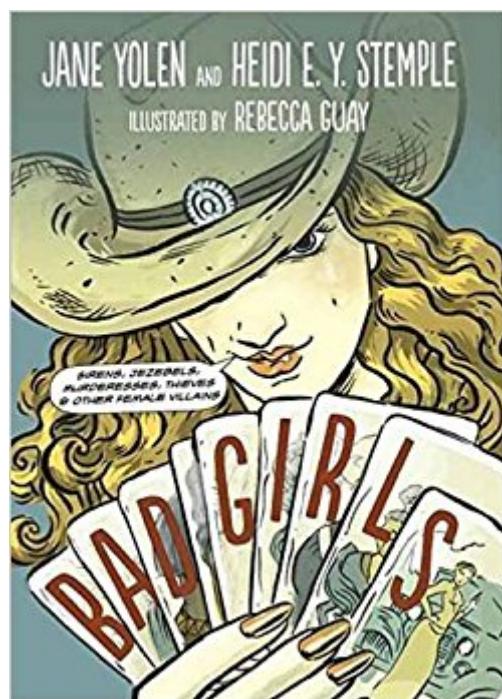


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# Bad Girls: Sirens, Jezebels, Murderesses, Thieves And Other Female Villains



## Synopsis

From Jezebel to Catherine the Great, from Cleopatra to Mae West, from Mata Hari to Bonnie Parker, strong women have been a problem for historians, storytellers, and readers. Strong females smack of the unfeminine. They have been called wicked, wanton, and willful. Sometimes that is a just designation, but just as often it is not. "Well-behaved women seldom make history," is the frequently quoted statement by historian and feminist Laurel Thatcher Ulrich. But what makes these misbehaving women "bad"? Are we idolizing the wicked or salvaging the strong? In *BAD GIRLS*, readers meet twenty-six of history's most notorious women, each with a rotten reputation. But authors Jane Yolen and Heidi Stemple remind us that there are two sides to every story. Was Delilah a harlot or hero? Was Catherine the Great a great ruler, or just plain ruthless? At the end of each chapter, Yolen and Stemple appear as themselves in comic panels as they debate each girl's badness. Heidi as the prosecution, Jane for context. This unique and sassy examination of famed, female historical figures will engage readers with its unusual presentation of the subject matter. Heidi and Jane's strong arguments for the innocence and guilt of each bad girl promotes the practice of critical thinking as well as the idea that history is subjective. Rebecca Guay's detailed illustrations provide a rich, stylized portrait of each woman, while the inclusion of comic panels will resonate with fans of graphic novels.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 800 (What's this?)

Paperback: 172 pages

Publisher: Charlesbridge; Reprint edition (September 8, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1580891861

ISBN-13: 978-1580891868

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 0.5 x 9.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #571,318 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #63 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Law & Crime #420 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Women #12684 in Books > Children's Books > Action & Adventure

Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Gr 4-8 Yolen and her daughter and cowriter, Stemple, gathered biographies of 26 infamous females in this romp with history's boldest women. From Delilah to Virginia Hill, listeners will meet brassy broads who operated outside the law, then hear the authors discuss whether the ladies were actually bad or merely misunderstood. Barbara Rosenblat's inviting narration is followed by Yolen and Stemple debating the merits of each historical crime. Their repartee enlivens these sassy tales of deception, murder, vanity, and self-preservation. Mother and daughter agree about shoes, but disagree about Cleopatra, Bloody Mary, Calamity Jane, and Mata Hari, along with other less well-known women, verbally jousting in a tolerant and humorous spirit. The two make it clear that history and community norms influence whether behaviors are acceptable or not. This collection will add just the right spice to history lessons for tweens and young teens. •Robin Levin, Ft. Washakie School/Community Library, W. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

**\*Starred Review\*** Girls gone wild! The mother-daughter team of Yolen and Stemple have rounded up some of the meanest (or perhaps just misguided) group of gals history has known. And they have wrapped them in an attractive package that makes reading about their exploits even more enjoyable. The list begins with the biblical Delilah (sorry, Sampson), introduces Cleopatra, stops in England to say hello to Anne Boleyn and (bloody) Queen Mary, and then heads over to America to visit with Tituba, Calamity Jane, and Typhoid Mary. And that's just a few of the 26 spies, sirens, and female felons the duo takes on. Each subject gets a jauntily written page or so, prefaced by one of illustrator Guay's terrific full-page portraits and back-ended with a comic book-style page featuring the authors discussing whether the woman was exactly what she seemed. In fact, both an introduction and afterword focus on how history changes its opinion on people's actions, the way history's winners get the glory, and whether circumstances shape events more than personalities do. The thick paper, graphic novel-style typeface, and delightful artwork executed in ink and brush and dabbed with digital color will draw readers. The bibliography will lead kids to more about these gals. Grades 7-10, --Ilene Cooper --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Shipped in a reasonable time. Great condition, great stories. Glad I got it. Also Jane Yolen was one of my favorite authors growing up.

I liked how there were separate people and the comic part at the end of each with the authors info

was Guinness! Now I want to be an author when I grow up!

These are really bad women. I enjoyed the reading because each entry was short, interesting and light hearted, I also like the graphics.

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