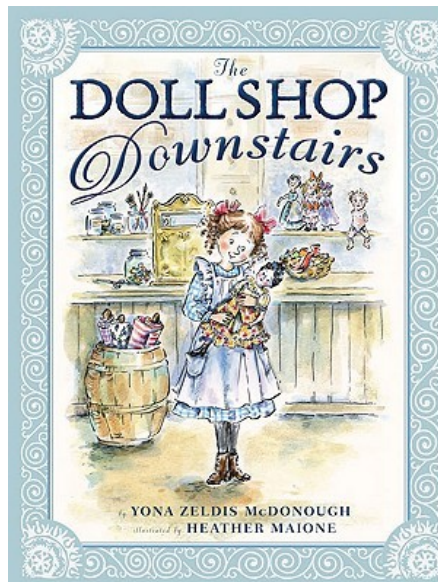




The Doll Shop Downstairs

Yona Zeldis McDonough , Heather Maione (Illustrator)

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Nine-year-old Anna and her sisters love to play with the dolls in their parents' doll repair shop. But when World War I begins, an embargo on German-made goods—including the parts Papa needs to repair the dolls—threatens to put the family's shop out of business. Fortunately, Anna has an idea that just might save the day. Inspired by the true story of Madame Alexander, this is a timeless tale of family and imagination. This beautiful gift edition of *The Doll Shop Downstairs*, featuring an eye-catching foil embossed cover, will make a perfect holiday present for dreamers and doll lovers everywhere.

The Doll Shop Downstairs Details

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Author : Yona Zeldis McDonough , Heather Maione (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review The Doll Shop Downstairs for online ebook

Rachel says

Amazing, delightful story. A new favorite and one I would like to read again someday! :)

Cassandra says

This episodic story about a family of doll makers living in the Lower East Side of New York during World War 1 was woven with enough historical details to make the story engaging and at times fascinating. I loved reading about the doll making process and was quite moved by the ending. Would make a terrific family read-aloud.

GeekGirl6666 says

Really beautiful book. Perfect for young girls.

Susan says

Sweet story about a Jewish family, living in New York around the time of WWI. I enjoyed reading about the little girls and the family business of fixing china and bisque dolls. (Nowadays these poor creatures would get tossed in the trash!)

Surprisingly this story was based on real people and real events. Does Madame Alexander dolls sound familiar? One of the girls grew up to start making these dolls. Very interesting!

Erin says

Absolutely wonderful! I would say this book is perfect for girls ages 7-10-ish. The story is loosely based on how the Madame Alexander company began. It's about a Jewish family with 3 young girls living in the lower east side of New York City around the time of the first world war. They own a doll repair shop and live above the shop. When the United States places an embargo on all goods from Germany their father is unable to order any more parts to repair the porcelain, bisque, and china dolls.

I think this would be a great book to read aloud to your girls because there are several interesting talking points about history, religion, war, and making due when times are tight. There is also a glossary, timeline, and author's note at the end of the book that I feel would be better utilized at the front of the book.

This would make a darling gift paired with a Madame Alexander doll. (I've seen them several times at Tuesday Morning for about \$25-40.00)

I'm looking forward to giving this book to my girls on book day--January 1.

Lisa Vegan says

Oh, I suppose the plot is somewhat (but not entirely!) predictable, but I loved this story.

It's a wonderful story of three sisters and their parents. They're Jewish, live in New York, and World War I has begun. Nine year old middle child Anna is the very engaging narrator of this story. Her sisters are seven and eleven.

There are wonderful vivid descriptions of the dolls, the rooms of the house including their colors, the sisters and mother and father, the penny candy, the stores and carts, the neighborhoods, and what it feels like to be a Russian American Jewish family in New York City nearly a century ago. Although the story takes place so long ago and this family's experiences are likely to be incredibly different from those of children today, I do think that today's girls will enjoy this book very much.

It's very poignant that the family business is a doll repair shop, but the family is so poor that they can't afford any dolls for their daughters. However, the girls are permitted to play in a limited way with the dolls in the shop. When World War I begins, doll parts can no longer be bought from Germany so with ingenuity the family finds another slightly different way to make a living.

I would have adored this book when I was eight and nine years old, and I really enjoyed it reading it now too. This book is probably designed to be read by 8 or 9 year old girls but it can be enjoyed by those of all ages, including as a read aloud to younger girls if they can enjoy a story about 7-11 year old girls.

This is truly historical fiction with an emphasis on historical. There's an author's note at the end of the novel where she explains that this book is loosely based on a real family and doll shop. In addition to the author's note, there is also a glossary of terms and a timeline of events in the back of the book.

Diana Davis says

I love It!!!!!!????

Rosemarie says

This is a totally sweet little book. I absolutely love it. The illustrations are beautiful as well.

I was at a book fair a while ago and I actually got to meet the author. I was drawn to the books at her table because I've always loved dolls and as it turns out, she has always loved dolls too. We talked about our mutual love of Barbie, both growing up and even now as adults - something that not everyone understands. It turns out that she also has a book about Barbie. She didn't have it at the fair, but I looked it up later and ordered it.

