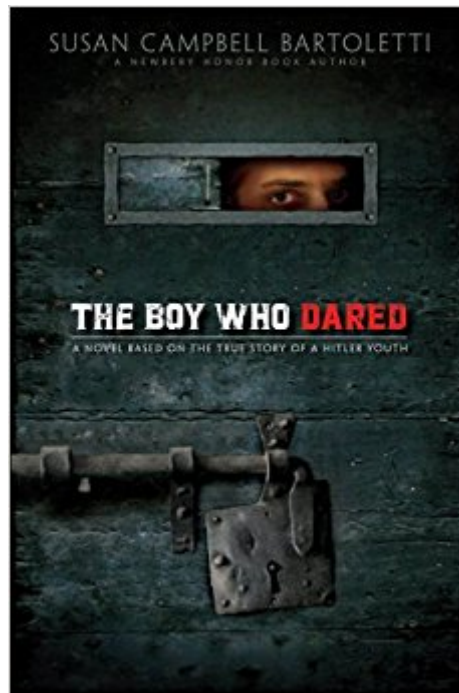




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The Boy Who Dared



Synopsis

A Newbery Honor Book author has written a powerful and gripping novel about a youth in Nazi Germany who tells the truth about Hitler. Bartoletti has taken one episode from her Newbery Honor Book, *HITLER YOUTH*, and fleshed it out into thought-provoking novel. When 16-year-old Helmut Hubner listens to the BBC news on an illegal short-wave radio, he quickly discovers Germany is lying to the people. But when he tries to expose the truth with leaflets, he's tried for treason. Sentenced to death and waiting in a jail cell, Helmut's story emerges in a series of flashbacks that show his growth from a naive child caught up in the patriotism of the times, to a sensitive and mature young man who thinks for himself.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 99 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #34,481 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in *Books > Children's Books > Biographies > European* #13 in *Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Holocaust*

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Grade 6-7 • In the newly formed Third Reich, Hitler's initial political doctrine is filled with hopeful solutions for a country plagued with unemployment, poverty, and a post-World War I feeling of defeat. Propaganda and promises quickly turn to oppressive new laws including the required participation in the Hitler Youth. Helmuth Hubner enters the program and is at once impressed with the bravado, shiny uniforms, boots, and patriotic fever sweeping the country. But his Mormon-based teachings trigger questions in his mind about the reality behind the regime's

invasions of neighboring countries, mistreatment of Jewish citizens, and closely controlled media. He creates an underground newsletter with information gathered from BBC reports using an illegal shortwave radio. As he secretly distributes the flyers throughout the town, his boldness encourages him to gather several accomplices resulting in his arrest, trial, and execution. The novel opens as he is on death row, and the story is told as a series of flashbacks. Helmuth is portrayed as a brave, outspoken voice amid a family of acquiescing brothers, mother, and new SS stepfather. Based on a real person, the novel includes black-and-white photos of Helmuth and his family. Bartoletti offers another perspective on the Holocaust, demonstrating that even if the effort proves unsuccessful, the courage and convictions of a minority should be motivation to speak the truth rather than remain silent. It's a message that must be continually emphasized as a lasting legacy of the Holocaust.

—Rita Soltan, Youth Services Consultant, West Bloomfield, MI Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Starred Review In *Hitler Youth: Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow*, Booklist's 2005 Top of the List for youth nonfiction, 2005, Bartoletti included a portrait of Helmuth Hübener, a German teenager executed for his resistance to the Nazis. In this fictionalized biography, she imagines his story as he sits in prison awaiting execution in 1942 and remembers his childhood in Hamburg during Hitler's rise to power. Beaten and tortured to name his friends, he remembers how he started off an ardent Nazi follower and then began to question his patriotism, secretly listened to BBC radio broadcasts, and finally dared to write and distribute pamphlets calling for resistance. The teen's perspective makes this a particularly gripping way to personalize the history, and even those unfamiliar with the background Bartoletti weaves in the German bitterness after World War I, the burning of the books, the raging anti-Semitism will be enthralled by the story of one boy's heroic resistance in the worst of times. A lengthy author's note distinguishes fact from fiction, and Bartoletti provides a detailed chronology, a bibliography, and many black-and-white photos of Helmuth with friends, family, and members of his Mormon church. This is an important title for the Holocaust curriculum. See the Booklist interview with Bartoletti, in which she discusses how this teen's story moved her. Grades 6-12. --Hazel Rochman

A thoughtfully written book about a very brave young man who lived a brief life of courageous resistance to the evils of Nazism during WWII. The book is based on a true story. It is written clearly, it lets the facts of his life speak for the lessons to be learned. I was left with awe, gratitude, sadness,

and admiration for this young man and for others like him of all ages who have stood up to evil. It's one of the books that touches you for the rest of your life. I will not forget this story. I recommend it to anyone.

Helmuth Hubener is an ordinary young man caught up at first in the National emotional fervor for the Fuhrer. But when his eyes are opened to the horrors he sees going on around him, will he have the courage to take a stand? Compelling and powerful, this is "a novel based on the true story of a Hitler Youth." In reading it, don't be surprised to find yourself pulled into Helmuth's life. I couldn't put it down, even though I knew (having read another account of Hubener) what ultimately happens. And don't forget to read the author's notes in the book. (Read this book in conjunction with Bartoletti's *Hitler Youth: Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow*. Combined they make a powerful history lesson regarding life for Germany's youth during Hitler's reign.)

This book was requested by my son's teacher for a group reading and discussion. I think it is a good book for middle school kids.

good book

Based on real events, this was a very good story based during the world war times. A boy's struggle to try and warn his town that everything Hitler was saying was a lie even when he knew if he was caught he could be killed or imprisoned for his beliefs.

good story type of narrative more than a documentary. We knew one of the guys involved personally; he just died a few years ago, so got this book. We already had a DVD and three other books on this subject. The world needs more who do what is right and let the consequences follow.

my son loved this book.

My daughter had to read this over the summer for middle school. My daughter said it started out slow but after the first chapter she got really into it. So if your kid has to read this, just tell them struggle through until the second chapter.

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