



# Journal of a Schoolyard Bully: Notes on Noogies, Wet Willies, and Wedgies

*Farley Katz*

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## **Journal of a Schoolyard Bully: Notes on Noogies, Wet Willies, and Wedgies** Farley Katz

In the tradition of the mega successful DIARY OF A WIMPY KID and DORK DIARIES comes Niko Taylor, a school bully who must keep a journal to right all the wrongs he has done, but Niko, being a habitual trouble-maker, has other ideas.

Niko Kaylor, the terror of his middle school, doles out wedgies and collects money he doesn't need. When he is forced to begin keeping a journal of his activities to curb his bullying ways, he secretly turns his diary into a how-to guide for bullies. Now, against the wishes of his peers, Niko plans to conquer his middle school and teach everyone a lesson in bullying, including his teachers.

## **Journal of a Schoolyard Bully: Notes on Noogies, Wet Willies, and Wedgies Details**

Date : Published September 13th 2011 by St. Martin's Griffin (first published 2011)

ISBN : 9780312681586

Author : Farley Katz

Format : Hardcover 208 pages

Genre : Childrens, Middle Grade, Humor

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# From Reader Review Journal of a Schoolyard Bully: Notes on Noogies, Wet Willies, and Wedgies for online ebook

## Brianna says

This book is kind of funny..... My favorite part in the book was when he played dead to his brother and made his brother think that he killed him. LOL

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## Tim says

Niko Kayler assumes an Alfred E. Newman disguise as this self-proclaimed überbully postures through the dimensions of a very serious subject. Current media publishes alarming information about the happenings and issues surrounding bullying in schools, cyberspace, and elsewhere. Farley Katz's Mad Magazine treatment intends to entertain while enlightening his audience with global examples of bullying through the unlikely protagonist of Niko.

Through his comic-book satire, Katz attempts to trace bullying through its various impacts on "targets" such as parents, siblings, classmates, neighbors, cyberfriends, professionals, and authority figures. Through some of the preposterous events and intimidations perpetrated by Niko—whether actual or fantasized—the author pokes his pen at the emotional, verbal, and physical abuses that create today's touted societal problem.

Comedic touches snap from the beginning when Niko addresses his journal as his "Bully Log." He is a student at Checkers Nixon Memorial Middle School. Immediately, the reader should associate the moniker to Richard M. Nixon's fateful "Checkers Speech," in the early '50s. It's funny enough that Niko's school honors a dog—a Republican canine no less—but the farce continues by enshrining a proper GOP icon as its mascot: an elephant named Daisy.

Niko's descriptions of his bullying practices embrace parodies that include a bully's intensity framed after Homeland Security's National Terrorist System color coding, a correctional path following the Kübler-Ross model for the grieving process, brainwashing á la A&E's TV series "Scared Straight," and a manta (N.I.K.O.) that shrieks of many self-help guides.

Practical standard methods of correction have no effect on Niko: not his mother, not the school principal, and certainly not his therapist, Dr. Shaeffer (penned as Sheffer on page 135). It is only as an inmate at the Lindsay Lohan Academy for Misguided Youth (LLAMY) that Niko has his comeuppance. Or does he? The book ends suddenly without a satisfying conclusion and with only the suggestion that his punishment has made him stronger in his nefarious recidivism.

Technically, the printing is "cute." The Comic Sans-Serif typeface suggests the writing efforts of a 12-year-old diarist, but the causal script font lends itself to some tedious reading. It took me several minutes to decipher the word "thesaurus" on page nine, and some other spots in the text slowed my attention. The pen-and-ink insertions sometimes are distracting without adding much to the material's content, especially when the reproductions are blurry (e.g., pages 162, 167). Grammatically, there are some obvious glaring inconsistencies where the middle-aged author's vocabulary pushes through a middle-schooler's narrative. Niko's narration vacillates from "boogers," "cooties," and "dweebs" to "manifest," "subliminal," and "pummeler." And I wonder whether a boorish pre-teenager would be that familiar with M. Knight

Shyamalan or Burberry.

We trust the humorous character in this book serves as a comic deterrence to further bullying and not stand as an outlandish exemplar for any aspirant to bullyhood.

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### **Mary (BookHounds) says**

Farley Katz has written and illustrated a wonderful book about bullying from the bully's point of view. This one should provoke a lot of discussions for children, their parents and teachers. I didn't know that you could actually feel sorry for a bully, but Niko Kaylor with all his bravado and intelligence is actually a confused and angry boy. Niko is forced to write a journal by his mother, his therapist and the school. He illustrates it with all the hatred and anger he can muster and writes what he thinks the "unholy trinity" wants to read. He still continues to bully and ignore the threats placed on him by the school. Until he takes it all too far one day. He is sent to a reform school and becomes the victim instead of victor.

