

Fangirl

Rainbow Rowell

Reviewed by: Audrey Soohoo, Age 19

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Fangirl is a heartwarming novel about an introverted girl living through her first year of college while simultaneously writing fanfictions for an online blog in which she has thousands of followers. Before arriving at her new school, Cath Avery, the protagonist of the story, had never stepped much out of her comfort zone, preferring to hide away in her room and write stories for hours. However, her world begins to change when her twin sister, one of her only companions, decides that she does not want to share a dorm with Cath, thus forcing her to meet new people. After befriending her roommate and meeting an overly-friendly boy named Levi, Cath starts to open up to others, which undoubtedly affects her writing. Though family issues, writer's block, and blossoming feelings threaten to throw Cath off course, her growth and demonstration of inner strength help her make it through her freshman year.

Overall, I really enjoyed this novel and considered it to be quite the page-turner. I appreciated that the author included several different strong female characters throughout the story, and that their personalities remained constant despite the external factors affecting them. The novel depicted real situations and didn't attempt to sugarcoat serious problems that were presented as part of the plot. Unlike some other young adult books that I have read in the past, the protagonist of *Fangirl* remained true to herself and chose to focus on her own life before those of others. A common theme in romance novels is that the main characters begin to become so invested in their relationships that all of their traits are lost in the process, but Cath defied that trope. The only aspect of the novel that I didn't particularly like was that all of the "loose ends" were tied together very quickly towards the end of the novel without much explanation. The protagonist faced many conflicts throughout the year, but it was unclear how most of them were actually resolved. Despite this, however, I still believe that it was a very well-written and inspiring story.

I would recommend this book to the age group of 15+ because though it at first appears as if it is a lighthearted story, it still deals with heavy subject matters. It requires emotional maturity to handle several incidents involving mental illness, alcohol consumption, and romance, all within a school setting. Considering the characters are in college, they act in certain manners that may not be appropriate for younger readers. I believe that this book would be great whether it be a gift or a rental from the library, for it seems timeless. I would definitely read it again in the future, and would assume others might feel the same way. All of the characters were undoubtedly lovable, and the development of Cath's confidence and resilience made for a wonderful plot.

Recommended Titles:

Carry On, Rainbow Rowell

To All the Boys I've Loved Before, Jenny Han

The Fault in Our Stars, John Green