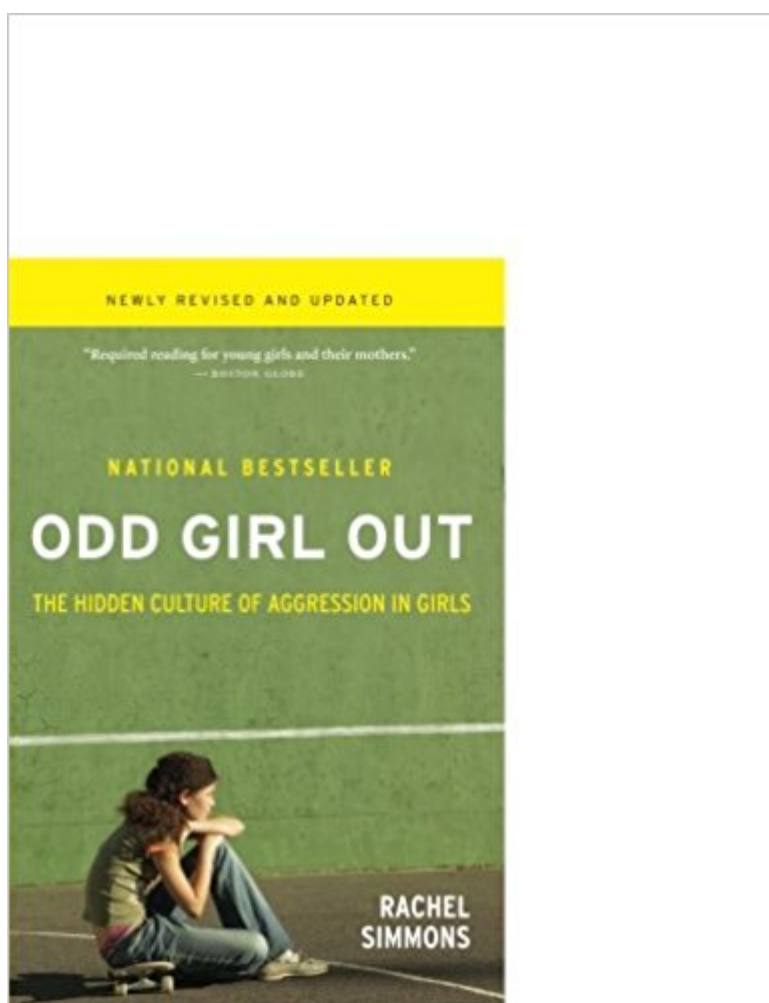


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Odd Girl Out, Revised And Updated: The Hidden Culture Of Aggression In Girls



Synopsis

REVISED AND UPDATED WITH NEW MATERIAL ON CYBERBULLYING AND HELPING GIRLS HANDLE THE DANGERS OF LIFE ONLINE When *Odd Girl Out* was first published, it became an instant bestseller and ignited a long-overdue conversation about the hidden culture of female bullying. Today the dirty looks, taunting notes, and social exclusion that plague girls' friendships have gained new momentum in cyberspace. In this updated edition, educator and bullying expert Rachel Simmons gives girls, parents, and educators proven and innovative strategies for navigating social dynamics in person and online, as well as brand new classroom initiatives and step-by-step parental suggestions for dealing with conventional bullying. With up-to-the-minute research and real-life stories, *Odd Girl Out* continues to be the definitive resource on the most pressing social issues facing girls today. **READING GROUP GUIDE AND TEACHER'S GUIDE** available at www.marinnerreadersguides.com

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Customer Reviews

There is little sugar but lots of spice in journalist Rachel Simmons's brave and brilliant book that skewers the stereotype of girls as the kinder, gentler gender. *Odd Girl Out* begins with the premise that girls are socialized to be sweet with a double bind: they must value friendships; but they must not express the anger that might destroy them. Lacking cultural permission to acknowledge conflict, girls develop what Simmons calls "a hidden culture of silent and indirect aggression." The author, who visited 30 schools and talked to 300 girls, catalogues chilling and heartbreaking acts of

