


## Heroine

*Mindy McGinnis*

Download now

Read Online 

# Heroine

*Mindy McGinnis*

**Heroine** Mindy McGinnis

**An Amazon Best Book of the Month! A captivating and powerful exploration of the opioid crisis—the deadliest drug epidemic in American history—through the eyes of a college-bound softball star. Edgar Award-winning author Mindy McGinnis delivers a visceral and necessary novel about addiction, family, friendship, and hope.**

When a car crash sidelines Mickey just before softball season, she has to find a way to hold on to her spot as the catcher for a team expected to make a historic tournament run. Behind the plate is the only place she's ever felt comfortable, and the painkillers she's been prescribed can help her get there.

The pills do more than take away pain; they make her feel good.

With a new circle of friends—fellow injured athletes, others with just time to kill—Mickey finds peaceful acceptance, and people with whom words come easily, even if it is just the pills loosening her tongue.

But as the pressure to be Mickey Catalan heightens, her need increases, and it becomes less about pain and more about want, something that could send her spiraling out of control.

## Heroine Details

Date : Published March 12th 2019 by Katherine Tegen Books

ISBN : 9780062847195

Author : Mindy McGinnis

Format : Hardcover 432 pages

Genre : Contemporary, Young Adult, Fiction, Realistic Fiction

 [Download Heroine ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Heroine ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Heroine Mindy McGinnis**

---

# From Reader Review Heroine for online ebook

## Hollis says

Never let it be said that McGinnis takes the easy way out in her books. Each one, at least those that I've read, handles something different and, usually, very dark. HEROINE tackles the opioid crisis through the lens of an injured sports star who is desperate to return to her previous incarnation as strong, capable, and on the fast track.

I could absolutely appreciate (whilst also being mostly terrified) of this downward spiral and the desperation that Mickey was driven to just to dull the pain, just to be able to get out of bed, just to be ready for the season. To have a future. But I found it very hard to like the journey, and not just because of the topic. Mickey was a challenging character to like because, even before her addition, she was kind of awkward and kind of uncertain about her place in the world and only really had one thing going for her : softball. And it was because of all that which drove her to push harder on the drugs, to do desperate things, because she initially rationalized it for the good of her family, her team. Until she no longer rationalized at all.

The middle of the story dragged quite a bit but the opening of the story is explosive in a way that pushes you on to see where things went to get to that point. And I wanted a happy ending. I know many users don't have one and I wondered if McGinnis would challenge us with a challenging, but real, ending. I wanted to know. And no, I'm not telling you either way.

So, again, did I like the book? No. But it's a brutal and no-holds-barred reflection on the reality of so many people. And I think that's worth the experience.

\*\* I received an ARC from Edelweiss and the publisher (thank you!) in exchange for an honest review. \*\*

---

## Jaye Berry says

This was so sad and soul-crushing that I'm suing Mindy McGinnis for emotional damages. **This book comes with a trigger warning for extremely realistic drug use.** And it doesn't take that trigger warning lightly. This book is dark and messed up, so avoid if you aren't in a good headspace.

When star athlete Mickey gets sidelined after a car accident before softball season, she refuses to give up and let her spot as catcher go to someone else. Behind the plate is the only place she's felt like she's belonged and the prescribed painkillers help her stay there. The pills don't just take away the pain though, they make her feel good. With a new circle of other injured athletes and people who are just bored, Mickey finds acceptance where it's easy to talk about anything and everything, even if it's just the pills. As the pressure to be the star athlete gets worse, her need increases and can send her spiraling out of control.

Jesus, this is some hard-hitting stuff. It's so tragic and gives such a hopeless feeling, even days later. The audiobook was really fantastic and this story is well written and told but damn, it really hits. This book had the same heartbreaking energy as *The Female of the Species* so at least she's staying on track. I think the part that just really got me the most was while people die and suffer in fantasy books, it is still fantasy but everything in this book could happen to anyone you know. You're not going to get eaten by a dragon in real

life (sadly) but you can sure get addicted to some bad things.

The first person POV shows us Mickey's every emotion and seeing her justify and rationalize her actions as everything falls out of control is heartbreaking. To watch her complete downward spiral into hard drugs was terrible, and honestly horrifying. This book never holds back; it gets gross and messy but is never seen as "if you do weed once you'll die" sort of school age scare tactic. Mickey's situation is all too real and I felt so sorry for her.

Very important, very well done but again, soul-crushing. Highly recommend if you're into feeling dead inside after reading a book.

---

## **Madalyn (Novel Ink) says**

This review originally appeared on Novel Ink.

