

BOOK REVIEW

NAME : B.BHUVANA SRI

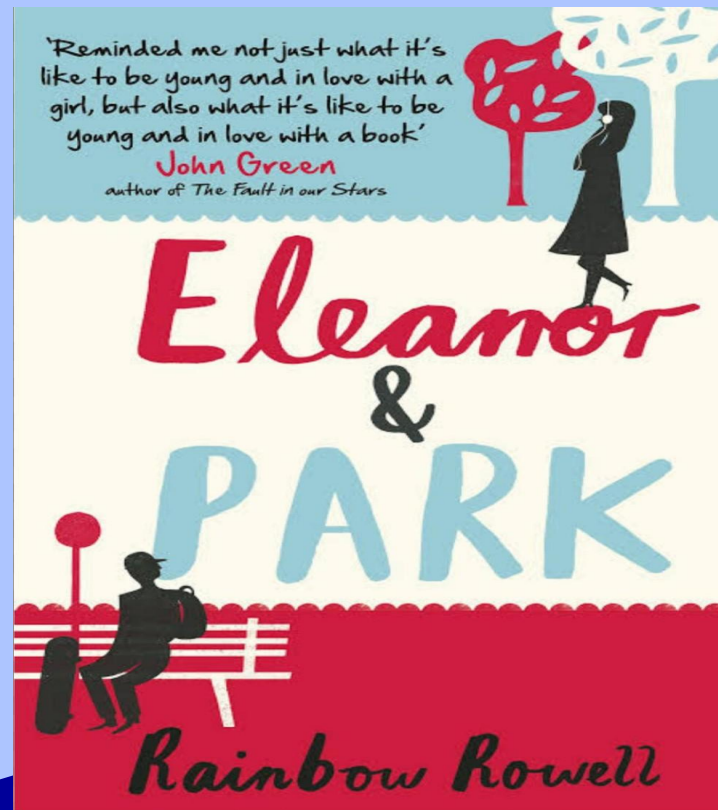
ROLL NO : 24BTB0A11

BRANCH : BIOTECHNOLOGY



Title : Eleanor and Park

Author : Rainbow Rowell



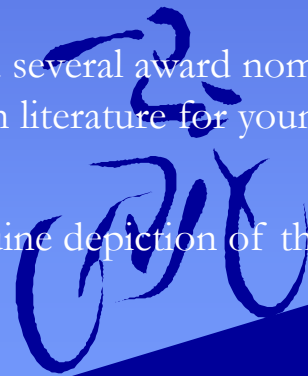
INTRODUCTION

- I selected Eleanor & Park because I had heard so much hype about it and was interested in the combination of coming-of-age elements, romance, and its handling of rough family life.
- * I anticipated a bittersweet, emotional book that would delve deep into the turmoil of being in love as a teenager and overcoming personal issues.
- * I wanted it to leave me pondering the complexities of relationships, identity, and acceptance.

AUTHOR BACKGROUND

Rainbow Rowell, author of *Eleanor & Park*, is a celebrated American author famous for her engaging young adult and contemporary novels.

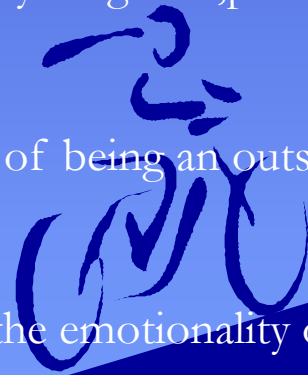
- Born on February 24, 1973, in Omaha, Nebraska. Rowell has journalism training, having been a newspaper columnist and editor prior to writing fiction.
- Her work typically deals with issues of love, identity, and self-discovery, and she is especially famous for developing well-developed, endearing characters.
- Rowell's first book, *Attachments* (2011), was a contemporary romance adult novel, though it was in her young adult novel *Eleanor & Park* (2012) that she gained wide recognition.
- The book gained instant bestseller status and achieved several award nominations, including the Michael L. Printz Honor, which promotes excellence in literature for young adults.
- *Eleanor & Park* has been widely applauded for its genuine depiction of the first love experience, teenage conflict, and adverse family relationships.
- Rowell's novels are cherished for their emotional resonance, realistic characters, and the manner in which they address complex issues in a readable and loving way.



