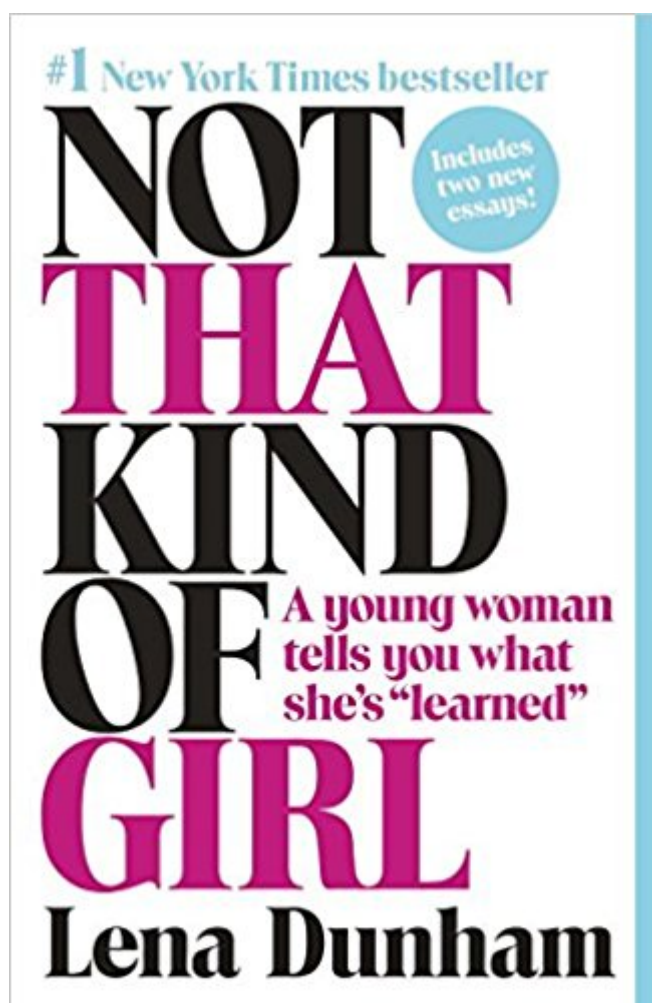


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Not That Kind Of Girl: A Young Woman Tells You What She's "Learned"



Synopsis

#1 **NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER** Includes two new essays! **NAMED ONE OF THE TEN BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY MICHIKO KAKUTANI, THE NEW YORK TIMES** **NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY BUZZFEED, THE GLOBE AND MAIL, AND LIBRARY JOURNAL** For readers of Nora Ephron, Tina Fey, and David Sedaris, this hilarious, wise, and fiercely candid collection of personal essays establishes Lena Dunham—the acclaimed creator, producer, and star of HBO’s *Girls*—as one of the most original young talents writing today. In *Not That Kind of Girl*, Dunham illuminates the experiences that are part of making one’s way in the world: falling in love, feeling alone, being ten pounds overweight despite eating only health food, having to prove yourself in a room full of men twice your age, finding true love, and most of all, having the guts to believe that your story is one that deserves to be told. “Take My Virginity (No Really, Take It)” is the account of Dunham’s first time, and how her expectations of sex didn’t quite live up to the actual event (“No floodgate had been opened, no vault of true womanhood unlocked”); “Girls & Jerks” explores her former attraction to less-than-nice guys—guys who had perfected the “dynamic of disrespect” she found so intriguing; “Is This Even Real?” is a meditation on her lifelong obsession with death and dying—what she calls her “genetically predestined morbidity.” And in “I Didn’t F*** Them, but They Yelled at Me,” she imagines the tell-all she will write when she is eighty and past caring, able to reflect honestly on the sexism and condescension she has encountered in Hollywood, where women are “treated like the paper thingies that protect glasses in hotel bathrooms—necessary but infinitely disposable.” Exuberant, moving, and keenly observed, *Not That Kind of Girl* is a series of dispatches from the frontlines of the struggle that is growing up. “I’m already predicting my future shame at thinking I had anything to offer you,” Dunham writes. “But if I can take what I’ve learned and make one menial job easier for you, or prevent you from having the kind of sex where you feel you must keep your sneakers on in case you want to run away during the act, then every misstep of mine will have been worthwhile.” Praise for *Not That Kind of Girl* “The gifted Ms. Dunham not only writes with observant precision, but also brings a measure of perspective, nostalgia and an older person’s sort of wisdom to her portrait of her (not all that much) younger self and her world. . . . As acute and heartfelt as it is funny.” —Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times* “It’s not Lena Dunham’s candor that makes me gasp. Rather,

