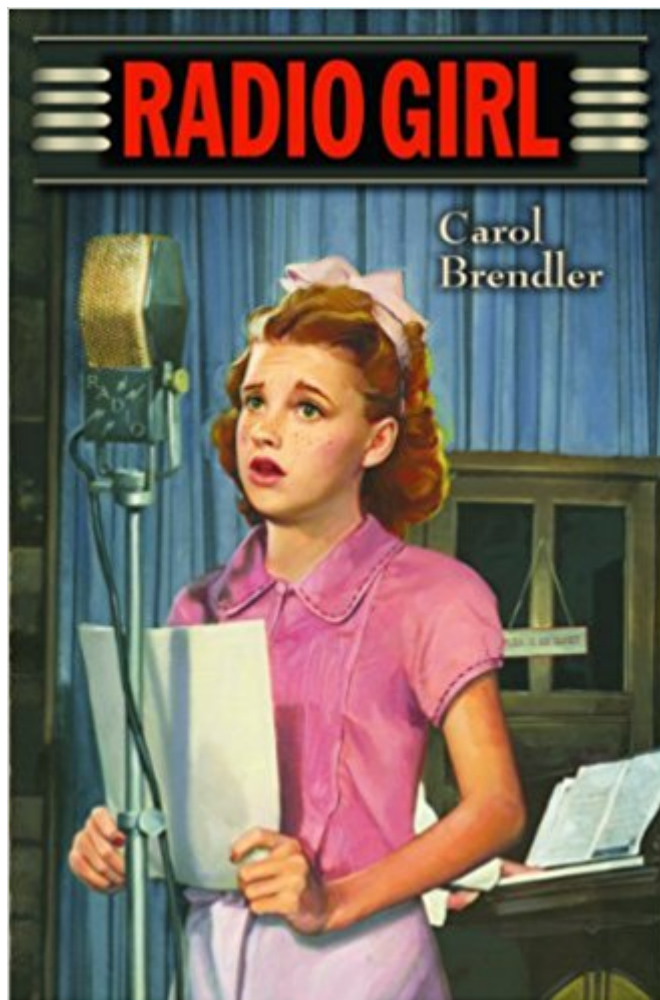


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Radio Girl



Synopsis

Can a girl from a middle-class Irish Catholic family living in Newark, New Jersey, in 1938 find fame and fortune (or even a job) as a radio star? Tune in to this unforgettable historical novel to find out. Poignant, often hilarious, it's the story of a family in crisis. Just as artful deception, smoke and mirrors characterize radio reality, so lies, secrets, and profound misunderstandings mark fourteen-year-old Cece Maloney's life: her secret job at a radio station, a cheating father, an aunt who may be romantically involved with the parish priest, a boy-crazed best friend, and a ham radio operator and would-be soldier both lying to their parents. The worlds collide on the night of Orson Welles's famous "The War of the Worlds" broadcast. As thousands flee in panic from the alleged Martian invasion, Cece must expose the truth about the radio hoax and confront the truth about her own and her family's dishonesty.

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Customer Reviews

Gr 5-7
New Jerseyite Cecelia Maloney is a girl with a plan. She wants to be a radio star and work in New York City just like her father, a sound-effects technician, even though her mother disapproves of her being in show business. The epitome of moxie, Cece won't let anything stop her from realizing her dream to be famous by her next birthday, even if that involves "sinning." She skips church, lies to everyone but her best friends, and steals transportation money from her family's rainy-day jar. Her good-natured pluck lands her a part-time job as a copygirl at CBS and an encounter with her idol, Orson Welles. Excitement over her budding