SUMMARY

Eleanor & Park is a poignant and beautifully told novel of two misfit teenagers, Eleanor and Park, who bond on the school bus in 1986.

- Eleanor, the fiery red-haired girl with a dysfunctional family, does not fit in at her new high school.
- Park, the half-Korean boy with a passion for comic books and punk rock music, struggles initially with his own identity.
- In spite of their differences, they bond over their passion for music, comics, and outsider life.
- As the romance develops, they confront the trials of young love, personal challenges, and the harsh conditions of Eleanor's family life.
- Strong themes are the strength of love, the difficulty of being an outsider, and triumphing over personal and family challenges.
- The narrative reflects the intensity of first love and the emotionality of adolescent vulnerability.
- The characters are well developed, and their narrative is heartbreaking and inspirational.



MAIN CHARACTERS

- Eleanor Douglas :

An intelligent, clumsy adolescent struggling against a poisonous domestic life. She is sensitive, strong, and creative.

- Park Sheridan :

A kind, music-loving boy struggling with cultural expectations and self-concept.

- Their love is pure, awkward, and strong, making them extremely relatable

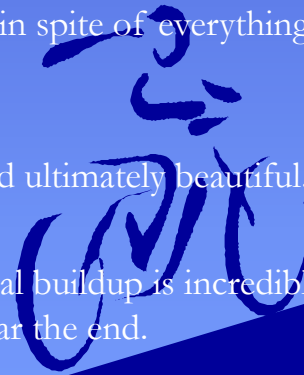


CENTRAL THEMES

- **Self-Discovery and Identity** : Both Park and Eleanor grapple with their own identities—Eleanor with her looks, her home life, and her self-worth, and Park with his cultural identity and what his family wants for him. The novel explores how these two characters develop and evolve as they learn about themselves and about one another.
- **Family and Dysfunction** : Eleanor's home life is dysfunctional, filled with abuse, neglect, and emotional turmoil. The novel discusses how challenging family dynamics influence one's sense of self and how they relate to others, particularly in Eleanor's situation, who has to endure harsh realities at home. It also addresses the influence of caring, loving families, as revealed through Park's family.
- **Outsider/Belonging** : Both Eleanor and Park are outsiders—Eleanor because she is an uncomfortable, red-haired girl with a difficult background, and Park because he is half-Korean in a predominantly white town. The novel examines the theme of finding one's place of belonging, both in a love affair and a community or family.
- **Bullying and Acceptance** : The novel barely scratches the surface of the emotional impact of bullying, especially through Eleanor's at school. It brings to light the strength of acceptance and the significance of discovering individuals who comprehend and support you.

ANALYSIS & OPINION

- Exceptionally well done in Eleanor & Park is Rainbow Rowell's capturing of the emotional depth of the characters and the rawness of teenage love.
- The chemistry between Eleanor and Park is real, making their relationship realistic and deeply affecting.
- The depiction of Eleanor's home life is powerful, revealing the harsh realities of abuse, neglect, and self-worth.
- The writing is vivid, and Rowell's skill at conveying emotions—ranging from awkwardness to passion—is amazing.
- * Eleanor, specifically, impressed me. Her vulnerability, strength, and resilience made her character feel authentic and relatable.
- Park, meanwhile, is the quiet, introspective hero who loves her in spite of everything. His character is also richly detailed and nuanced.
- The romance between them feels real—messy, complicated, and ultimately beautiful.
- * However, the pacing at times felt uneven. While the emotional buildup is incredible, the conclusion left me wanting a bit more. Some plot points felt rushed, especially near the end.
- * One direct quote is when Eleanor says, “I’m not pretty, I’m not good enough, but I’m not failure.”
- An indirect reference appears when Park reflects that “he never expected to care so much about anyone.

