



2018

Dear Rachel Maddow

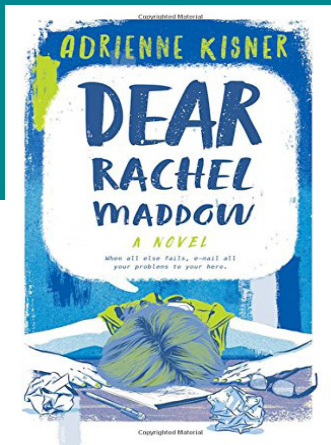
Emma Patton

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr>

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Patton, Emma (2018) "Dear Rachel Maddow," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 39 : Iss. 10 , Article 33.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol39/iss10/33>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the All Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Children's Book and Media Review by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.



Book Review

Dear Rachel Maddow

Author

Adrienne Kisner

Illustrator

Reviewer

Emma Patton

Rating

Dependable

Level

Young Adult

Pages

265

Year

2018

Publisher

Feiwel and Friends

ISBN

9781250146021

Brynn's life is complicated. Her father left, she has the world's worst stepdad, her brother died, and she's broken up with her girlfriend. On top of all that, Brynn now has to attend class in the basement, where all the "applied" classes are taught. But after being inspired by an assignment, she starts writing about her problems to Rachel Maddow, the host of MSNBC. Somehow, it makes her feel better to think that maybe Rachel reads the emails, but just having somewhere to send them is enough. When Brynn gets the opportunity to take on a new leadership role in her school, she becomes interested in the political process and the way anyone can make their voice heard. Initially, she thinks it is all because of Rachel Maddow's influence, but maybe the real inspiration comes from within Brynn herself.

Dear Rachel Maddow is unique in that it portrays a gay protagonist who is not questioning her sexuality. Often in young adult literature, characters will identify as queer but struggle to identify exactly where their attraction lies. Brynn, on the other hand, never questions her attraction for females. The book is made up entirely of Brynn's emails to Rachel Maddow. Interestingly, the reader never learns much about Maddow outside of how Brynn describes her. The reader never knows what she thinks of the details of Brynn's life. This could be frustrating to a reader, but it shows that what really matters is just having a place to turn in times of struggle. At a time when Brynn feels unsupported, grappling with grief and shame, she finds a person to turn to, even though it might just be a shout into the void. Brynn is a unique, but still relatable, character. Her story is entertaining, but not quite as thought-provoking as it could have been, given the subject matter.

*Contains severe language and mild sexual content.