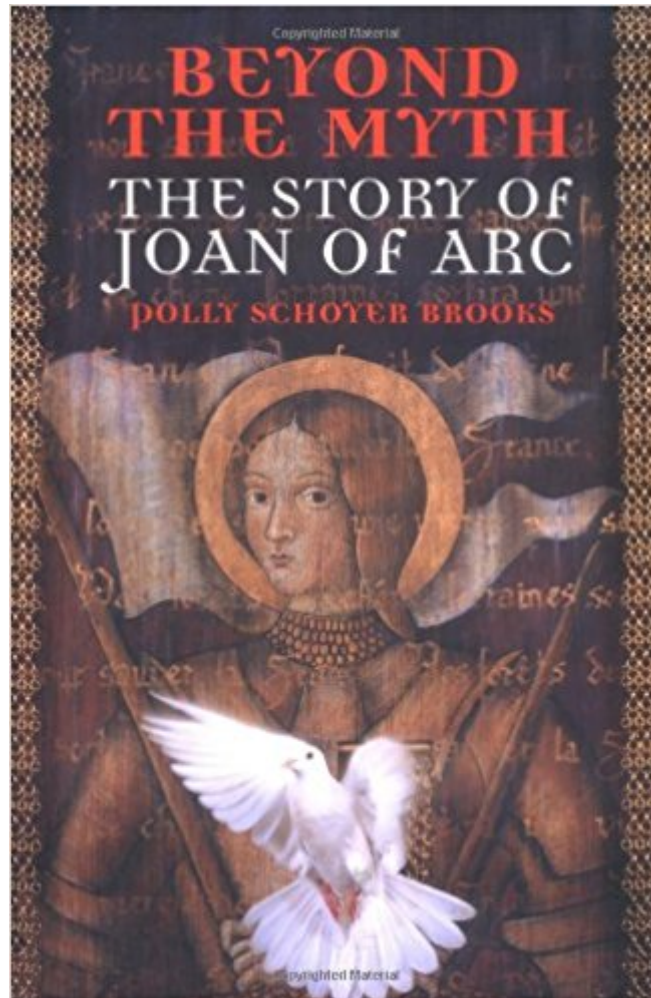


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# Beyond The Myth: The Story Of Joan Of Arc



## Synopsis

The king was going mad . . . So begins Polly Schoyer Brooks's account of one of history's most compelling stories and one of the world's most popular heroines-Joan of Arc. Brooks tells us of a fifteenth-century France ravaged by war, plague, and religious conflict; of a king who suffered fits of madness and his weak son who made a disappointing successor; and of a peasant girl from the countryside who accomplished what appeared to be miracles by rallying the dispirited French nation with her desire to see the rightful king rule. Little more than a year after her astounding triumphs-uniting the nation and securing the throne for Charles VII with her victory over the English at Orléan-nineteen-year-old Joan was imprisoned on charges of witchcraft and sorcery, tried for heresy, and burned at the stake. Polly Schoyer Brooks's detailed narrative unveils the spirited young woman who became a patron saint and continues to inspire courage and faith.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

A scholarly, well-written biography of France's great heroine, *Beyond the Myth* is thorough, interesting, and full of detail about this remarkable woman and the time in which she lived. In addition to an historical introduction, Brooks also discusses various interpretations of Joan's visions, and then makes her own thoughtful analysis. The book also contains a comprehensive, annotated bibliography. The black-and-white illustrations have been carefully selected and are aptly placed

within the text; there are also two excellent maps. Brooks' book is a good complement to Williams' classic *Joan of Arc* (American Heritage, 1963; o.p.) which, while more condensed in its text, effectively relates Joan's story and has superb full-color illustrations. A more recent study, Banfield's *Joan of Arc* (Chelsea, 1985; o.p.), is skimpy in detail and contains many factual errors; its numerous illustrations are, for the most part, poorly selected and explained. Goodwin's *Where the Towers Pierce the Sky* (Four Winds, 1989), a recent time-travel fantasy, treats Joan in the simplistic manner typical of popular fiction. In contrast, Brooks writes for serious readers, and her book, although challenging, is richly rewarding. It will certainly become the definitive Joan of Arc biography for young adults. --Ann W. Moore, formerly at Lane Road Library, Columbus, OH  
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Joan is pictured as pious, strong-willed, and heroic. Brooks's carefully rendered and moving history focuses on the single year in which Joan led the army of Prince Charles to victory and then fell prey to the jealousy, court intrigue, and superstition that brought about her death. Bibliography, index. --  
1990 Horn Book

This was a read aloud book with my 8 and 10 year old children. I chose to read this book because we all loved Ms. Brooks's biography of Eleanor of Aquitaine. Before reading the book we thought of Joan as just a peasant girl that lead an army. After reading the book, we know Joan was so much more. She was intelligent, confident, valorous, and brave. Her life was difficult and filled with challenges that tested her beliefs and patriotism. We appreciate knowing the motivations behind her actions, and her single aim of restoring King Charles to the throne of France. We all would highly recommend this book to anyone wanting to learn more about Joan and her life.

The author, Polly Brooks does an excellent job setting the stage for Joan of Arc's remarkable life. The books opens up describing the King of France Charles VI descent into insanity. His Queen Isabella is unfaithful. She is sleeping with the King's younger brother Louis of Orleans. Louis and King Charles are the cousin of John the fearless, the powerful Duke of Burgandy. John and Louis want to take advantage of the king's insanity to futher their ambitions. The rivalry between John and Louis becomes so intense that John has Louis assassinated. Louis' friends have John killed. The English see an opportunity to secure the kingdom of France and choose to renew the Hundred Year War. The French suffer a catastrophic defeat at the Battle of Agincourt. Under the terms of the treaty, the heir to the French throne, the future king of France Charles VII is disinherited. The

the victorious English King, Henry V is given the daughter of the French king in marriage. Burgundy allies itself with England and the combined forces are threatening to overrun the rest of France. The main obstacle to the complete conquest of France is the strategic City Orleans. The common people of France look up to the King as their protector, even in areas that the English and their Burgundy allies control. This is where an unlikely savior of France enters the scene, the Maid Joan of Arc. The author describes the ascendency of a peasant girl who becomes the savior of France. Mark Twain commented that Joan of Arc was the most remarkable person to ever live so this is where that I will stop my review.

Enjoyed reading this book and learned a lot I didn't previously know about Joan of Arc as well as the historical period in which she lived (and died).

My 11 year old granddaughter loves this book. I bought it for her.

Purchased by school district. Didn't hear any complaints from the teacher (and I would), so assume all's good.

This is pretty good though pretty basic. I know more now than before reading. The book moves along at a good pace and chapters are short so you could read on at bed time.

Love history

Excellent Book. The details of Joan's life and her short 2 years of fame are almost too much to take in. The English are really pigs and cutthroats as is the Catholic Church. The author did a very fine job in taking a lot of facts and condensing them into a very readable book. More - More - More.

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