This book is based on the life of a famous doll creator, Madame Alexander. Yona Zeldis McDonough had read her story and was inspired by it to write this book. In the book, 3 sisters live with their parents above a doll repair shop in New York City at the time just before WWI. It's their father's shop, he repairs china and

porcelain dolls for a living. I understand how this idea would be appealing to a doll lover, of course. The family is a poor immigrant family, but still, what a wonderful environment to grow up in!

Since the family can't afford expensive dolls for the girls, they are allowed to play with the dolls that have been brought in for repair as long as they follow the rules and do not take them out of the shop. Each girl has found one special doll that she considers "hers." These dolls have been in the shop for some time because Papa cannot find the right parts to repair them. Bernadette Louise is the name Anna has given to her doll. Anna is the middle sister and the story is told from her point of view.

When the war breaks out, it becomes impossible to trade with Germany. Germany is where all of the doll parts that Papa uses to repair the dolls come from. So, the family will be in trouble if they can't come up with an alternative way to keep the shop open. It is Anna who suggests making dolls instead of just repairing them. She says they should make their own dolls from materials that they can easily obtain.

Papa repairs as many dolls as he can with the parts that he has, then must return the dolls he can't repair to their owners. The 3 dolls that Anna and her sisters play with do not receive a response from their owners and there is hope that the girls will actually get to keep them.

This is such a sweet part of the story. We see how much Anna truly loves Bernadette Louise. It's very touching just how much. The author really captures the love that a girl has for her special doll. I think I love that aspect most about this book. Nowadays, girls can be criticized for being too "girly" - but loving dolls is a special part of being a girl and I don't see anything wrong with that.

In a lot of ways, this book has that cozy feel to it than you might find in the "Little House on the Prairie" books that I also used to love as a child. If you are a doll lover of any age, you will want to read this book!

Kierstin says

First chapter book that Lois age 9 has loved and finished completely on her own.

Brenda says

Anna is right in the middle. Sophie is two years older - she always seems to know everything. Trudie is two years younger - she is always babied and worst of all adores everything Sophie says and does. Anna is caught in the middle. They live in a small apartment above their doll shop. Papa repairs dolls and makes them like new. Mama sews clothes for them and together they make a fine living until the war breaks out.

All the parts they use to fix the dolls come from Germany and now that World War I has begun there will be no more trade with Germany so no more parts for fixing dolls. The family wonders about what they will do to make a living until Anna comes up with an idea - rather than repair dolls they can make them. If they all work together that just might work and a limited edition doll, Nurse Nora, is made. She is beautiful and brave and is discovered by Mr. Greenfield, the buyer for FAO Schwartz. The Doll Shop will survive the war.

This is a wonderful story of family life in the city in the early 1900's. Anna's parents are immigrants from Russia. They have family in the old country and they are bridge the old and new ways by making sure their children have schooling and opportunities. The girls work with their parents doing the chores they need to do so they can also have time for dolls and tea parties, penny candy treats and ice cream cones.

Anna also shares the feelings of never being old enough or young enough. She knows she mustn't while as little Trudie does, but sometimes it is challenging not too. She knows she must not feel jealous of Sophie when she get's A's and gold stars on everything. She knows she must just work harder, but still it can be hard. Caught in the middle she has time for watching and knowing. She takes time to be alone, to wonder and question. Because of this, she has some pretty amazing things to share.

I loved characters and the setting. They are a wonderfully real family. You'll be happy to meet them.

Saka says

Such a emotional, warm, comforting story. Shows the pain of war, and the love of family. A great read, and perfect for young readers.

Amanda says

Wanted to like it

The Doll Shop Downstairs is the fictional story of a Jewish family in New York who has to make changes to keep their business going during WWII. It is inspired by a true story (the author has a nice note in the back of the book about that).

I thought it was cute and predictable. The story is told from the perspective of the middle child, and while I certainly understood her thoughts and perspective the dedicated voice has the potential to alienate a lot of readers ... mainly those who aren't middle children.

I picked this book up for free and really debated about whether to hold on to it or not. Our heroine ends of stealing a stamp from her parents (saying she's going to replace it) and there are never any ramifications for that act. I just didn't like planting that idea in kids' heads. A trivial thing, perhaps, but I never think stealing should be painted in a forgiveable light like that. I think the story would have worked just as well if she had asked her parents for a stamp.

Maybe I'll regret letting go of this book one day, but I think it's mostly forgettable anyway. Maybe if I read this as a child and had nostalgia attached to it I wouldn't feel that way. I wanted to like this book, but I just didn't connect with it.

3 stars.

This review originally appeared at <http://sophiesmindset.blogspot.com/20...> as part of the Reading Challenge 2016. To see the other books in the challenge, [click here](#).

