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Boy Proof

Rachel Wadham

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Castellucci, Cecil. *Boy Proof*. Candlewick Press, 2005. ISBN 0-7636-2333-4. \$15.99. 208 pp.

Reviewer: Rachel Wadham

Reading Level: Young Adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Contemporary realistic fiction;

Subject: Science Fiction Fans-Juvenile fiction; Friendship--Juvenile fiction; Teenage girls--Juvenile fiction;

High school senior Victoria Jurgen is fully in control of her life. Dressing and talking like her favorite Sci-Fi heroine, Egg, Victoria has isolated herself from everyone, especially boys. Keeping busy being a straight 'A' student, a photographer for the school paper, a member of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Club, and chatting online with other Sci-Fi fans, Victoria sees very little need for more human interaction. But her worldview is shattered when a new boy, Max Carter, comes to school. Max is smart, confident, artistic, in control, and handsome. With their developing friendship, Victoria begins to see through Max's eyes a wider world where she is not as smart as she thought and other people are truly important. As startling new realities impact her life, Egg's hard shell cracks and a new more self-actualized Victoria emerges.

First time novelist Cecil Castellucci has expertly captured the complex identity struggles that face teenage girls. Victoria is a strong character. Her voice rings true and many will find it echoing to their own lives. At the same time, Max's character is not as satisfactorily drawn and it is hard at times to see why Victoria resonates so strongly with him. Though not unique, the extended journal style provides the reader with just enough insight into Victoria's experiences, thoughts and dreams to make the novel real and satisfying. With its universal theme of finding and making ones life unique this is a novel that will truly resonate with teenage girls.