career prevents her from picking up signals of trouble between her parents. Life at home and work collide in a twofold climax: Cece learns of her father's affair with a radio starlet, and when Welles's "War of the Worlds" broadcast panics the city, Cece must confess how she knows it is a hoax. Debut novelist Brendler has created a funny, appealing protagonist with expressions full of the hyperbole one would expect from a 14-year-old with a penchant for melodrama: "his voice would broadcast itself into my heart." This engaging, detailed novel vividly depicts Depression-era lifestyles and the world of old-time radio. The best feature is a fresh take on the 1938 broadcast for readers familiar with the event and an intriguing introduction for those who are new to it. Marybeth Kozikowski, Sachem Public Library, Holbrook, NY (c) Copyright 2013. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Cece Maloney is only 14, but she knows what she wants out of life: a career in radio. Her pop, a well-respected radio sound-effects man has promised to get her an interview at Mutual Broadcasting, but when he reneges, Cece talks her way into a job typing newsroom copy and scripts at rival CBS. Cece is a fan of radio soaps, but they have nothing on her own life. Her teenage aunt appears to be having an affair with a parish priest, her best friend has a medium for a mother, and there's something odd going on between her parents. Will the truth crush her dreams? Brendler does two things here very well: she tells an enjoyable story, and the 1938 setting really evokes an era. A couple of twists are predictable -- at least to veteran readers -- and there's the occasional, small incorrect fact ("Swinging on a Star" wasn't recorded until 1944). But this is so full of charm and humor, it's good that a sequel seems on the way. Grades 5-8. --Ilene Cooper --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Beautiful hardbound copy of this unique book. I would hazard a guess of tweens as the target audience, but the reality is that I am a mid-20s adult who loved every page of this whiz-bang story. Radio Girl is the tale of a 1930s tweenager whose passion in life is to work at a Radio Station and possibly meet Orson Wells! Also includes the well-known War of the Worlds broadcast, this exciting book will keep you on your toes. Here's hoping that Ms. Brendler writes some more!

This book was almost written with older adults in mind. I hope that young people can relate to the times in radio when the sound effects were live and a person would go to a place of business

to try to get a job vs. using the Internet. This story was very gratifying and a joy to read. I purchased the book for our church library, just to get kids to read, but read with a passion for success (even if there were some defeats too).

Radio Girl was a very enjoyable read. Cece has to make some hard decisions, and she makes some mistakes along the way. The book is both funny and heart wrenching, and Cece is a believable and endearing character. I'd recommend this one to anyone who likes historical fiction.

Keep your eyes on this author. She is very talented. Radio Girl is a fantastic read. Could this be a Newbery award winner? I think so.

This is the story of Cecelia "Cece" (rhymes with "peace") Maloney, a fourteen-year-old New Jerseyite whose dream is to become a radio star. When her father signs her working papers, but refuses to take her with him to the studios at "the Mutual" (he's a sound effects engineer at the Mutual Broadcasting System where Cece's favorite radio series, THE SHADOW, is produced) to get a radio job as he promised, Cece sneaks off one Saturday and dares to try to get a job at the CBS radio network instead— and to her delight is allowed to help out in the mailroom. From there she goes on to helping with other things, including typing scripts, and meets one of her idols, young actor Orson Welles, as well as an actress she admires. But other things aren't going so well for Cece: her best friend seems to be dumping her for another girlfriend (one she initially said she hated), she's keeping her employment a secret from her overworked mother, and her dad's young sister, who lives with them, appears to be keeping a terrible secret. This is a bouncy, almost believable adventure that brilliantly brings 1930s teenage life alive: fashions, after-school jobs, favorite radio programs and singers, etc. Cece's breezy narrative, laced with the teen slang of the day, follows her as she confides in her best friend, and makes her way inch by inch toward her dream, never realizing her new job may gain her fame, but it's going to change her life in ways that she hasn't imagined. She's a typical teenager, self-absorbed enough and so fixed on her dream as not to guess what's going on at home. Brendler paints the 1930s well; I detected only one mistake: missalettes were a 1970s thing, and I did think it was a bit "overkill" to have Cece and her best friend share a similar family problem. But she nicely ties a historical event into the end of the story. Not great literature, but quite enjoyable in the end.

I'm not always a huge fan of historical fiction, but Radio Girl captivated me quickly with its humor

and its heroine. Cece is adorable and adventurous as she defies her family's wishes and pursues a weekend job in radio. The book's many period details immersed me in the world of 1930's Newark and New York City, and I especially enjoyed learning the slang of the day ("Nerts!" may be my favorite new-old expression). Celebrities like Orson Welles make cameos, and the secondary characters (especially Cece's hilarious best friend Bev) are very well drawn. I didn't want Radio Girl to end, and would love to see a sequel. I'd recommend this book for anyone aged 9 to 90! :)

This book is absolutely fantastic! It's funny, but also thoughtful. I could read this book over and over again. It's set in the late 1930's radio era around the Orson Welles "War of the Worlds" broadcast, and it is ultimately a story of hope and courage.

Carol Brendler captured the voice of the late 30s and provided twists and turns that kept me riveted till the end.

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