



# Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls

By *Rachel Simmons*

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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.

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## **Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls** By Rachel Simmons Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

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

#### From Publishers Weekly

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.

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#### From [Booklist](#)

Forget the stereotypes of sugar and spice. Girls are *mean*, and as this book and a recent *New York Times Magazine* cover story indicate, their subtle, insidious style of bullying is rapidly garnering attention and concern. Simmons, a twentysomething with a political background, calls on her extensive face-to-face research with teens in this book that exposes the social minefields of female adolescence and the deep scarring

that can result. Bolstered with numerous revealing anecdotes and quotes, *Odd Girl Out* does an excellent job of articulating to adults exactly the pain and subtle warfare that many teen girls experience, and Simmons offers thoughtful motivations for both bullies and the parents who are reluctant to rein them in. She also offers admirable, groundbreaking insight into an all-too-common issue and will be invaluable to any adult struggling to help a girl get through her teens. Also suggest Sharon Lamb's revealing title *The Secret Lives of Girls*. Gillian Engberg

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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Neil Williams:**

The book *Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls* can give more knowledge and information about everything you want. Why must we leave a very important thing like a book *Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls*? A few of you have a different opinion about e-book. But one aim this book can give many information for us. It is absolutely correct. Right now, try to closer along with your book. Knowledge or data that you take for that, you could give for each other; you are able to share all of these. Book *Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls* has simple shape but you know: it has great and big function for you. You can appearance the enormous world by available and read a book. So it is very wonderful.

#### **Patricia Bush:**

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#### **William Rice:**

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#### **Harold Bunch:**

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