I received this book for free in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

Content warnings: addiction; opioid addiction; extensive drug use (opioid pills, heroin), described in detail; overdose; withdrawal; death; car accident; needles; vomiting

**\*\*Please use caution going into this review and/or this book if you are a recovered or recovering addict. This book contains content that could be extremely triggering.\*\***

Mindy McGinnis is an author who I typically find very hit-or-miss, but her contemporaries always make me think and always tackle difficult subject matter with nuance. Heroin is no exception. In *Heroin*, McGinnis paints a harrowing and all-too-real picture of the US's opioid crisis, the myriad types of people affected, and the complexity of the issue itself.

We follow Mickey Catalan, a high school softball star in her small Midwestern town. At the beginning of the book, Mickey is driving with her best friend and fellow softball teammate, Carolina, in the passenger seat, when the two are involved in a nasty car crash that leaves both of them severely injured and puts their futures in jeopardy. Mickey, unable to play or condition during her recovery from surgery and learning to live with three new screws holding her hip together, quickly becomes dependent on her Oxycontin prescription to get through each day. What begins as a quick fix for Mickey to escape her problems soon spirals into full-blown addiction.

I should say early in this review that I have personally never dealt with addiction, so take all of my thoughts on its portrayal in this story with a grain of salt. However, I think *Heroin* succeeded in capturing many of the thought processes of an addict. Throughout the book, Mickey justifies her drug use because she's "not like other addicts"—she was first prescribed the drug completely legally, after all, unlike her newfound Oxy-using friends, who she continually demeans because they began using the drug recreationally. We see the victim-blaming narrative play out in Mickey's inner monologue, even though she is in exactly the same situation as her fellow addicts. It may be cliché, but it's true: the first step is admitting you have a problem, and Mickey is in deep, deep denial throughout this story.

We see Mickey start to slip away from her friend group and her softball team as she spends more and more

time using with her new group of friends. She steals from her mom and stepmom in order to buy more drugs. When Mickey and her friends' source of Oxycontin is no longer a viable option, they switch to easier-to-access heroin with almost no hesitation. Through all these things, Heroine truly captures the desperation addicts feel and the ways in which addiction can take over your life and your thoughts. It's difficult to witness as a reader, because all the bad parts of addiction Mickey experiences feel so inevitable from the outside. However, reading from Mickey's first-person perspective perfectly illustrates how people fall into addiction and why it feels to impossible to escape from the depths of it.

Mickey is no stranger to the opioid crisis— it's taken over in her town, to the point where everyone knows someone affected— and yet that doesn't stop her own dependency on the drug from happening. Heroine shows how, really, this can happen to anyone. As I mentioned, Mickey is originally prescribed Oxycontin completely legally, and it's all too easy for her to access the drug even once her prescription runs out. I think this book illustrates some of the irresponsibility on the part of doctors and drug companies in prescribing opioids.

While I do think the portrayal of addiction in Heroine, though difficult to read, is a necessary one, the reason I can't rate this book higher boils down to the complete and utter lack of connection I felt to all the characters in this story. We don't get to spend any time with Mickey as a character before the car accident, so her whole personality in this book is her becoming a drug addict. We are continually told about her personality before the accident, but we're never shown it, so it's almost impossible to feel a real connection with her as a character. Additionally, her parents, softball teammates, user friends, and all other side characters in this story all felt like characters whose sole roles in this book were to further the events of Mickey's plot— none of them felt like fully fleshed-out characters in their own right. I think this did a disservice to the book overall.

In short, this was a powerful read about a subject I'm glad YA is tackling, but don't expect to find your new favorite characters in this story.

---

## **Ashley says**

*"Sometimes it's hard to decide what's the worst thing I ever did."*

This was a hard book to read. Mickey feels like any sports-obsessed high school girl, like she could be real and out there. And to a degree, she is. Addiction is an epidemic in America, and it's destroying people's lives every day. Books like Heroine give a face to a disease that is easy to dehumanize. You don't think it could ever be someone you know, or a relative, or even yourself. Mickey thought the same. Seeing her rationalize her growing addiction, making excuse after excuse... it hits home how someone can become so caught up in drugs that they change their whole life and personality just to chase that high. Plus this book is set in my home state of Ohio, where heroine use kills people every single day. And this narrative makes it clear that it can happen (or be currently happening) to anyone - no one is safe when they can get drugs like these from their doctor's office. One character points out the fact that oxycodone has the same molecular structure as heroine. That a life-ending addiction can be started at the prescription counter is a terrifying and sobering thought.

Heroine is a book about how addiction isn't just relegated to people that the populace consider 'druggies' - it's happening in our parks and public spaces, to people who seem 'normal', and we all need to be aware. 4.25/5, well written and definitely worth your time.