I think most adults will know Katz's work from Mad Magazine and a lot of the humor present there is carried over. There are situations in the story that would never be allowed to occur at any school in the United States but are illustrated to the extreme to make his point. Bullies have issues of their own and should be dealt with accordingly and quickly. I really enjoyed this one and if you enjoyed Diary of a Wimpy Kid, you will like this opposing point of view.

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### **Cate (The Professional Fangirl) says**

This is a **Reading Good Books** review.

Niko is a damn smart bully. Yeah, there is a tone of surprise in that statement. I never thought bullies can be smart. I was one of the "nerds" so I was definitely bullied (by girls, which was much worse if you ask me). But that was a long time ago; I've forgotten about them and have moved on to better things in life. Ha-ha!

But really, Niko really is smart. Using big words, referencing Charles Darwin, knowing how to pronounce "rendezvous"... I am impressed. And his plans, albeit evil, have a touch of brilliance! However, everything else was cliché. A masochistic goth chick, your usual caveman bully, and of course, the bully liking the prettiest girl in class. Really, the idea of a bully keeping a diary (okay, journal) of his adventures is a little unbecoming.

I enjoyed the illustrations. They were fun. The handwriting font was great as well. It was like a look into the mind of a bully. Sure, he's tough but deep inside, he has his own issues. He's insecure that's why he brings other people down to make himself feel better. That doesn't make it right but that's one explanation. It also suggested that "once a bully, always a bully". I'm not sure how I feel about that but hey, this is a children/YA book so here's to hoping Niko will grow up and see the error of his ways.

I do actually like Katz's webcomics. They can be found at Kids Are Dumb on Tumblr. And I enjoyed this one as well. Not bad for a debut novel.

Rating: 3/5.

Recommendation: Fans of Diary of a Wimpy Kid will love this. I haven't read those books myself but I've seen them around and they have the same sort of format as this one. Illustrations, handwriting font, and all that good stuff.

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### **Bailey Meeker says**

I received this book through a goodreads giveaway.

I'm sure I'm not the target audience for this book. I found it pretty funny sometimes and the illustrations were clever. Niko's bullying techniques are hyperbolic. He builds machines to help him bully and creates elaborate plots to escape the consequences of his actions. If I had to guess, I'd say that middle schoolers won't love the book. Bullied kids will be upset that Niko never recognizes the error of his ways. Kids who bully (these two groups are not always distinct) may not see themselves in Niko. He really doesn't remind me much of the bullies I used to know.

Still an entertaining book. I'll make sure my copy makes it's way to a kid the right age.

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### **Angelc says**

I'm pretty sure I'm not the target audience for this book, so that might be part of why I didn't enjoy it so much. I just wasn't able to get past the message that celebrating bullies sends to kids.

There's an author's note at the beginning that detailed how the reader was supposed to be laughing at the bully not with him, but I'm not sure that came across in the story. Especially since it never really seemed like Niko got his just deserts in the end. The author's note seemed to be tacked on at the last minute to make the book politically correct, especially with the bullying epidemic lately in the news.

There were laugh out loud moments, like his grouchy neighbor telling him to "get off my lawnmower" instead of the typical "get off my lawn." But there were also many cringe worthy moments such as Niko calling the police and having the grouchy old man sent to the asylum. I thought bullying like this went way too far, and I preferred the sillier things like stinky paper airplanes and I thought they were more age-appropriate.

I think the book would have worked for me more if all of the bullying incidents had been sillier and harmless, and I definitely would have liked it more if Niko had learned his lesson. It seemed like maybe he didn't stop bullying in the end so that there could be sequels.

The book has it's funny moments, but overall it might not be the best book for kids in light of all the bullying that goes on in real life.

ARC sent by publisher in exchange for honest review

reviewed for <http://inthehammockblog.blogspot.com>

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## **Llewellyn says**

I received an advance readers' edition of this book for free through GoodReads First Reads.

Each page of this book has a picture and about one paragraph of text, so it's a very fast read. The book is cute, funny, and entertaining. But I was hoping for a bit more.

In the "Dear Reviewer" page at the very beginning, the author says we should "laugh at the expense of the bully," but I never really found myself laughing at him. The funny parts of the book weren't exactly at his expense in my opinion.

