



**[Dear Rachel Maddow](#) by Adrienne Kisner**

Fiewel & Friends, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, 2018

ISBN: 9781250146021 (Hardback)

\*Age Range: 13-18 (Suggested by Publisher)

Grade Range: 8+ (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

### BOOK SYNOPSIS

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In Adrienne Kisner's *Dear Rachel Maddow*, a high school girl deals with school politics and life after her brother's death by drafting emails to MSNBC host Rachel Maddow in this funny and heartfelt young adult debut.

Brynn Haper's life has one steadying force—Rachel Maddow.

She watches her daily, and after writing to Rachel for a school project—and actually getting a response—Brynn starts drafting e-mails to Rachel but never sending them. Brynn tells Rachel about breaking up with her first serious girlfriend, about her brother Nick's death, about her passive mother and even worse stepfather, about how she's stuck in remedial courses at school and is considering dropping out.

Then Brynn is confronted with a moral dilemma. One student representative will be allowed to have a voice among the administration in the selection of a new school superintendent. Brynn's archnemesis, Adam, and ex-girlfriend, Sarah, believe only Honors students are worthy of the selection committee seat. Brynn feels all students deserve a voice. When she runs for the position, the knives are out. So she begins to ask herself: What Would Rachel Maddow Do?

### REVIEWS AND PRAISE

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"What unfolds is a heartbreaking but ultimately hopeful tale of a struggling student who sees an injustice and steps in. She does so unwillingly, but still, she does. Brynn is realistically depicted and even though this novel is epistolary, the supporting characters are well fleshed out, too. A necessary purchase wherever there are teens." —*School Library Journal*, **starred review**

"In her debut novel, Kisner uses the epistolary format to portray the life of a girl who has very little parental support and is seemingly falling through the cracks at school. . .Revealing Brynn to be an individual with realistic insecurities, biases, and complexities, Kisner playfully explores the very human manner in which a stranger like Maddow might come to feel like a friend and confidant." —*Publishers Weekly*

"Kisner perfectly captures the dueling emotions of hope and hopelessness as Brynn attempts to carve out a place in an often-hostile world, weaving wry humor into some gutting looks at addiction, loss, and abandonment. *Dear Rachel Maddow* is the perfect book for anyone who has ever felt truly understood by a comforting, friendly face smiling at them from the TV screen." —*Booklist*

**Updated 3.20.25**

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"This has all the hallmarks of a classic teen drama: the snooty rich-kid villain, the deceitful ex-girlfriend, the crappy stepfather, and the smartass outsider supported by a band of misfits (Brynn's classmates). . .fans of dark humor and tough heroines will want to tune into this story of a luckless girl finally defining her own future—with or without the help of political pundits." —*The Bulletin*

### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

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- 2019 ILA Children's and Young Adults' Book Award for YA Fiction
- YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults 2019
- YALSA Rainbow Book List 2018
- Texas Library Association TAYSHAS List 2019
- BuzzFeed 16 Best Queer YA Books of 2018
- New York Public Library Top Books for Teens 2018
- Junior Library Guild Pick, Fall 2018
- PEN New England Susan P. Bloom Discovery Award, 2016

### MEDIA AND RESOURCES

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- [Eliza Zied Interview](#)
- [Literary Rambles Interview](#)
- [Book Riot Interview](#)

### \*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES

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A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

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