it's her writing which is full of surprises where you least expect them. A fine, subversive book. David Sedaris "This book should be required reading for anyone who thinks they understand the experience of being a young woman in our culture. I thought I knew the author rather well, and I found many (not altogether welcome) surprises. Carroll Dunham "Witty, illuminating, maddening, bracingly bleak . . . [Dunham] is a genuine artist, and a disturber of the order. The Atlantic

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

An Best Book of the Month, October 2014: In an era where twenty-something women are told how to think, where to work, who to date, and what to wear, it's refreshing that a voice has broken the mold to empower women to do one thing: be yourself, flaws and all. In *Not That Kind of Girl*, Lena Dunham takes readers on a voyage of self-discovery as she successfully navigates the often-perilous facets of womanhood, from dating and friendships to self-love and careers. Through her series of essays, Dunham shares what she's learned on her path to self-awareness with a refreshing candor and raw honesty that emboldens readers. Her painfully-relatable stories of graduating from one-night stands with toxic men and dead-end jobs with no purpose, to loving relationships and a fulfilling career will leave you laughing, cringing, and sighing "me too." Thoughtful, hilarious, and exquisitely-written, Dunham's memoir is like reading your quirky big sister's diary.
--Brittany Pirozzolo --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

“The gifted [Lena] Dunham not only writes with observant precision, but also brings a measure of perspective, nostalgia and an older person’s sort of wisdom to her portrait of her (not all that much) younger self and her world. . . . As acute and heartfelt as it is funny.”

•Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times* “It’s not Lena Dunham’s candor that makes me gasp. Rather, it’s her writing—which is full of surprises where you least expect them. A fine, subversive book.”

•David Sedaris “This book should be required reading for anyone who thinks they understand the experience of being a young woman in our culture. I thought I knew the author rather well, and I found many (not altogether welcome) surprises.”

•Carroll Dunham “Witty, illuminating, maddening, bracingly bleak . . . [Dunham] is a genuine artist, and a disturber of the order.”

•The Atlantic “As [Lena] Dunham proves beyond a shadow of a doubt in *Not That Kind of Girl*, she’s not remotely at risk of offering up the same old sentimental tales we’ve read dozens of times. Dunham’s outer and inner worlds are so eccentric and distinct that every anecdote, every observation, every mundane moment of self-doubt actually feels valuable and revelatory.”

•The Los Angeles Review of Books “We are forever in search of someone who will speak not only to us but for us. . . . *Not That Kind of Girl* is from that kind of girl: gutsy, audacious, willing to stand up and shout. And that is why Dunham is not only a voice who deserves to be heard but also one who will inspire other important voices to tell their stories too.”

•Roxane Gay, *Time* “I’m surprised by how successful this was. I couldn’t finish it.”

•Laurie Simmons “Always funny, sometimes wrenching, these essays are a testament to the creative wonder that is Lena Dunham.”

•Judy Blume “An offbeat and soulful declaration that Ms. Dunham can deliver on nearly any platform she chooses.”

