



Fame and Glory in Freedom, Georgia

Barbara O'Connor

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Will a spelling bee be the answer to all of Bird's problems?

All her life, all Bird has ever wanted is to be noticed in her small town and to get to Disney World. As it turns out, Bird just might have a chance to realize at least one of her goals because of a state spelling bee, and she might get to make a friend along the way – a boy named Harlem Tate who has just moved to Freedom. Harlem seems like a kindred spirit – someone like Bird, whom people don't usually take the time to find the good in. (Unless it's someone like Miss Delphine, who always makes Bird feel special.) But as much as Bird tries to get his attention, Harlem is not easily won over. Then Harlem agrees to be her partner in the spelling bee, and if they study hard enough, the two might just win everything Bird's always wanted.

In Barbara O'Connor's funny new novel, a spunky young girl discovers that sometimes all it takes to feel famous is a little recognition from true friends.

Fame and Glory in Freedom, Georgia is a 2004 Bank Street - Best Children's Book of the Year.

Fame and Glory in Freedom, Georgia Details

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Author : Barbara O'Connor

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Genre : Realistic Fiction, Childrens, Juvenile, Middle Grade, Young Adult, Academic, Read For School, Fiction, Chapter Books

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From Reader Review Fame and Glory in Freedom, Georgia for online ebook

Kristy says

Super cute! I loved the off-beat characters and the way Park takes small town Georgia and makes it interesting. I don't usually like books set in rural America, because it feel like nothing ever happens, but Park makes roller-skating, sitting in a back alley, and hanging out at a tattoo parlor a wonderful experience.

Margaret says

A beautifully written book by Barbara O'Connor that even adults can enjoy and appreciate. I read it before giving it to three above grade level readers (Levels O/P/R), and I was hesitant at first because of the realism of life on the poorer side of town (tattoo parlor, can collecting, cigarettes). But, you know what? Kids know about these things and are curious about these issues. Books are a great way to get them to start thinking and visualizing other walks of life. Most chapter books don't go there, but O'Connor goes there. Most chapter books focus on bullying and fitting in around being different--in a kind of humorous way--at school, but this book goes further and brings in several social issues, as well as a deeply rooted, more hurtful side of bullying that a lot of books fail to capture. Moreover, the resolution is not a sugar coated, fairytale ending. It keeps with the realistic tones of the book and leaves readers with a sense that more needs to be done in order to fix these social problems.

Amanda says

Bird is a good kid. She wants to be free from the haters, and she wants to make a new friend. But what she wants more is to go to Disney World. And! There happens to be a spelling bee at her school with a Disney World grand prize. Her best friend, Mrs. Delphine, helps her figure out how to befriend Harlem Tate, who is a great speller. Eventually Bird learns all of Harlem's secrets, negating the rumors the town spread to keep him an outsider.

Karen says

One of the best things about being a children's librarian is discovering new (to me) children's authors. Barbara O'Connor popped up on my radar when Fame and Glory in Freedom, Georgia was a Sunshine State Reader for the school year 2005-2006. I checked it out one night after work, read it, and brought it back the next morning. In those few hours of a hasty reading, Ms. O'Connor won me over.

Barbara O'Connor has a clear, distinct, Southern voice. Her characters are quirky, funny, a bit tumble-down, rumbled and flawed, but with hearts as big as the state of South Carolina. I fell in love with Bird, the main character in Fame and Glory, about seven years ago when I first read this book, and all over again today when I re-read it.

Bird's story ends with a happy ending, but not a fairy tale ending. She is not a passive person. She is not a

perfect person. She is, however, a perfect character; as, I suspect, is Ms. O'Connor.

Judi Paradis says

Bird is a girl with no friends, except a kind neighbor, Miss Delphine. However, when a new boy named Harlem moves to town Bird convinces him to be her partner in the school spelling bee and changes both their lives. This book is funny and full of great characters--with many unexpected twists and turns.

