793. The setting makes the story really stand out. By the story being in Philadelphia it really makes the conflicts of the story pop out. In the story Mattie Cook (main character) has a big conflict when robbers come and rob her family's store. Because of the setting you could imagine why the robbers actually rob the store.

In the story happiness always comes in the darkest and unexpected places. In the story Mattie finds a young child. When this happened a smile just raced on my face. I thought to myself how great is it that you can lose on person that you needed help from and out of nowhere find someone that really needs your help. I think the author really makes the story very realistic.

When ever there's happiness there is happiness there is sadness. In the story Mattie is very sad. Mattie is sad because she can't find her mother. Mattie tries to contact here mother, but it seems she always comes to a dead end. She cries and she weeps but that does not get her down. Mattie is strong and she survives the lonely nights and empty days without her mother.

This story is one that everybody should read. This story has the makings of a wonderful book. A book that will be remembered forever. A book that I can tell my children about in the years to come. "Fever 1793", the best book ever. Anyone whose read it should know that, but if you haven't. You should be on your way to borders book store.

Rebecca McNutt says

This book was quite depressing, to say the least. Nonetheless it's still an excellent historical novel which captures a long-forgotten time period that most readers could never even imagine luckily.

Scarlett Readz and Runz....Through Novel Time & Distance says

In 1793, Philadelphia, PA was the largest city in the established colonies. The city streets, called alleys at the time, were laid out in a grid pattern as many modern cities are laid out today. Located on the Delaware River made it an ideal spot for accessibility and trade. Markets, banks, coffeehouses, a university and the State House made it a desirable, modern city of its' time.

The central location was one of the reasons the Constitutional Convention was called to order in Philadelphia during a very hot summer six years earlier.

Despite its “modernism” imagine dirt roads, outhouses, animal droppings in the streets, and trash that was put out at night for rats to scamper through as disposal. Therefore, your daily life consisted of swapping away flies and mosquitos' not to mention the smells around. Personal hygiene did not consist of baths or showers and doctors had opinions, perhaps a few remedies, but no modern medicines at hand. Bleeding was the favored method of some of the doctors around to get rid of the sickness.

He's the best physician that knows the worthlessness of most
Medicines. –Benjamin Franklin
Poor Richard's Almanac, 1733

Get to know Mattie and her family in this historical young adult fiction novel. Her mother and grandfather run a wonderful, successful respectable coffeehouse on a busy corner in Philadelphia among the hustle and bustle. Only 2 blocks away from President Washington's house. Along with servants they work from sunrise to sundown, serve homemade delicious dishes to loyal guests and pass through travelers. Spirits were not served at this coffeehouse, but there was always time for a good card game.

Mattie is an obedient hard working and resilient girl. She runs errands at market and dislikes fancy dress up tea parties. One day, Polly, their servant girl does not show up for work. Stricken sick with a fever that people first called the “grippe”. In the next few days things change very quickly for this family and other Philadelphia residents, as it is thought that a ship docked at the harbour brought mosquitos along that infected people with Yellow Fever.

The patient is to be placed in a large empty tub, and two
buckets full of water, of the temperature 75 or 80 degrees
Fahrenheit's thermometer,are to be thrown on him.
-Dr. Adam Kuhn, Philadelphia, 1793

As this story unfolds you will find out what happens to this family and how this young girl with some help struggles, persists through and helps others in need in this tragic time.

Hot, dry winds forever blowing,
Dead men to the grave-yards going;
Constant hearses,
Funeral verses;
Oh! What plagues-there is no knowing!
-Phillip Freneau
Pestilence: Written During the Prevalence
of a Yellow Fever, 1773

This is a beautiful, heartbreaking, story of a real event in our history. Yellow Fever was not reserved for the poor or unfortunate. It did not stop for class, race gender, the wealthy or the leaders of this young nation. Many families evacuated into the country and were not even accepted into some towns as guards told them to turn around if they had been in contact with the fever. Supply and demand of needed items drove prices sky high. The people that remained suffered in their homes, hallucinating and starving.

The haunting toll of the church bells, the mass graves and the desperation of the people, our people, was heart wrenching to read. The author did a fantastic job interweaving fictional characters with this real time event.

In the Appendix of the book you will find interesting historical information that relates to the writing of the book. There are many things that I did not know prior to reading this. I love that about Fever 1793. The author took a period of history and held it under a lens to examine it, and then magnified it to this event for

the reader to enjoy. I would have not found out about the Free African Society, or famous people touched by the fever, or the battle of the doctors in this time period. This is an outstanding piece of historical literature. I highly recommend this book to any middle grade student and up, studying American History in school.

Rachel Aranda says

If I'm honest my expectations were really low for this book. I'm not in the "right" age range, didn't know anything about this author, and until recently didn't know what made the year 1793 special until I mistyped in a Google search looking up an answer for my mom. The reason I decided to place a hold for this book was to learn a bit about the worst epidemic that has hit the U.S., but knew I didn't have time to read a big non-fiction book.

