



2008

A Voice of Her Own: Becoming Emily Dickinson

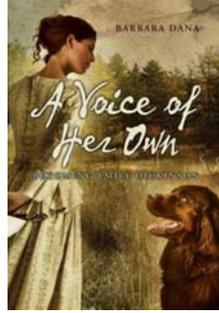
Megan Harris

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Harris, Megan (2008) "A Voice of Her Own: Becoming Emily Dickinson," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 29 : Iss. 6 , Article 19.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol29/iss6/19>

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Dana, Barbara. *A Voice of Her Own: Becoming Emily Dickinson*. Illustrated by Larry Rostant. HarperTeen, 2009. ISBN 9780060287047. \$16.99. 346 p.

Reviewer: Brown, Ruth-Anne

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young adult

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Historical fiction;

Subject: Dickinson, Emily, 1830-1886--Childhood and youth--Juvenile fiction; Amherst (Mass.)--History--19th century--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Emily Dickinson is the perfect daughter. She bakes her father's bread, dusts the stairs, takes care of her frail mother, and even comes home early from college after one year at the request of her father. But inside Emily wonders why God would bless women with talents when they are only meant to cook, clean, and raise the children quietly at home. The only way she can obey her father and herself is to keep her two selves separate. She is her daddy's perfect little girl by day and a poet by night. . Emily falls in love, but chooses not to lose herself and be overshadowed by a man. Even through illness, her battle with hypertension and her controlling father, Emily Dickinson thrives and makes her life her own by writing over seventeen hundred poems.

The cover of the book captures immediate attention with the enormous brown dog and the corseted brunette. Dana researched for several years in order to capture the true tone of Emily Dickinson and the mid-1800s New England setting. The reader can get an intimate understanding of Emily Dickinson through the journal like style of writing in the book. This detailed history of Dickinson's life shows her spirit and defiance against the ideal woman of her time. Parents and teachers can share this recount of one poet to show how poems can be used as a source of escape and passion.

Volume 29, no.6 (July/August 2009)