Michelle Rohrer says

Bird wants a friend. Being an outcast herself, she looks to the tall and mean-looking Harlem. Bird's neighbor encourages her to connect with Harlem, and Bird's determination to win the Spelling Bee pushes her into this relationship. Without which, she'd never have known her true road to fame and glory.

Linda says

Plain, funny, real characters from middle-to-low income households. At its heart, this book is about caretaking and community. It features an adult daughter caring for a dad who's had a stroke, a girl trying to befriend a boy everyone rejects, and a dad in poverty trying to somehow provide for a son. The conversations and reactions are touchingly normal. It only gets four stars because the plot spends a lot of time on a particular event, and then characters abruptly stop investing in it. I thought, Wait, what about this thing that was so important last chapter?! Still--a lovely book.

Tara says

This book was cute but the unrealistic clashed with the realistic. What's the chance Bird would pair up with a spelling-genius that gave them the advantage in the spelling bee? Not great. But she did. And then she's hurled back into the realistic...and loses. Then she has to settle with her "fame and glory" among the five people that actually like her.

Jan Carlson says

This is another wonderful realistic fiction book by Barbara O'Connor. Most of her books are set in the south and involve children who are struggling with issues like friendship, homelessness, and divorce. This is the story of Bird and Harlem. Each of them have friendship and family problems. They team up for the state spelling bee, but Harlem's secret holds them back. The characters in this book seem to jump off the pages. You can't help but love spunky Bird and sweet Miss Delphine. Great book for boys and girls.

Jennifer says

I'm on a Barbara O'Connor kick! This is the second title of hers that I've read recently - this one on audio. I'm thinking that the southern setting is a theme of hers, which really came through nicely on the audio version. A great little story - perfect for third, fourth, fifth graders.

Ha Van says

I liked that this story shows a girl who wants to be friends with the person who sits by himself everyday , the one that has no one but his grandfather, but is great at spelling.Later on they become great friends and learn that his grandfather cares about him a lot.They study for a spelling bee that they end up losing because this girl's friend couldn't see clearly.

Holly Mueller says

I love spelling bees and Barbara O'Connor books, so how could I not love this one? Sixth-grader Bird is a bit of an outcast, but because of the encouragement of her caring neighbor, Ms. Delphine, she tries to make a friend out the new boy, Harlem. Harlem is picked on, poor, and sullen-faced, but Bird is determined to be nice to him. When she realizes Harlem can spell really well, she asks him to be her partner for the school spelling bee. After much practice and the making of a true friendship, (SPOILER ALERT)she doesn't understand why he misses the winning word when she knows he can spell it. After the problem is solved, Harlem doesn't forget Bird, thankfully, and always saves her a spot.

Susie Tweed says

A touching story about finding what you are good at, being honest with yourself and being open to others. Bird and Harlem are both trying to find out how they fit in. When they parter up for the spelling bee, they learn a lot about each other and themselves.

Natalie says

What a beautiful story. A good reminder that you should never judge a book by it's cover. We all have goodness inside of us; it just may not look like what we are used to or comfortable with.

Bird & Mrs. Delphine, two peas in a pod; as far as sincere goodness and getting their way goes. Ones just a younger or older version of the other, if that makes any sense. Freedom, Georgia is just like anyother place. It's hard to find where you fit in. With the help of Mrs. Delphine, Harlem, and a couple of other unsuspecting characters, Bird finds her place. It's a place where she can be confident inspite of horribly mean kids in school. A place where she is wanted. It's a place where she is happy and most importantly...a place she shares with friends.

Valerie says

A pleasant and uplifting middle grade read about an unlikely but mutually beneficial friendship. Also features a spelling bee, which is why it was recommended to me by my wonderful friend who is a (former) librarian when she heard that people have been trying to convince me to change the competition in my work-in-progress to a spelling bee. O'Connor weaves the spelling bee into the story nicely without letting it take over. In fact, one of the things I liked most was that -- spoiler alert -- it's not all about winning in the end.
