

Odd Girl Out
The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls
By
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Relevant Quotes from her national bestseller:

Girls use backbiting, exclusion, rumors, name-calling, and manipulation to inflict psychological pain on targeted victims. P. 3

Girls frequently attack within tightly knit networks of friends, making aggression harder to identify and intensifying the damage to the victims. P. 3

Girls fight with body language (turning your back) and relationships instead of fists. P. 3

In girls bullying peaks during the ages of ten to fourteen. P. 4

Girls feel angry in fundamentally different ways than boys, but the many girls appear to show anger differently. Girls anger may be cover and relational. Children want three things out of life: connection, recognition, and power. Connection propels friendship and the need for recognition and power ignites competition and conflict. P. 9

Girls flash looks, pass notes, and spread rumors. P. 15

Among girls the feeling of solitude and isolation is overpowering. P. 32

Schools lack consistent public strategies for dealing with alternative aggressions. P. 39

The most common forms of relational aggression are “do this or I won’t be your friend anymore,” ganging up against a girl, the silent treatment and non-verbal gesturing or body language. P. 43

“Your friends know you and how to hurt you. They know what your real weaknesses are: They know exactly what to do to destroy someone’s self-worth. They try to destroy you from the inside.” Such pointed meanness can stay with you for your entire life. It can define who you are.” 8th grade girl quote! P. 43

Relational aggression is invisible and hard to detect. It is not thought of as bullying. P. 45

The silent treatment is the most pointed of all relational aggression. Mean looks and the silent treatment are the ultimate undercover aggression. P. 47

Girls who are bullied constantly by other girls turn to boys as their closest friends. P. 54

The plight of girls who are victims of relational aggression is usually the hardest to address. P.61

Without an understanding of their unique experience of bullying, girls often end up blaming themselves for their own victimization. P. 62

Girl bullies are often likely to be the most socially skilled in a group complicates matters further. P. 62

In a world that socializes girls to prize relationships and care above all else, the fear of isolation and loss casts a long shadow over girls' decisions around conflicts, driving them away from direct confrontation. P. 70

No matter how upset they were, these girls said they would rather not hurt someone else's feelings at the expense of their own feelings. P. 70

As feelings grow in size and intensity, so does the challenge of restraint. P. 72

Girls admitted they took their anger against other girls out on an animal or siblings. P. 73

Fear of speaking face to face usually ends up worsening girls' conflicts by forcing them to involve third parties. P. 73

The surface of a girl fight can be silent and smooth as a marble. Many girls use double doses of distance and silence to announce their anger, leaving defendants clueless about what they've done. P. 75

When the fight is concluded, one girl has usually surrendered and apologized-via note, messenger, e-mail, instant message, or in person-while the other has "won." P. 76

Girls who want to bypass conflict entirely may turn to other behavioral pathways. Humor is an especially popular way to injure a peer indirectly. Joking weaves a membrane of protection around the perpetrator as she jabs at a target. P. 78

Nothing launches a girl faster, or takes her down harder, than alliance building, or "ganging up." The ultimate relational aggression, alliance building, forces the victim to face not only the potential loss of the relationship with her opponent, but with many of her friends. P. 79

By engaging in conflict as a group, no one girl is ever directly responsible for her aggression. Anger is often conveyed wordlessly, and the façade of the group functions as an eave under which a girl can preserve her "nice girl" image. P. 80

If fights are ultimately a contest of relationships, the facts of the conflict are easily dwarfed by the alliances forming around them. P. 83

A plurality creates a safe space for girls to be mean in a culture that refuses to allow girls individual acts of aggression, making alliance building a rare intersection of peer approval with aggression. Alliances create underground network in which girls can be in charge of their own social norms, deciding together when the use of aggression is deserved. P. 83-84

Where males opted for “fight or flight,” females would “tend and befriend,” often nurturing or seeking the support of others rather than attempting to aggress or escape. P. 87

In clique expulsions, punishments range from pretending the girl never existed to embarking on campaigns of scorching cruelty. These expulsions may seem sudden, arbitrary, and just plain mean. P. 88

For most girls there is little more painful than to stand alone at recess or lunch. P. 101

One of the chief symptoms of girls’ loss of self-esteem is the sense of being crazy, of not being able to trust one’s own interpretation of people’s actions or events. P. 101

As most any girl knows, one of the worst insults is to be called a girl who “thinks she’s all that.” This girl, loosely defined as a conceited, is considered a show-off, obnoxious, or full of herself. By fifth grade, girls are intimately familiar with “all that,” an epithet that grows with them into adulthood, gradually evolving into the more genteel belief that “she thinks she’s better than me.” P. 107

Research indicates that girls who are victimized are significantly more likely to become bullies themselves. P. 139

Parents would show girls that conflict-free relationships do not exist. Instead of believing conflict terminates relationships, girls could learn that no relationship can survive without conflict. Girls would learn not to be controlled by fear, understanding that relationships ebb and flow beyond the power of one. P. 262