




# Fat Chance

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## **Fat Chance** Lesléa Newman

Judi Liebowitz thinks she's fat. And she's convinced, as she confides in her diary, that she'd be happier if she were skinnier. So when Judi becomes friendly with pencil-thin, glamorous Nancy Pratt, she learns Nancy's secret and joins her in the secret binge-and-purge cycles of bulimia. Before long, Judi's life spins out of control and her obsession with food, calories, and pounds is no longer another typical eighth-grade problem-it's a matter of life and death.

## **Fat Chance Details**

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Author : Lesléa Newman

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## **From Reader Review Fat Chance for online ebook**

### **Olive Skies says**

This is one of the first eating disorder themed books I read. I remember asking the librarian in my middle school - I was in 7th grade at the time - if she had any books on the subject and she was stunned that I had asked. This was the only one they had and I read it in about three days. At twelve, this had been a very good read for me. It got the point across and I connected with the character.

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### **Brianon Sheffield says**

deftly handles scary and important topics like eating disorders, fitting in, family dynamics, and growing up. this book helped me realize that starvation and/or binges are not glamorous, and definitely not the answer to loving myself. this fictional diary makes the mistakes for us, so that we will know not to.

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### **Ms. B says**

Another eating disorders title. It's no Wintergirls and it's dated; it's from the 1990s. There are references to the TV series, Roseanne. What I liked about this one is that 8th grader Judi, the main character, is not the one who ends up in a hospital with a full-blown eating disorder. Instead, she is shown as flirting with one. It's Nancy who ends up in the hospital. Nancy is a girl that Judi idolizes; she's super skinny, wears make-up and dates a 9th grader. Nancy befriends Judi and Judi helps Nancy hide her secrets that keep her skinny.

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### **Angel says**

I rarely give books five stars. Not only does it have to be flawless, but it generally has to accomplish something absolutely marvelous. But this book got the rare five stars. Though it is an ordinary, enjoyable read, I gave it the rating it did because of how well the author captures the confusion of middle school. Some of Judi's thoughts were exactly my own when I read it. I was in eighth grade, just like Judi. Though the writing is excellent, this book is no Steinbeck. It will win no Pulitzers, no Nobels. But in my recollection no author has so accurately written about what it's like to be a teenager, and if that is not the true purpose of books, I'm not sure what is.

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### **Lauren Anastasi says**

I read this in middle school. At this point in my life, I had been dealing with an eating disorder on-and-off for a number of years, although I had yet to recognize that I was struggling with an eating disorder, seeing my activities more as "dieting" and less as a disease. Instead of this book helping me to realize my disordered

way of thinking and eating, I found that it gave me more ideas on how to hide my symptoms from friends and family. I understand that this review doesn't necessarily have to do with the writing of this book, but for me, this book pushed me further down the path of self-destruction and deceit.

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## **Sally Kruger says**

Although published in 1994, *FAT CHANCE* by Leslea Newman still rings true today, in fact, with the increased prevalence of eating disorders, its message may be even more important today.

As an eighth grader, Judi dreams of having a boyfriend and going on exciting dates, but she is convinced that can only happen if she loses weight. Her mother insists she is a "growing girl" who needs to eat three nutritious meals a day. Judi is sure that isn't the path to happiness. It doesn't help that Judi's classmates are typical kids who tease and taunt about any perceived physical flaws with little regard for the feelings they hurt or the self-esteem they damage.

When Ms. Roth, the new English teacher, requires each student to keep a diary, Judi uses the assignment to pour out her feelings as she records her attempts at weight loss and relationship difficulties. She learns tricks to avoid eating breakfast, consumes only diet Coke for lunch, and tries to get away with eating as little as possible of her mother's home-cooked dinners. She is able to shed a few pounds, but is frustrated by the need to binge when she is feeling stressed.

The answer to all her problems seems to appear the day she stumbles across popular girl and future model, Nancy Pratt, vomiting in the restroom. When Nancy explains that vomiting is her secret to weight control success, Judi is disgusted at first, but as she becomes more desperate to be thin, she gives it a try. It is easier than she ever imagined. Now she can eat enough to keep her mother from nagging and lose weight at the same time.

Keeping her secret is difficult, and when Nancy ends up in the hospital as a result of her bulimia, Judi begins to have second thoughts. Losing weight has some positives, but the strain it has created in the relationships with her best friend and her mother involve more negatives than she may be willing to endure.

