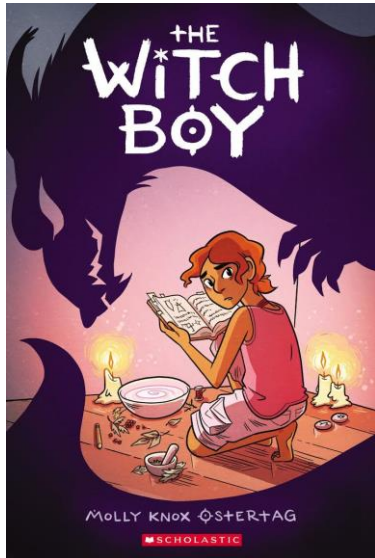


Spotlight on Books



As someone who did not share a lot of typical "boy" interests as a child, curious about the occasional "girl" interest, and whom was chastised for both, I sure would have loved Molly Knox Ostertag's graphic novel *The Witch Boy* had it been around. And I don't doubt for a second that it'll be equally as important to kids today.

Aster is the titular Witch Boy, born into a society where girls are expected to go into witchcraft, boys into shapeshifting. Ostertag is careful to note the importance of both (they are equally crucial), and sensitive, I think, to societies that are heavier on gender roles. But this is about that small yet significant population of folks who might do better if they were allowed to follow their hearts. Like Aster, unfortunately, most are mocked or get in trouble for doing so, even by family members who feel they're doing the right thing or can eradicate such feelings with a stern lecture.

Despite "Important" topics, it's first and foremost an engaging adventure story with compelling, well-defined characters. The art is bright and expressive, stylistically similar to Hope Larson or Faith Erin Hicke.

John Mutford, Library Manager

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