



# Revolutionary Friends: General George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette

By Selene Castrovilla

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In this riveting story about an important friendship, Selene Castrovilla introduces young readers to the tender side of George Washington when he meets the youthful Marquis de Lafayette during the Revolutionary War. Lafayette has come to America to offer his services to the patriotic cause. Inexperienced but dedicated, he is a much-needed ally and not only earns a military position with the Continental Army but also Washington's respect and admiration. This lively picture book presents the human side of history, revealing the bond between two famous Revolutionary figures. Both the author and illustrator worked with experts and primary sources to represent both patriots and the war accurately and fairly.

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### Editorial Review

#### From School Library Journal

Gr 3-5-The Marquis de Lafayette is famous for helping George Washington and the Continental Army defeat the British. The idea of exploring the development of his relationship with the American general in picture-book form is intriguing, but while this version is long on historical content, it is short on flair. The research is admirable. Direct quotations from Lafayette are featured on almost every page, and lists of sources and places to visit, as well as time lines of the men's lives, provide excellent historical background. However, these figures do not come to life. The author concentrates on Lafayette arriving in America, becoming part of Washington's army, and proving his mettle at the Battle of Brandywine. The large illustrations end when Washington visits the wounded Lafayette and instructs the doctor to care for him "as if he were my son," demonstrating the real affection that developed between them. However, the account goes on for three more pages, illustrated by much smaller images. The awkward transition complicates the book's ability to find an audience. Younger readers who are drawn to the picture-book format may lose interest in the text-heavy later part, while older students studying the Revolutionary War may find the book too simplistic for their needs. The pen-and-ink illustrations with digital coloring are appealing for the most part, but they have an odd flatness that detracts from their overall effect. Spreads that should have depth and a vanishing point seem more one-dimensional than two. French phrases incorporated into the text are defined at the end of the book, not in context, which may be cumbersome for some readers.-Lucinda Snyder Whitehurst, St. Christopher's School, Richmond, VA ©(c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

#### From Booklist

\*Starred Review\* In 1777, the 19-year-old Marquis de Lafayette defied his king's orders and left France to fight for freedom in America. Though initially expecting little, Washington found the young French nobleman idealistic, courageous, and eager to learn everything he could from the general he idolized. Congress had refused to give Lafayette a command, but he proved his mettle at the Battle of Brandywine, where he rallied retreating troops and suffered a leg wound. The doctor was told by Washington to treat him as he would his son, "for I love him with the same affection." The picture-book story rather abruptly ends there, though the next three pages continue the vivid account of Washington and Lafayette's "revolutionary friendship" in an information-packed narrative, followed by detailed time lines of their lives. In addition, there are suggestions of places to visit, a source bibliography, and a glossary translating the French words and phrases sprinkled through the text. Short passages from Lafayette's letters and other writings appear in small, scroll-like boxes on some double-page spreads. Kozjan's illustrations, lively ink drawings digitally enhanced with color and subtle shading, will engage readers, as they bring the period settings to life. This oversize, handsome package will introduce a little-known aspect of the Revolutionary War history through pithy words and often dramatic pictures. It respects its audience as well as the historically significant friendship it portrays. Grades 2-5. --Carolyn Phelan

#### Review

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