•Dwight Garner, *The New York Times* “Very few women have become famous for being who they actually are, nuanced and imperfect. When honesty happens, it’s usually couched in self-ridicule or self-help. Dunham doesn’t apologize like that—she simply tells her story as if it might be interesting. The result is shocking and radical because it is utterly familiar. *Not That Kind of Girl* is hilarious, artful, and staggeringly intimate; I read it shivering with recognition.”

•Miranda July “Dunham’s writing is just as smart, honest, sophisticated, dangerous, luminous, and charming as her work on *Girls*. Reading her makes you glad to be in the world, and glad that she’s in it with you.”

•George Saunders “A lovely, touching,

surprisingly sentimental portrait of a woman who, despite repeatedly baring her body and soul to audiences, remains a bit of an enigma: a young woman who sets the agenda, defies classification and seems utterly at home in her own skin.

•Chicago Tribune “A lot of us fear we don’t measure up beautywise and that we endure too much crummy treatment from men. On these topics, Dunham is funny, wise, and, yes, brave. . . . Among Dunham’s gifts to womankind is her frontline example that some asshole may call you undesirable or worse, and it won’t kill you. Your version matters more.”

•Elle “[Not That Kind of Girl is] witty and wise and rife with the kind of pacing and comedic flourishes that characterize early Woody Allen books. . . . Dunham is an extraordinary talent, and her vision . . . is stunningly original.”

•Meghan Daum, The New York Times Magazine “There’s a lot of power in retelling your mistakes so people can see what’s funny about them and so that you are in control. Dunham knows about this power, and she has harnessed it.”

•The Washington Post “Dunham’s book is one of those rare examples when something hyped deserves its buzz. Those of us familiar with her wit and weirdness on HBO’s Girls will experience it in spades in these essays. . . . There are hilarious moments here and I cracked up on a crowded subway reading an essay about her childhood and disturbing ones, too. But it’s always heartfelt and very real.”

•New York Post “We are comforted, we are charmed, we leave more empowered than we came.”

•NPR “Touching, at times profound, and deeply funny . . . Dunham is expert at combining despair and humor.”

•Publishers Weekly (starred review) “Most of us live our lives desperately trying to conceal the anguishing gap between our polished, aspirational, representational selves and our real, human, deeply flawed selves. Dunham lives hers in that gap, welcomes the rest of the world into it with boundless openheartedness, and writes about it with the kind of profound self-awareness and self-compassion that invite us to inhabit our own gaps and maybe even embrace them a little bit more, anguish over them a little bit less.”

•Maria Popova, Brain Pickings “Reading this book is a pleasure. . . [These essays] exude brilliance and insight well beyond Dunham’s twenty-eight years.”

•The Philadelphia Inquirer From the Hardcover edition.

Before reading this book, I thought Lena Dunham could do no wrong. I love all three seasons of Girls, I’ve bought magazines I’d never previously read simply because she graced their covers, and I’ve read all of her online essays. This book is, however, too much Lena. While there are flashes of