aggression, including the silent treatment, note-passing, glaring, gossiping, ganging up, fashion police, and being nice in private/mean in public. She decodes the vocabulary of these sneak attacks, explaining, for example, three ways to parse the meaning of "I'm fat." Simmons is a gifted writer who is skilled at describing destructive patterns and prescribing clear-cut strategies for parents, teachers, and girls to resist them. "The heart of resistance is truth telling," advises Simmons. She guides readers to nurture emotional honesty in girls and to discover a language for public discussions of bullying. She offers innovative ideas for changing the dynamics of the classroom, sample dialogues for talking to daughters, and exercises for girls and their friends to explore and resolve messy feelings and conflicts head-on. One intriguing chapter contrasts truth telling in white middle class, African-American, Latino, and working-class communities. *Odd Girl Out* is that rare book with the power to touch individual lives and transform the culture that constrains girls--and boys--from speaking the truth. --Barbara Mackoff --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Although more than 16 years have passed, Rhodes Scholar Simmons hasn't forgotten how she felt when Abby told the other girls in third grade not to play with her, nor has she stopped thinking about her own role in giving Noa the silent treatment. Simmons examines how such "alternative aggression" where girls use their relationship with the victim as a weapon flourishes and its harmful effects. Through interviews with more than 300 girls in 10 schools (in two urban areas and a small town), as well as 50 women who experienced alternative aggression when they were young, Simmons offers a detailed portrait of girls' bullying. Citing the work of Carol Gilligan and Lyn Mikel Brown, she shows the toll that alternative aggression can take on girls' self-esteem. For Simmons, the restraints that society imposes to prevent girls from venting feelings of competition, jealousy and anger is largely to blame for this type of bullying. It forces girls to turn their lives into "a perverse game of Twister," where their only outlets for expressing negative feelings are covert looks, turned backs and whispers. Since the events at Columbine, some schools have taken steps to curb relational aggression. For those that haven't, Simmons makes an impassioned plea that no form of bullying be permitted. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

i'm not sure how i missed this book. it was published in 2002, and is absolute must reading for EVERY youth worker (male or female) and every parent of a girl.it's a tough read and an easy read. easy, because simmons is an excellent writer and fills the book with real stories of real girls. tough,

because the real girls she profiles reveal a profile of aggression (almost universally experienced) that is so painful, so destructive, it's difficult to read (especially if you care about teenage girls). I had a great chat with my 13 year-old daughter, Liesl, after reading this book. She was very open about how girls treat each other. I may be fooling myself, but I do think that Liesl's private school (a Waldorf school, which is particularly nurturing and has no tolerance for mistreatment) protects her from the fullest extent of what this behavior would look like in the vast majority of schools. In fact, I could easily see Liesl being the aggressor (the rumor-creator, the silent treatment-giver, the "we don't like you" club-originator), were she in a different context. The book talks at length about why this alternative aggression is so commonplace amongst girls. It also talks about why schools are so poor at addressing it. It's a bit light on suggestions for what we all (who care about girls) can do about it - but there is some of this, especially near the end of the book. Given my passion for early adolescent ministry, I was intrigued to read that this behavior is at its peak during the young teen years. The author focuses all of her research on girls from 5th grade through 9th grade, with the "sweet spot" (bad choice of words, I suppose) between 11 and 14. Here's one particular paragraph I found fascinating: at first glance, the stories of girls not being allowed to eat at the lunch table, attend a party, put their sleeping bag in the middle, or squeeze inside a circle of giggling girls may seem childish. Yet as Carol Gilligan has shown, relationships play an unusually important role in girls' social development. In her work with girls and boys, she found that girls perceive danger in their lives as isolation, especially the fear that by standing out they will be abandoned. Boys, however, describe danger as a fear of entrapment or smothering. This contrast, Gilligan argues, shows that women's development "points toward a different history of human attachment, stressing continuity and change instead of replacement and separation. The primacy of relationship and attachment in the female life also indicates a different experience of and response to loss. The centrality of relationship to girls' lives all but guarantees a different landscape of aggression and bullying, with its own distinctive features worthy of separate study.

If you are a man seeking to understand why the woman you love has found herself cast out of a group, or if you want to understand your teenage daughter's challenges to forming long lasting friendships. Or if you are wondering how you ended up in the middle of a conflict with no idea how to help either side. This book was very revealing to me.

Good book for those who want to understand teen girls aggression. Very informative! Only half way through and can't put it down.

This book helped me to understand how teachers are oblivious to the abuse girls suffer from other girls and why girls seemed trapped. I wish that all teachers were required to read a book like this. Perhaps, their antennas would be raised and they could help girls who are suffering in silence.

It gave me insight

This book resonated with me on so many levels: as a girl who dealt with alternate aggressions, as a teacher of young girls, as a stepmother of an adolescent, and as an aunt. Although at times redundant and lengthy in its retelling of countless interviews, this book is a great read for anyone who has a young girl in their life.

The insidious nature of attacks by girls on other girls, which starts when they are still little darlings in grade school, is very hard to understand. This book really helps. I think every teacher should be required to read it in order to learn about the subtleties of the symptoms to look for; then maybe they can at least not discount the reactions of children who are being attacked, so they don't feel so alone. I sure would like more advice on how to prevent it in the first place.

This should be required reading for all parents of girls while they are still little.. Once parents get a more clear picture of what's out there then they can choose a path to help raise strong, healthy minded girls. Girls who will be more prepared and able to understand and cope with the scenarios they will encounter.

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