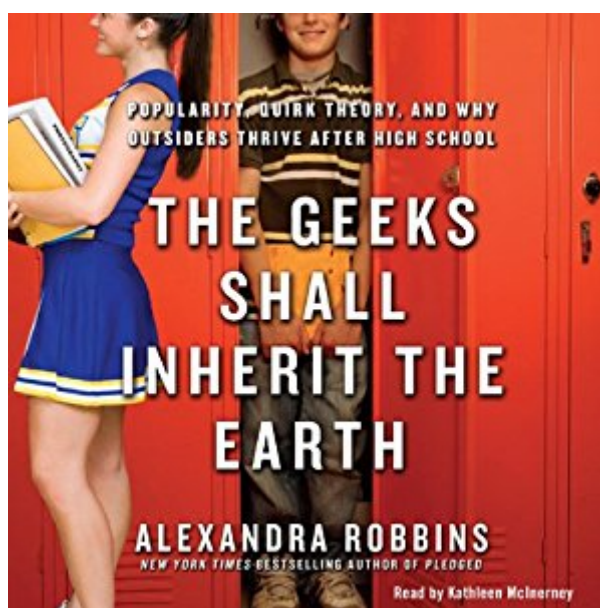


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# The Geeks Shall Inherit The Earth: Popularity, Quirk Theory, And Why Outsiders Thrive After High School



## Synopsis

In a smart, entertaining, reassuring book that reads like fiction, Alexandra Robbins manages to cross *Gossip Girl* with *Freaks and Geeks* and explain the fascinating psychology and science behind popularity and outcasthood. She reveals that the things that set students apart in high school are the things that help them stand out later in life. Robbins follows seven real people grappling with the uncertainties of high-school social life, including: The Loner, who has withdrawn from classmates since they persuaded her to unwittingly join her own hate club The Popular Bitch, a cheerleading captain both seduced by and trapped within her clique's perceived prestige The Nerd, whose differences cause students to laugh at him and his mother to needle him for not being "normal" The New Girl, determined to stay positive as classmates harass her for her mannerisms and target her because of her race The Gamer, an underachiever in danger of not graduating, despite his intellect and his yearning to connect with other students The Weird Girl, who battles discrimination and gossipy politics in school but leads a joyous life outside of it The Band Geek, who is alternately branded too serious and too emo, yet annually runs for class president In the middle of the year, Robbins surprises her subjects with a secret challenge-experiments that force them to change how classmates see them. Robbins intertwines these narratives-often triumphant, occasionally heartbreaking, and always captivating-with essays exploring subjects like the secrets of popularity, being excluded doesn't mean there's anything wrong with you, why outsiders succeed, how schools make the social scene worse-and how to fix it.

## Book Information

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Education & Teaching > Schools & Teaching > Student Life

## Customer Reviews

"Let your Geek Flag" fly!!! I have thoroughly enjoyed this book - Alexandra Robbins does an amazing job (as usual)! I am an educator of 26 years and a high school assistant principal. The information I have gotten from this book has certainly helped me to look at my student population in a totally, new light. Not only does Robbins examine the labels that students assign themselves and others and the harm it causes but "The Geeks" also looks at the way that the faculty that educates them treat students and each other. I had never thought of the way that faculty groups mirror the groups of students. Also, it was an eye opener to think that the influence of the media has caused "mean girls" to be mean, as a way of protecting themselves. We often misunderstand and think that they mistreat other kids because they enjoy it. The fact is that many of these young ladies don't enjoy it at all but the influence of shows such as "Gossip Girl" and "90210," make it "cool" to be mistreat others. It is hard to believe that many students who are viewed as being a part of the "Popular Crowd" are truly miserable but lack the courage to leave for fear of rejection. Thanks again to Alexandra Robbins for a fantastic read!!!

My high school class really liked this book -- lots of food for thought and lots of conversational fodder. I liked that the author gave each of the kids she "followed" for a year a challenge mid-year to help them break out of the frustrating dynamics they found themselves in. She recognized -- correctly -- that while the misconceptions that others had of them were often not their fault, they were still the only ones with the power to change those perceptions. Most of them did, so that the book was ultimately hopeful and empowering rather than remaining mired in gloom and disgust at how badly kids can treat each other! It was also helpful as a teacher to be reminded of the ways that we teachers sometimes feed rather than disrupt the unwholesome and unfair social dynamics that plague many schools. Overall, this book was accessible to my better readers, and interesting to most of them, even those who struggled with the vocabulary. I recommend it pretty highly.

There's a LOT of good in this book. A lot. The message is powerful, that being a geek or being different - "cafeteria fringe" as the author calls it - isn't all bad. Being who you want to be, even if it's one of the unpopular kids, is what really matters. That later on life, things look much better. Marching to the beat of your own drummer can be fabulous. I get it. I do. I wasn't exactly Miss Popular in High School myself. This was a book club selection and I really am sorry that I missed it because I would have loved to hear what everyone thought about it. I think it gave some insight into high school cliques and how kids group themselves. It also gave us a lot of information about

bullying and how cruel kids can be. Catty girls and all. My biggest problem with this book was the characters. From the writing and description, it seems to be true stories, but I felt some of it was too contrived. Some of them felt very real to me but others just felt entirely out of place. I realize that may not seem fair, maybe I'm projecting my own beliefs onto these kids, but it just felt too pat in places. Too perfect. High school is messy and... while it was definitely messy in places, it just wasn't messy enough. I just felt like too many creative liberties may have been taken. BUT... I think the author's message is an important one and I will definitely be giving this to my children to read. I feel lucky that my kids seem pretty self-assured and don't seem to care what other kids think of them, but they also aren't quite to high school yet.. and we all know that that can change. I think one line in the book stuck with me... and that was that parents sometimes project their own high school insecurities onto their children so push them to get into the "right" group and have the "right" friends. I just hope that I remember that the "right" friends for them are the ones that they choose. Whether it's the preps, the punks, the geeks or the jocks. Recommended for parents, educators and young adults alike.

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