



The Boy Project: Notes and Observations of Kara McAllister

By Kami Kinard

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For anyone who's ever felt that boys were a different species....

Wildly creative seventh grader Kara McAllister just had her best idea yet. She's going to take notes on all of the boys in her grade (and a few elsewhere) in order to answer a seemingly simple question: How can she get a boyfriend?

But Kara's project turns out to be a lot more complicated than she imagined. Soon there are secrets, lies, and an embarrassing incident in the boy's bathroom. Plus, Kara has to deal with mean girls, her slightly spacey BFF, and some surprising uses for duct tape. Still, if Kara's research leads her to the right boy, everything may just be worth it. . . .

Full of charts and graphs, heart and humor, this hilarious debut will resonate with tweens everywhere.

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Editorial Review

Review

Looking for a boyfriend takes on a whole new meaning when 14-year-old Kara starts her research project.

Kara, a self-proclaimed geek, decides to find a boyfriend using the scientific method. This initially involves covert observation of her subject: boys. She keeps detailed index cards, and the novel is decorated with her charts, graphs and lists. The project eventually becomes a science-fair project that also utilizes Facebook for a love survey. When her best friend Tabbi gets a boyfriend first, unfortunately with Kara's crush, it takes Kara some time to remember that she needs her best friend more than she needs a boyfriend. This middle-school drama is hip to the moment, with break-up texting, kissing and popularity tug of wars. The boy obsession becomes tiresome, but Kara's irrepressible spirit, clever wit and introspection save this story from vapidity. Kara's hilarious observations, as when she compares feigning happiness to the difficulty of fastening the, like, 15 hooks of her 87-year-old grandma's bra, keep it buoyant. As she becomes increasingly discerning, Kara realizes that being true to oneself is the coolest asset.

Kara's boy-crazy experiment lends refreshing perspective on teen relationships, and the results point to self-enlightenment. (Fiction. 10-13)

-Kirkus Reviews - October 15, 2011

Kinard's first novel reads a bit like *Field Notes of a Romantically Frustrated Kid*. Her sympathetic, entertaining heroine, Kara McAllister, dismayed at not having been kissed by age 13, is determined to use the scientific method to get a boyfriend: she'll be the eighth-grade version of Jane Goodall, except she'll be observing boys instead of chimps. Not that there's a huge difference. Her goal is twofold: win the science fair with this project and achieve her other objective—unlimited texting, promised by her parents in return for an A in science. Unobtrusive observations, note taking, charts, graphs, and questionnaires (incorporated throughout) are all part of her plan, which has humorous and unexpected side effects as her views of, and feelings for, her subjects shift during the course of her research. Kinard creates a highly credible middle-school universe of popular girls, dorky boys, unpredictable teachers, and volatile loyalties; she hits all the right notes as Kara learns that first opinions are rarely accurate and that the scientific method does not always apply to human beings. Ages 9–12. Agent: Stimola Literary Studio. (Jan.)

-Publisher's Weekly, December 5, 2011

About the Author

Kami Kinard enjoys writing about the boyfriend quest more than she enjoyed experiencing it. A teaching artist on the SC Arts Commission's Roster of Approved Artists, she writes from Beaufort, South Carolina where she lives with her husband and two children. Please visit her online at: www.kamikinard.com.

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I, Kara McAllister, will change my image before the end of the school year. By “change my image” I mean “get a boyfriend.” And I know exactly how I’m going to do it. I’ll apply both my brains and the scientific method to the project. Hey, if the scientific method helped real scientists figure out the structure of an atom, surely it can help me figure out how to find a boyfriend!

This pack of index cards will be perfect for inconspicuously taking notes on my subjects (boys) in their natural setting (school). The scientific term for this is “unobtrusive observation.” What method of research could possibly be easier? All you have to do is be a little sly while looking around.

I’ll be the seventh grade version of Jane Goodall, except I’ll be observing boys, instead of chimps. Not that there’s a huge difference.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Marla Mestas:

Do you have favorite book? In case you have, what is your favorite's book? Book is very important thing for us to find out everything in the world. Each book has different aim or perhaps goal; it means that reserve has different type. Some people experience enjoy to spend their time for you to read a book. They are reading whatever they have because their hobby is usually reading a book. Consider the person who don't like looking at a book? Sometime, person feel need book once they found difficult problem or maybe exercise. Well, probably you will require this The Boy Project: Notes and Observations of Kara McAllister.

Andrew Fogarty:

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Caroline Edwards:

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Andrew McConnell:

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