Krista the Krazy Kataloguer says

Set in New York City during World War I, this is the story of a Jewish immigrant family from Russia who try to make ends meet when the war cuts off the supply of doll parts that they import from Germany for their doll repair business. Anna and her sisters are lucky enough to be able to play with the dolls left to be

repaired, but they each want a doll of their very own. Will the family be able to survive economic hard times? Will the girls ever get their own dolls? Read and find out! The details of life at that time, especially the food, were most interesting. I envy the girls being able to sleep out on the roof in hot weather. I always wanted to do that. I just got the sequel, *The Cats in the Doll Shop*, via interlibrary loan, so I can't wait to read more of the adventures of these sisters. Highly recommended!

Peggy says

A charming story that reminded me of All-of-a-Kind Family. I especially liked the historical connection with Madame Alexander, as my mother and I loved those dolls. I look forward to reading the sequel, which apparently adds kittens! :)

Eileen W says

A lovely little book I read to my young daughters.

Molly Cline says

4 star

I checked this book out due to really enjoying this author's books. I wasn't disappointed! And got a bonus at the end when she wrote a 'note from the author' and said that this book was based upon the real life girl and experiences that as an adult started the "Madame Alexander dolls". I LOVE books that tell other people's lives, especially those that struggled but still found within them a will to live and thrive.

My summary doesn't do this book justice but I'll try; but believe me although this is a children's book you won't regret reading it. Especially if you enjoy real life based books, and or dolls...

In this book a family lives on top of a shop. The dad fixes dolls (back years ago dolls were made of porcelain, ceramic and other breakable things.) The mom helps by sewing clothes and other things. The three little girls sometimes help but they also can't afford dolls for themselves so they very lovingly play with three that had been abandoned by their owners simply because papa couldn't get the parts to fix the dolls. The war is going on between America and Germany so they can't get parts like they used to. But with the help of the entire family they all come together to come up with an idea to help make the family money during a time when money and community was so unstable.

At the back of the book is also questions that people have asked Ms McDonough and I thought that was very interesting to get to know more about her and the way she thinks and lives. Also there is a timeline of events during the 'real world' and there is a glossary also. So homeschooled families could use this book as a History-Biography-economic learning book for young learners

Tasha says

Nine-year-old Anna is lucky enough to grow up living above her parent's doll shop where they repair broken china and bisque dolls. She is a middle child, feeling ordinary next to her smart older sister and her cute little sister. Though the family doesn't have enough money for dolls for the three girls, they are allowed to play with the dolls that have been in the shop for some time. Each girl has a special doll that is "theirs." However, changes are coming with the beginning of World War I. Doll parts become impossible to import from Germany because of the War. So the family must become creative about how they will earn a living.

I was a girl who played with dolls. My favorite and one I still treasure is the rag doll my mother made for me. She has yellow yarn hair, blue eyes, and a collection of clothes which include a velvet dress with a bustle! It was a treat to read a book about little girls who love dolls, especially dolls which are not perfect.

Anna is a great character. Her perspective on her own ordinariness is shown to be incorrect by all of the clever and important things she invents and does. I think there are many children who don't see that they are special and it's nice to have a book that explores that for younger children.

The world of pre-War New York City is vividly depicted and is as much a character as any of the human ones. McDonough does a great job of showing glimpses of the city but not inundating young readers with facts. I also appreciate the fact that the family is Jewish and that it is handled so matter-of-factly.

Recommended for doll lovers and as a great example of historical fiction for young readers who are looking for something light but historical. Appropriate for ages 7-10.

Kathryn says

4.5 STARS

This is such a sweet story of an immigrant family in WWI-era America; there are three sisters (Anna is the middle sister) and their father runs a doll repair shop. What a great premise*. I thoroughly enjoyed it. I think that perhaps the only reason I'm not awarding it five stars is that I wanted more ;-> but as a book for young children, I think it succeeds very well and is an appropriate length.

Anna's family is portrayed in an honest and loving way--not without their little flaws, but deeply kind and devoted and full of integrity. The little squabbles between Anna and her sisters ring true and never escalate beyond the clear love and friendship they maintain for one another.

I really loved how the children were included in the discussion of financial difficulties that fell upon the family and that they also helped to create a solution. The family working together was just marvelous and it shows how children really do want to participate and help--that it is preferable to being kept in the dark where one feels something is wrong but is unable to talk about it with grown-ups or do anything to feel useful.

The discussion of the war is age-appropriate, hinting at the poor soldiers and worry about family back in Russia, but not going into detail.

I loved the doll shop and feel that the joy and excitement of living above a doll shop (and helping out in said doll shop) for the three sisters was conveyed beautifully.

The illustrations are completely adorable!!!

All in all, I would highly recommend this to those who love dolls, loving family stories, stories about Jewish and/or Russian immigrants or those seeking a gentle account of the personal and financial hardships WWI brought to Americas even before the US entered the war.

*I loved learning from the author's note that the story is loosely based on the real biography of (view spoiler)

Kathy says

This book was ADORABLE. The cover is so cute and classic! The storyline was very unique, a definite read if you have not already!

Jane says

Gentle story with loving family and an old-fashioned feel. I especially appreciated the emphasis on play using the imagination -- it may give contemporary kids some good ideas.