The main character of this story, Mattie, is an obedient, hard working, and resilient 14 year old teen. She runs errands at market, often disagrees with her mother, and dislikes fancy dress-up tea parties. Her dream is to one day make her family's coffeehouse even more successful and travel to Paris. One day, Polly, their servant girl does not show up for work. Stricken sick with a fever that people first called the "grippe". In the next few days things change very quickly for this family and other Philadelphia residents. There are many theories about how Yellow Fever got to Philadelphia that were wondered about since the early 1900s, until it was discovered that mosquitos carried the disease. Back then medicine and knowledge of best practices for patients wasn't at it's highest level but we get a look at what it was like as a doctor and patient. It's scary to see how everyone acted, both bad and good, to an epidemic to the colonies. This story had heart break, budding romance, fear, happiness, and everything I didn't expect.

In the Appendix, the author included some interesting historical information that relates to the writing of the book. I love the fact that I learned things that I didn't know prior to reading this book. Ms. Anderson took a period of history and held it under a lens to examine it, and then magnified it to this event for the reader to enjoy. I would have not found out about the Free African Society, or famous people touched by the fever, or the battle of the doctors in this time period. To sum up, this is an outstanding piece of historical literature and I couldn't put it down even when I knew I had a full day ahead of me.

I highly recommend this book to anyone ranging from middle school and up or anyone who enjoys learning about American History. In the future, I hope to learn more about this Yellow Fever epidemic and feel I have a decent amount of knowledge on the topic.

Jennifer says

Fever 1793 is a standalone, young-readers novel written by Laurie Halse Anderson. Although it falls in the genre of historical fiction, this story is based on a very real event in history. If interested, you can learn more about the yellow fever epidemic of 1793 by clicking [HERE](#).

As a reader and a parent who supports academic success, I can acknowledge the benefits of educating youth via literature. Even I learned a lot from reading this book. But how much are they learning if they are trudging through every chapter? Fever 1793 was one of the titles required for my son's summer reading. He wasn't happy about not getting a choice about what he is reading this summer and he was even less happy about having a number of extensive assignments for each book. But he had the best attitude a sixth grader (trying to enjoy his summer) can be expected to have and he did what he needed to do.

But his opinion?

It wasn't only him though. I personally asked the opinions of several of his friends and all of them hated this book as well (note: "hate" is their word, not mine). After reading this book myself, I can see where they are coming from. It's not a pretty thought that an epidemic of this horror can exist, and the thought that one could affect our super-sanitized society of today is even more frightening for youths and adults alike. But if history teaches us anything, it's the important knowledge that people can and do survive horrors of all kinds, and that little tidbit is priceless.

My boy's rating of Fever 1793 is one star. He wouldn't budge even acknowledging the survival component. He "despised" every chapter. It was pretty sad, but my personal rating isn't much better in terms of personal enjoyment. Even though I can objectively note many positive elements incorporated in this book, I didn't enjoy the experience much at all. So I'm giving Fever 1793 a two-star rating.

When my boy heard my rating, he demanded to create his own goodreads account to personally document his lonely one star. He's got two more years to go before that happens...but when he turns thirteen? Watch out goodreads. My boy's got some opinions!

07/31/2015:

July 2015: Reading along with my son for his required summer reading.

Alfreda says

When I first found out that I had to read this book, I was not excited about it, because usually school books are boring and have no interest for me in it. When I first started to read this book I thought here we go again another boring book, why are doing this to me? I got more into the book as time went by, and wound up actually liking it. This book had become interesting and it was like no other book that I had read before, which was a good thing. In the next few paragraphs, I will tell you why I liked this book.

My first reason for why I like this book is because, it takes you to a certain time in history when things weren't so great for our society. When you read this book it does at first seem like this another old boring school book, but then you get more into it and realize that it is actually interesting. In the book the author tells you about how malaria took over everyones life. No one was safe from it whether you were rich or the poorest of the poor, you had a chance of getting infected. At the same time this movie wasn't just about a diseases that was spreading it was also about family. This girl and her grandfather had to leave her mother behind because she was infected with malaria. On their way to their destination, they became closer because they had no choice but to survive on their own. So not only is this book about a disease that took over at one point in time, but it's also about how this disease brought families closer together.

My next reason for liking this book is for the simple fact that out of every book that I had ever read before having to do with any African Americans during that time, this book did not give them this title as being worth nothing at all. I wouldn't go as far as saying that they were treated as equals, but they did have jobs that they got payed for and they had homes and friends who were whites. I had gotten to a point where I got tired of reading about how useless African Americans were, when in fact in the book they portrayed one black woman as a hero in my eyes. She was there for this family when they needed her and she made sure everything was ok until the threat was over.