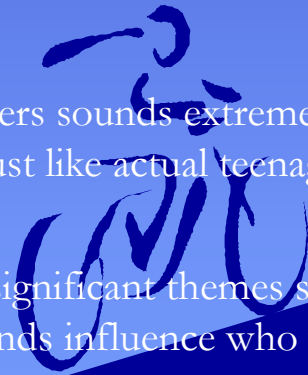


WRITING STYLE OF THE AUTHOR

- The writing style of Rainbow Rowell in *Eleanor & Park* is emotionally resonant, realistic, and extremely character-driven. She employs a split narrative format, alternating between the two main protagonists, Eleanor and Park. This enables her to provide every character with an individual voice and gives readers a strong emotional connection to their inner lives and emotions.
- Her dialogue is natural and realistic, conveying the awkwardness and rawness of teenage interactions. Rowell's characters speak and think in ways that feel true to their age, making their experiences relatable. The author also balances humor and lighthearted moments with the deeper, sometimes painful, themes of the novel, such as self-identity, family struggles, and the difficulties of first love.
- Her dialogue is natural and realistic, conveying the awkwardness and rawness of teenage interactions. Rowell's characters talk and think as if they were living in their time, so their experiences become accessible. The author also manages to balance the humor and lightheartedness with the more serious, at times painful, issues of the novel, including self-identity, family conflicts, and the challenges of first love.
- Rowell's descriptive passages are rich but not excessively elaborate, with an emphasis on the sensory and emotional experiences of her characters. She creates a strong sense of atmosphere through subtle details, especially through music and setting. Her writing is conversational and accessible, which makes the emotional richness of the book ring even more strongly.

STRENGTHS OF THE BOOK

- **Realistic Characters** : Eleanor and Park are realistic characters, each with their own personal struggles. Eleanor deals with bullying and an abusive home life, and Park deals with not fitting in and his cultural heritage. Their evolution through the book makes them both likable and genuine.
- **Emotional Resonance** : The book does a good job of portraying the emotional depth of being a teenager—particularly the first love feelings, self-doubt, and family problems. It's an intensely emotional tale that deals with sensitive subjects such as abuse and feeling like an outsider.
- **Dual Narratives** : By presenting the narrative from both Eleanor and Park's points of view, readers have the opportunity to see their thoughts, feelings, and development in a more personal manner. It provides richness to their relationship and gives a more complete picture of their struggles.
- **Realistic Dialogue** : The dialogue between the characters sounds extremely realistic. The conversations are awkward, humorous, and sincere—just like actual teenage conversations.
- **Explores Important Themes** : The book touches on significant themes such as love, identity, and family. It illustrates how our experiences and backgrounds influence who we are and how we interact with others.

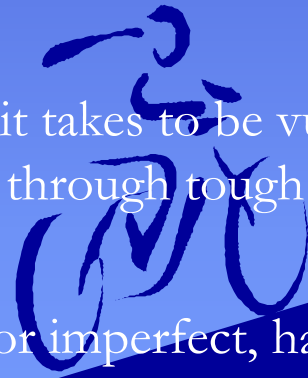


WEAKNESSES OF THE BOOK

- **Pacing Issues** : There are times when the pacing is unbalanced. While the developing relationship between Eleanor and Park progresses slowly and emotionally, the climax seems somewhat hurried, particularly at the end. Some crucial plot points might have been developed more intensively.
- **Predictable Plot** : The narrative takes a relatively predictable course, particularly in regards to the issues the characters encounter. Although the emotional depth is solid, the story doesn't provide many surprises or twists.
- **Lack of Closure** : The ending, though emotional, leaves a few questions unanswered, and not every reader will find the resolution fulfilling. Some might feel that the story doesn't completely tie up some of the character threads or situations.
- **Secondary Characters** : Although Eleanor and Park are well-developed, some of the secondary characters, such as Eleanor's family members or schoolmates, could have been fleshed out more. Their actions and motivations can come across as somewhat one-dimensional at times.

