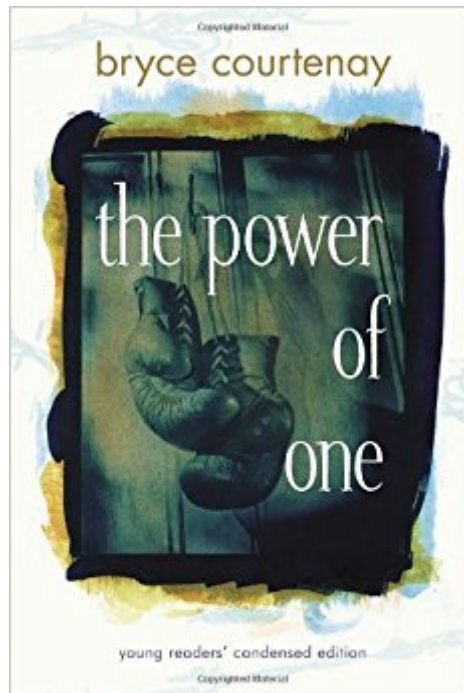




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The Power Of One (Young Reader's Edition)



Synopsis

In 1939, hatred took root in South Africa, where the seeds of apartheid were newly sown. There a boy called Peekay was born. He spoke the wrong language—English. He was nursed by a woman of the wrong color—black. His childhood was marked by humiliation and abandonment. Yet he vowed to survive—he would become welterweight champion of the world, he would dream heroic dreams. But his dreams were nothing compared to what awaited him. For he embarked on an epic journey, where he would learn the power of words, the power to transform lives, and the mystical power that would sustain him even when it appeared that villainy would rule the world: The Power of One.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.3 out of 5 stars 11 customer reviews

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Historical Fiction > Africa #605 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family

Issues > Prejudice & Racism #1027 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Sports

Customer Reviews

Grade 6 Up—The opening chapters of this haunting autobiographical novel, set in small-town South Africa during World War II, are as bleak and violent as anything written for young people. Five-year-old Peekay is the only English-speaking boy in a harsh Afrikaans-language boarding school. He is urinated on by a pack of older boys, and then beaten for it by the matron. Although he endures many losses, he grows through his experiences. His goal is to become a boxer, and the story shows how hard work can lead to success. Peekay forges loving relationships with adults, most notably Doc, a German professor. When Doc is detained as an enemy alien, Peekay's life becomes intertwined with the local prison. It is there that he learns to box and becomes a secret ally of the black prisoners. Courtenay's deft and chillingly accurate characterization of the Afrikaner prison warders. The author is unsparing in his portrayal of the

brutality meted out to prisoners and in his depiction of racist speech. Courtenay's ear for dialogue is impressive, and he consistently captures the cadences of South African speech. Peekay's story is written in a direct, almost childlike style, which sometimes seems bland, but readers will be swept along by the events in the protagonist's life. The book packs a powerful emotional punch, evoking horror, laughter, and empathy. It is a condensed version of the first part of Courtenay's adult book of the same title, and the ending feels artificial and unresolved. In all, this is an extraordinary and unusual survival story, and one that should inspire young people feeling battered by the circumstances of their own lives.

— Sue Giffard, Ethical Culture Fieldston School, New York City

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Gr. 9-12. "I went in under the arm with a quick uppercut and caught him in the ribs." The sports action is exciting in this story about Peekay, a white English-speaking boy in rural South Africa during World War II, who becomes a talented boxer and dreams of being welterweight champion of the world. With the help of several mentors, including an Afrikaner, a German botanist and pianist, a Coloured (mixed-race) worker in the local jail, a brave librarian, and a Jewish teacher, Peekay not only wins the local boxing championship but helps desperate African chain-gang prisoners send letters home. The original book was published for adults and made into a movie with Morgan Freeman; this effective condensation for YAs gives a sense of personal uplift, despite the virulent racism, but American teens won't get the complex political history. What is timeless is the picture of the sport and the kid who takes on the giants and wins.

Hazel Rochman

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FAST, CHEAP AND ACCURATE !!!Thanks...

I love this book so I thought I'd buy a hardcover edition. I didn't know it until the book arrived that it is a "young readers' condensed edition". If you are looking for a shortened version of the story for a young adult, choose this one, otherwise pick up the paperback edition.

how you can feel with a little boy's hardship in a boarding school and how you hope for his stamina and how you love his intense friendships that bring him on his way. You really live with that life and that is best a book can do.

.com sent the "Young Readers Edition" and I have returned it. I am waiting for the "Library Edition" and then I will be able to review for you. I have read the Library Edition and it was so wonderful I ordered a copy for my self to share with others. It is one of the best books on tape I have ever read. Very Powerful.

Very misleading purchase. This book is actually a young readers condensed version (of an excellent book) and not adequately marked on the website. In the process of being returned.

This review has nothing to do with the actual book but, instead, has everything to do with 's advertising of the book. Nothing is done to really let the buyer know that this is the abridged children's version of the book instead of the full sized version (Nearly three times as long) written for the adult audience. Apparantly there are others who were duped, as I was, into making this purchase thinking I was getting the full version. Had I enlarged the image enough times I could have seen on the cover in samll print where it says "young reader's condensed edition". That was the only place it was made clear this was unabridged version. Just curious, how many compliats doers need before they actually correct his error? By the way, I took the time and made the effort to go to my local bookstore and purchased the full version. I will be returning the children's version to .

There are two versions of Bryce Courtney's "The Power of One

If Bryce Courtenay's The Power Of One sounds familiar, it's because this represents a young reader's condensed edition of a prior hard-hitter which became both an adult classic and an acclaimed movie of the same name. It's great to see such a powerful novel condensed with youth in mind: grades 8-12 will find compelling the story of 1930s South Africa and a boy who faces apartheid and prejudice in a country where his childhood is marked by loneliness and dreams of changing lives. A powerful story of courage and change evolves.

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