brilliance in the book, like the essays on the hard-to-define rape she suffered, the teacher who tried to sexually abuse her, and the struggles she's had with being taken seriously by male execs in Hollywood, the majority of the book is filled with musings about her life that are simply boring. I get that Lena believes that standing up and telling your story is the bravest thing anyone can do, but your story has to be interesting in order to be worthy of being published. That's where this book has gone wrong--the publisher clearly thought that anything written by Lena would be lapped up by readers. With each individual essay, her editors clearly didn't step back and ask, 'Is this really worth publishing?'. If they had, the book would be about two-thirds shorter. The title is also misleading, as Lena does not appear to have learned very much, or rather, she doesn't take much interest in imparting her knowledge to her readers. This book has primarily taught me that Lena Dunham is excruciatingly self-obsessed and lacking virtually any self-awareness. She appears to believe that her musings on virtually anything are nothing short of brilliant, no matter how dull and irrelevant the subject matter. The reprinting of several pages of her food diary is perhaps the best illustration of this --a verbatim regurgitation of what she ate for about a week while she was allegedly on a 'diet' (it's really just a pretty standard day's eating for most people) is supposed to communicate what exactly? Her attempts to make even the most mundane interactions with her family appear so powerfully meaningful are odd. The part where she retells a story about how she and her father got stuck in a traffic jam and experienced frustration because, well, they were in a traffic jam is a perfect example of this. In this book, Lena seems consumed by a pressing need to convince you that she feels so many more emotions, so much more intensely than anyone else. She sees quirks and eccentricities in people that others simply cannot comprehend, and you, the reader, need to know that. She is just so brilliant, you guys, don't you see that from all of her deep introspections on how we're all going to die eventually so what's the point?! Lena is so overwhelmed by herself in this book that you can't help but feel like you're suffocating while reading it. This book has killed my love affair with all things Lena Dunham. I admire the work she has done in film and television, no question, and she's an extremely talented writer in both of those genres. I don't think, however, that she can write at the level required to sustain an entire book. I will view Lena Dunham from afar from now on. I've thrown out all of those once-hoarded magazines, and although I still love *Girls* and will await every new season with much anticipation, I'll watch it from now on with a degree of detachment.

I really wanted to like this book, I generally think Lena Dunham has interesting things to say but this book did not do a good job of bringing out those thoughts, ideas, or opinions. Instead it felt like the worst parts of Hannah from *Girls*. Self important, and unaware.

I got bored and stopped reading. I just kept wondering to myself, "Who cares...?"

The worst book of the hundreds of books I've read in the last number of years! I don't know why anyone would publish or sell it. A complete waste of time.

The character Lena Dunham plays on 'Girls', is sometimes relatable in this book, but she is not the Lena Dunham we meet in her book. This is a rollicking book that brings you to the laughs, and then back down to earth to the darks. Lena talks a great deal about her sex life, which is good. She is very insightful and candid. The first couple of chapters describe her life as an adolescent and as a teenager. The book revolves around her life, her philosophy, her family, her friends, her education, her camp life, her therapists, her OCD, her high school, her college and her life as it is. She is mesmerizing at times, her writing so precise and so well done. If you thought of Lena Dunham as fresh and exciting, as I do, then you will love this tome. It is as original as Lena is. One of my favorite chapters is where she discusses her therapists and how she came to see one. She had always had some form of anxiety, but it grew and got so bad her father had to go out one night and walk off his issues. Her therapists were varied, but she found several who fit her needs. At one point she discovers she probably has OCD, and then tries to adapt. She also focuses on death a great deal as does her father. In fact many of her issues focus on the same ones of her father. She was born to artistic parents and brought up in New York City to a very nice life. She is privileged in a sense, and she knows this. She relates to many people and she seems to make friends easily. Looking at Lena Dunham, once would think she has it made. She is a writer, actress, developed her own television series, and life seems good. What Lena has done is to tell a little bit about her life in her series. Her father admonishes her not to look at every get together as a promise of a scene in her series. This is a refreshing look at a young artist. Very well liked by many, and not liked at all by some. She is a reckoning of sorts. She shows us .life as we may never have seen it, a path to be followed, and a guide of sorts to young women on their path to their own life. She discovered herself, and she wants to be able to help others do the same. Recommended. prisrob 10-01-14

Only finished this book in the hope Lena would redeem herself, after reading of her sad, promiscuously countless attempts at sexual satisfaction. I see a creative young woman somewhere in the fog of her anxiety-producing self absorption. Keep growing, Lena.

So glad I'm not the girl in the book. Her behavior and thoughts about self is an embarrassment. She makes my worst decisions in life seem mild compared to her lack of self respect.

I like the show Girls and it seems that a lot of the stories in the book appear in that show, so save some money and time and just watch the show if you're interested. This book is just awful.

Scattered. Meaningless and only a tad bit funny. The show is way funnier. So please, save your money and spend it on something better than this book.

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