PERSONAL CONNECTION

- Reading Eleanor & Park made me reflect on my own experiences with love, self-discovery, and the challenges of growing up.
- Like Eleanor, I've had moments of feeling like an outsider, struggling with my own identity and finding my place in the world.
- The way the characters connect over music and comics reminded me of how small, shared interests can bring people together in meaningful ways.
- The book made me appreciate the strength it takes to be vulnerable and open up to others, particularly when one is going through tough times.
- It also reminded me that love, albeit messy or imperfect, has the ability to assist us in our growth and self-discovery.



LESSONS LEARNED FROM BOOK

- **The Power of Love and Connection** : The book illustrates that love, despite its messy and imperfect nature, has the ability to make us grow, heal, and be empowered during turbulent moments. Eleanor and Park stick by one another during their own struggles, illustrating how crucial it is to have someone who understands you.
- **The Importance of Self-Acceptance** : Eleanor's story teaches us that learning to love ourselves, imperfections and all, is the secret to happiness and confidence. The book is a reminder that we don't have to be perfect in order to deserve love and respect.
- **Triumphing Over Obstacles** : Both Eleanor and Park encounter personal challenges, whether it is family problems, identity crises, or belonging.
- The book reminds us that though life can be challenging, we can triumph over obstacles through resilience, love, and support from other people.



RECOMMENDATION FROM BOOK

- I highly recommend Eleanor & Park to readers who appreciate emotional, character-driven stories about first love, self-acceptance, and personal growth.
- If you appreciate books that delve into the intricacies of adolescence and the struggles of fitting in, this one will speak to you.
- It's ideal for those who love young adult novels that address realistic issues, such as family issues, bullying, and identity, with a blend of humor, tenderness, and heartache.
- The Fault in Our Stars or Fangirl fans will also enjoy Rainbow Rowell's writing and her well-crafted, relatable characters.



AUTHOR'S OTHER WORKS

Rainbow Rowell's Notable Books :

- **Fangirl :**
A college freshman and fanfiction writer.
- **Carry On :**
A fantasy spin-off of Fangirl.
- **Attachments :**
Adult contemporary romance.
- **Wayward Son and Any Way the Wind Blows :**
Continuation of Carry On.



HISTORICAL/CULTURAL CONTEXT FROM BOOK

1980s Setting :

Cassette tapes, Walkmans, comic books, and mix-tapes were central.

Racial dynamics :

Park's being half-Korean in a white neighborhood introduces tension.

No smartphones or internet :

intimacy is developed through shared experiences and conversations.



CHARACTER RELATIONSHIPS FROM BOOK

Eleanor & Park :

Empowering and transformative relationship.

Eleanor & Richie (stepfather) :

Abusive, fear-based dynamic.

Park & His Parents :

Strained with his father; warm with his mother.



SYMBOLISM IN THE BOOK

- Comics :

Escape and connection.

- Music :

Emotional expression; language of love shared.

- Red Hair :

Eleanor's individuality and vulnerability.

- The Bus Seat :

Space for developing relationship – from distance to closeness.



QUOTES FROM BOOK

- “He made her feel like more than the sum of her parts.”
- “Nothing before you counts. And I can’t even imagine an after.”



FAN RECEPTION AND AWARDS OF AUTHOR

- Praise for its realistic depiction of teenage love.
- Michael L. Printz Honor Book Award Winner (2014).
- Admired by supporters for being raw, nostalgic, and inclusive.



CONCLUSION

- Highly, highly recommend Eleanor & Park to anyone who loves a deeply emotional and exquisitely written love story with characters that are real and imperfect.
- It's an poignant portrayal of love, hurt, and the challenges of coming of age.
- Contemporary YA romance readers will especially love it, as it explores rich emotions and self-discovery.
- It's more than a love story; it's a reflection about discovering oneself in the midst of turmoil, rendering it a must-read for anyone trying to find their own way.





THANK YOU