This book was just different and it opened my eyes up to books like this that I have never thought that I would ever want to read in my life. If you ever read this book maybe you will feel the same as me or either you will feel completely different. Either way Fever of 1793 is a book that I would recommend to anyone.

Jeffrey says

Fever 1793 is one of the rare children's novels that I will recommend to adults to read.

As a middle school English teacher, reading children's and young adult fiction is part of the job. Often it is enjoyable, and often I am annoyed because I would rather be reading something else. Usually, after a spree of YA literature I must read Faulkner or a chapter from Ulysses to come out even. YA books are often formulaic. The formula includes a protagonist that is generally angst-ridden, complaining about mom and/or dad and nervous about how they act in front of their crush. They develop a newfound respect for a character in the story who is either old or diseased. This character shows unbelievable strength and teaches profound morals. And then this character dies. I have been told YA books are filled with misery because it is what kids are interested in. I guess children are not much different than adults in that regard.

Back to Fever, though. It is about Mattie Cook, who is initially unhappy with her mom, but learns to love her when she might lose her. She might lose her because the story takes place during the yellow fever epidemic of 1793 in Philadelphia. Mattie is very interested in Nathaniel and is very nervous and giddy around him. She learns to love her very old war hero grandfather. He teaches her a lot as the two of them are alone just fighting to survive the epidemic. So Anderson certainly follows the formula. However, this story is very historically accurate and well-researched and she is a very good writer. It is worth a look to see eighteenth century United States citizens forced to be their very best or very worst.

CandyChaser21 says

A delicious and addictive book about a young teen forced to become an adult overnight when she is left alone during the yellow fever outbreak in the 1700s. Her mother is missing, and grandfather gets taken away from her also. The author researched this very well, and the book is accurate in it's details. Although the book is very sad, there is a lot of heart warming moments, and you learn to appreciate the way humans react in a crisis. This is one of those books I didnt want to end. This was found in the young adult section at the library, but it could be enjoyed by any age or gender, in my opinion. Two major thumbs up!

UniquelyMoi ~ BlithelyBookish says

Many years ago I took my now adult kids out of public school to home-school them, and this was one of the first books I bought to add to their reading curriculum and library when I was looking for entertaining ways to teach history. Well, guess what? We **all** loved this book!! I've thought about it often through the years and now... I think it's time for a re-read. It's thought provoking in a way younger readers can understand, and older readers can appreciate.

Blurb...

It's late summer 1793, and the streets of Philadelphia are abuzz with mosquitoes and rumors of fever. Down near the docks, many have taken ill, and the fatalities are mounting. Now they include Polly, the serving girl at the Cook Coffeehouse. But fourteen-year-old Mattie Cook doesn't get a moment to mourn the passing of her childhood playmate. New customers have overrun her family's coffee shop, located far from the mosquito-infested river, and Mattie's concerns of fever are all but overshadowed by dreams of growing her family's small business into a thriving enterprise. But when the fever begins to strike closer to home, Mattie's struggle to build a new life must give way to a new fight-the fight to stay alive.

I HIGHLY recommend this for readers of all ages.

Purchase on Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B004...>

Britany says

Mattie Cook is a 14 year old growing up helping her mom out in the coffeehouse. Trying to get out of doing her chores and playing adventures with her best friends Polly & Nathaniel. All of a sudden, Polly comes down with a fever, and from there the fever strikes the city of Philadelphia. Set in the 1790s and based on true events, we discover along with Mattie, the harsh realities of growing up in that time, without modern medicine, trying to survive the yellow fever.

This was a quick read, and written towards younger adults, so I would recommend for those readers. A little too broad and not too much depth.

Elise (TheBookishActress) says

2.5 stars. A lot of potential and good writing style, but ultimately just another boring, archetypal historical fiction.

This book is by no means bad. Anderson's prose flows very nicely, making even the boring bits easy to read. But it's just too average.

This book doesn't break any historical fiction molds. Anderson breaks no boundaries with her boring plotting. *Fever 1793* is far too drawn out. It's just boring all the way through.

The main protagonist here was somewhat likable, but she's completely flat. There's no interest to her story because she comes off like a doormat.

Tink Magoo is bad at reviews says

First a small ramble.

When I was at school I always thought *'What do I want to learn history for, it's boring, where will it get me and what help will it be'*. Just imagine if everyone had the same outlook, we would lose so much knowledge. Thankfully now I'm an old withered up Mother I can appreciate our past a lot better.

"Life was a battle, and Mother a tired and bitter captain"

This story really punched me in the heart with its sorrow. And what really makes it hit home, is the fact that in this day and age people still suffer as badly as they did back in 1793. This evolved from the story of a hard done by teenager who resented her Mother for working her so hard, to a strong young lady finding hope where there seemed to be none.

I can't express just how much I loved this.

"One had to be careful with elbows and boys"