In *FAT CHANCE* author Leslea Newman captures the emotional turmoil created in those suffering from eating disorders. Through Judi's obsession to lose what to some may seem an insignificant amount of weight, it becomes clear that the mind of a person with bulimia is far from normal and their body image issues produce increasingly irrational arguments most of us would never understand. Newman's message that eating disorders require outside intervention and commitment on the part of the struggling individual makes this novel instructional as well as entertaining. Unlike more recent books written about the same subject, *FAT CHANCE* does not dwell on the horror and debilitation of the eating disorders, however, it still provides an important view worth reading.

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## **Michelle says**

You guys, I always understood that Judi was not actually overweight (she hovers around 127 lbs for the entirety of the book, at 5'4"), but at the time of rereading this, *we weigh exactly the same* and I am four

inches shorter than Judi. Yeah, I still have some baby weight and whatnot, but I still think I'm looking aight. That just kind of blew my mind a little bit and made me realize how hard Judi was on herself.

Original review, November 2007:

So maybe other people wouldn't give this five stars, but really, it's one of my favorite books of all time. I remember buying it at a book fair in middle school, and just being blown away by it. I had never read a book dealing with eating disorders, and this one pretty much made me never want to experience one. I read it almost every year because it has many other good qualities, besides handling such a weighty topic (no pun intended--that's for you, Judi). The main character is charming and refreshing. Also, while reading this book, you end up really remembering being in the 8th grade, hating your body, wishing to be the beautiful, popular girl, daydreaming about the ridiculously handsome guy, thinking your mother just won't understand. Ugh, the angst. And then you get to the end of the book and cry because it's just so sweet, and also, from a writing point of view, really wraps up just in the most perfect way. God, I really, really love this book.

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### **Amanda (LoveofJoe11) says**

I can't remember exactly when I read this book, but I remember absolutely loving it. I read it as I was struggling to admit I had an eating disorder and completely related with the main character. I remember crying for the character and crying for me.

I'm not going to lie, I don't remember the quality of the writing or character develop, but over ten years after I read it I remember it's impact on me, so I think that says something.

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### **erica says**

What a waste of time. Boring and preachy.

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### **Shaya says**

I personally really liked Fat Chance.

The book is really easy to read and the story makes you want to continue reading!

When I read that book, I told everyone about it and the school librarian told a lot of kids came asking for it.

I recommend this book to everyone because I think it explains you pretty well how certain kids feel at this point of their life.

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### **Alisee says**

Come morire per la bellezza e salvarsi accettandosi

Libro semplice e diretto, che racconta con semplicità il dramma adolescenziale del confronto con un aspetto fisico che non piace. La protagonista non sopporta i suoi chili di troppo e decide di provvedere, aiutata dal

cattivo esempio: la più bella della scuola, la ragazza invidiata, col ragazzo fantastico... la ragazza con uno scheletro nell'armadio più grande di lei, fatto di digiuni e corse in bagno quando mangia, fino a finire in ospedale, ancora ossessionata da una realtà che vede solo deformata (ingrandita) allo specchio. La protagonista prova a seguire la sua strada, attratta dal risultato finale, ma non perde la ragione, riesce a fermarsi in tempo, comprendendo che, in fondo, qualche chilo in più o in meno non fa nessuna differenza.

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### **Sierra says**

Well right now i think the book is about 4 stars i really like it so far i hope it turns out amazing. Well im nearing the end and it is amazing! It is a realistic fiction book and it is good. It actually is not boring. If you need a realistic fiction i would say to read this one. You might think it would be a little wierd, but it isn't. If you start reading you want to read it to the very end. If you need a short book this is your book.

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### **Diana says**

I read this book in the 8th grade. The book really open my eyes and how I learn what was a eating disorder. I re-read the book again. As an educator, I would definitely show this to my students and tell them they are beautiful they way look and never change for anybody. Eating Disorders is an important discussion to talk about to students. I would know because I was feeling terrible the way looked in the mirror but I realized I am perfect the way I am. I highly recommended to read this book and such a great book and powerful message.

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### **Taylor says**

This really delves into what every girl thinks about at least once in her life. Am I fat? Judi is in highschool and is trying to start the year off well. She knows she's not the smallest girl in the bunch but she also knows she can't change it overnight. Or can she? Judi walks into the bathroom at school one day, to here someone throwing up in the stalls, but when she asks if she's okay the girl acts as if Judi should never had been there at all. What exactly WAS the girl doing in there, and furthermore, why is she mad at Judi for being there?

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### **Stephanie A. says**

Usually I love weight loss novels - or at least the idea of them. But this one, like too many others, become a tiresome tale of how the girl loses weight, feels better, goes through a bad time, gains most of it back, then finds a support system and learns to love herself while slowly becoming healthy again.

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