---

## **PinkAmy loves books, cats and naps says**

Mickey fractures her hip just a few months before senior year softball season. After one prescription of OxyContin, she's hooked. Good thing she has it under control. She's not an addict like Josie, the girl who gives her pills. She can stop any time she wants. Mickey just needs to be ready for spring training. She'd never crush and snort the pills. Until she does. She'd never mix them with water and shoot them into her veins. Until she does. She'd never switch to heroin. She can stop any time she wants.

HEROINE sent chills through my body from start to finish. I wanted to climb into my Kindle and stop Mickey from taking that first extra pill. I was the kid who listened to the Don't Do Drugs lectures and took them seriously. I tell doctors I don't want pain meds after surgery. I make the nurses remove the morphine drip the minute I'm lucid. I don't fill pain med prescriptions. I've never had a substance abuse problem because Mickey is my nightmare. I'm lucky those lectures scared me so much, because I can see myself, in Mickey's shoes, becoming her.

Mindy McGinnis has her pulse on the heart and mind of a teen who falls into addiction. She's seventeen. Goal oriented. Softball. College scholarship. She knows her body better than the doctors the way most teenagers know more than adults. Nothing bad will happen because bad things happen to other people. Addiction happens to other people.

HEROINE should be required reading for teenagers, their teachers, coaches and parents. Anyone could become Mickey. Those of us who don't have more fortunate DNA and get scared by cautionary tales. We are the lucky ones.

---

## **Sana says**

UGH, EVERYTHING ABOUT THIS COVER IS JUST :HEART EYES:

Also, no idea how she does it but I love the subjects she tackles in her books from a cli-fi about water scarcity to a historical YA about lobotomies to rape culture and now drug addiction. In other words, I stan one (1) Mindy McGinnis

---

## **Kai says**

~~I'm so ready for this~~ I'm not ready for this

---

## **Chelsea (chelseadolling reads) says**

This book was heavy, but SO good. Wow.

TW: extremely realistic & descriptive drug use (**anyone** recovering from addiction should proceed with

caution)

---

### **Trina (Between Chapters) says**

This was uncomfortable to read and I hated what was happening at times, but I have been discussing this book with people I know who with addiction recovery, which has really helped me process my feelings and form a deep respect for this book. It portrays addiction and withdrawal brutally, but without reducing the character to a stereotype. I believe the intent is to humanize people with substance use disorders to people unfamiliar with addiction.

Aside from how it handles the topic, I also really enjoyed the flow of the writing. I've read all of Mindy's books and while this isn't my favorite story, this has my favorite writing of her 3 contemporaries so far. It's easy to read and Mickey is a well developed character and you can really empathize with her hopes and worries.

tw: The book starts with this warning: *"This book contains realistic depictions of opioid use. Recovered and recovering addicts should proceed with caution."* PLEASE heed this warning. There is detailed use of pills, snorting, and needles. The drugs shown are Oxy and heroin. There is a car accident, injury, and brief hospitalization. There is also quite a bit of page time given to discussing poop, which felt appropriate due to the portrayal of withdrawal, but I know that's a squeamish thing for some.

*\*An ARC was provided to me by the publisher. My opinions are my own.\**

---

### **Emily May says**

*I am not a wasted person. I am not prowling the streets. I am not an addict. I am a girl spinning her locker combination. I am a girl who got a B on her math test. I am a girl who has two holes on the inside of her arm, but they do not tell the whole story of me.*

**This book left me feeling hollow.** By this I mean that it hit me so hard in so many different ways that I now feel emptied out. Saying it is "sad" is not enough. "Horrible" is closer to the truth, but that seems too sensational.

*When I wake up, all my friends are dead.*

Heroin starts with ^this arresting sentence that grabbed my attention and made my jaw drop. Then it jumps back in time. The following build-up to the horror you know is coming is a quiet, introspective slippery slope. It's about a girl with a bright future, an accident, a harmless prescription that became not enough, just one more, denial, just two more, lying, more and more, stealing. All building up to the inevitable climax.

The book comes with a trigger warning and recovering addicts should heed it. There are details about needles and the process of drug use, but also - and I think this is the most emotionally-challenging thing of all - a close look at the mental place Mickey finds herself in. It is very easy to understand how drugs become

an attractive option to her, and how it escalates into an obsession, followed by lying to her family, her friends, and herself.

McGinnis doesn't go easy on us. She does not sugarcoat the horrible lengths Mickey will go to for her next fix. The author is neither finger-wagging in her attitude to drugs, nor simplistic in the portrayal of Mickey herself. Though I found Mickey a highly sympathetic character, you can also see how she alienates those around her through her actions.

I felt a little panicked as I followed Mickey on her downward spiral. This smart girl with a promising softball career ahead of her... seeing her life fall apart, piece by small piece, is terrifying. Her addiction steals her sense of morality, of right and wrong. The relief she feels over getting new pills eclipses any shame or guilt she might have otherwise felt.

I also really appreciated all the nuanced relationships in the book. Mickey is adopted and her adoptive parents are divorced after her father had an affair. Now he is having a baby with his new wife and this causes complications between them all, but I think it is done very well. I especially liked the strange and begrudging mutual respect that grows between Mickey's mom and her dad's new wife, Devra. The friendships that are made and the ones that fall apart over the course of the novel are complex and feel real, too.

Also, I'd just like to say that I really like how McGinnis constantly tries new things with her writing. She doesn't stick to trends, but instead writes unique and interesting stories. Few authors do this. Patrick Ness is another one. Of course this means her books can be hit and miss for me, but I really appreciate the attempt to go somewhere new.

I highly recommend *Heroine* for contemporary fans who are in a good mental place.

[Blog](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Youtube](#)

---

### **Milena says**

I have no sympathy whatsoever for junkies (being raised by one may have to be the reason), and I have even less sympathy for writers who have no idea what the hell are they talking about.

---

### **Vicky Who Reads says**

*4 stars*

Mindy McGinnis is one of the most versatile and consistently amazing writers I know of.

All of her books are stunning and range from a little dark to SUPER DARK, all while being some of the best teen literature I've ever read.

Somehow, she effortlessly gets to the root of something with a narrative style that fits the story, and her latest novel, *Heroine*, was no exception to this streak of consistently great books.



Honestly? *Heroine* is the darkest, scariest book Mindy's written that I've read. What makes it so scary is that it's so real—it's happening to regular people in our modern world, and that makes it 100x more of a gut-punch than any fantasy novel.

*Heroine* is dark. It's gruesome. It's really really really scary.

And it's real.

*Heroine* starts out with Mickey Catalan—regular teen in a small town, hoping to get a scholarship for softball, which is a huge part of her life.

And then she gets in a car crash and is prescribed Oxy.

And then she wants more.

And then and then and then and then.

The way McGinnis sets this up is what ultimately makes this so relatable—and therefore more emotional—for the reader. It's just Mickey, softball player. She knows about the opioid epidemic in her town, but that's not her.

And slowly, very slowly throughout the book, we see Mickey become addicted. To Oxy, and then heroin. It happens so naturally, so subtly, over a series of justifications, that you can't help but look back and go "Wow. I never would have known."

In the end, Mickey's best friend Carolina who was in the crash with her asks "Why you and not me?" And there's no good answer to that, and Mickey doesn't have one either.

This is what makes this book so frightening (but wholly necessary). It brings the reader—who might ~know~ about this, but don't empathize—so much closer to what addiction is like and how it happens.

I fully admit that I live a very sheltered life and although I ~know~ about addiction and drugs through education, I've never been exposed to it. And Mickey wasn't either. That's what scared out of my pants by this book. There's no formula to how addiction works, and suddenly everything became more personal.

Although *Heroine*'s goal isn't to teach—it brought the topic so much closer to the reader. It made them understand Mickey's shoes and how it can happen.

That is what I believe is this book's greatest triumph. And it's a damn good story, too.

I do have to add that the reason I took off a star is in part because I have to be able to differentiate McGinnis' work (if I five star all of them, you'll never know which I like best?) and also because a few of the hints McGinnis dropped along the way read a little too obvious to me. (A minor qualm, really.)

I'd put this tied in second place with *Given to the Sea*, with first being *The Female of the Species* and third being *A Madness So Discreet*.

Ultimately, I cannot attest to the accuracy of *Heroine*, although people I know who have been personally affected by addiction and have talked about how great this was, so I like to think McGinnis did a good job of

portraying it.

(Also, I really love what Erin Fitzsimmons did with the cover and Heroine/Heroin/Her!)

So overall, this was great. Which I totally expected. I just never expected how hard this book would hit me.

*Thank you so much to Harper Collins and Edelweiss for providing me with a digital review copy in exchange for an honest review!*

--

initial thoughts upon finishing:

okay wow that was very scary and very intense

not sure what to rate it yet and it's one of mcginnis' darker books so just be prepared if you intend to read!!!

[Blog](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#)

---

### **Elise (TheBookishActress) says**

hey Mindy thanks for saving my life

---

### **Noa ?? says**

I honestly don't know if I have the words right now. This was... heartbreaking, raw, sad and yet **hopeful** ?

Review to come, for sure. Mindy McGinnis, you're out of this world.

---

### **Madison (life uh finds a way) says**

Wow wow wow. If you're in a good and healthy mental state please read this book. It's so eye opening and heart breaking.

---