Parents should be aware that the "bullies are having trouble dealing with their own insecurities" message of the book is pretty subtle and that (SPOILER ALERT), our bully does not learn his lesson at the end. As a result, the book may not be appropriate for some kids to read on their own because they may not see the message at all and may even think the book is glorifying bullying. But if the parent wants to read the book with the child, it could make for some insightful discussions along the way.

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## **Kelsey says**

I found this while sorting my room out, it happened to be in the wardrobe. It was sent for review and I must of lost it in the midst of all the stuff I have. I went into reading this thinking it was going to be like Diary Of A Wimpy Kid. Which I loved (well the film) It tells the tale of a boy called Niko who happens to love bullying people. He bullies people that much that he has to have some counselling. I found this book to be rather boring and not funny at all. There was no moral to the story, just a middle grade boy getting his kicks for bullying children. Literally all through the book he was plotting to bully someone different. I thought that maybe it would change throughout the book and that maybe he would learn a lesson, that bullying is unacceptable. But even the ending was a disappointment and there was no lesson learnt. If anything it was sending a message to kids that bully is a fine thing to do. I dont know if the author meant for the book to have the meaning of this, but thats what it came across because the main character Niko in the story carried on bullying.

I think it didnt help that it was diary formed either because I find it hard to read books like this, or that it was middlegrade because the boy had such a wild imagination I didnt know if what he was saying was actually true. I dont reccomend this for young adult reads. I would say a young ten year old boy would probably enjoy this and find it funny. I dont think I could really find any good points to this book apart from the sketches they were pretty funky and done wonderfully.

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## Tracy Towley says

I received *Journal of a Schoolyard Bully* by Farley Katz through the Goodreads Firstreads program. The font was fun and the illustrations were well done. Unfortunately that's pretty much the extent of the positive things I have to say about this book. I'd really like to know what the author was thinking when he wrote this. Mr. Katz, who is the youngest staff cartooner for The New Yorker, clearly has talent but this book is certainly not evidence of it.

I will say that it seems to be a pretty accurate portrayal of a middle school bully's journal. Which means that almost all of it is dull, the bully has no redeeming qualities and takes no responsibility for anything. The author touches briefly on some personal issues the bully has, which are likely the cause for his bully behavior, but sadly these are dealt with just long enough to give you a sliver of an idea of what the kid is actually thinking. Then he just goes back to being a little prick.

I certainly wasn't expecting the bully to be 100% reformed by the end of the book, with tons of new friends who'd forgiven his former bully ways and a ticker-tape parade in his honor, but I did expect that he'd see the light to an extent and that he'd go through some kind of personal growth process. Nope. The book is just a bunch of examples of him bullying kids, tricking the psychologist he's required to see and just generally a story about a kid who's a big asshole.

You'd imagine that this book, which clearly borrows plenty from *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, would be geared towards a young adult audience. Maybe it is, I actually don't have a clue, but it seems that some of the vocabulary in this book is well above what a supposed middle school bully would use and certainly I wouldn't be comfortable with my 7th grader reading an account of a unrepentant bully.

Overall, it was visually pleasing and this is an author who clearly has promise. I just really don't understand what he was trying to accomplish with this book.

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## Laura says

I found this book in the library and thought it looked a lot like the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* books. Many of my students want recommendations for new humor books. I was hoping this was it.

It's cute. It's not quite up to *Diary's* standards but it's similar enough to intrigue the students who saw me reading. I heard "Is that a *Wimpy Kid* book?" often. I like that the point-of-view is unusual, an unapologetic bully who looks upon bullying as a point of pride. He wants to improve his bullying skills, preferably without being caught.

I also like that the bully sees his life as worthy enough for the Smithsonian. He's not an idiot; he enjoys the Food Channel, etc. He's just a kid with a twisted view of the world.

I'm hoping there's another book. I'm intrigued.

It's a good book for middle schoolers who like humor and the *Diary* books.

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## **Tammi says**

The subtitle to this book is “notes on noogies, wet willies, and wedgies.” This book tells the story of Niko Kayler. He is a bully in his school. He likes being a bully. One day he gets into trouble and has a meeting with vice principle Jones, his mom and his psychiatrist. His vice principle informed him at that meeting that if he got into trouble one more time that he would be expelled from Checkers Nixon Memorial. This causes Niko to evaluate his bullying and at the advice of his therapist, he keeps this journal to help him in this process. What happens, however, is different than what Dr. Shaeffer had planned. Not only does Niko describe his emotions when certain things happens, which gives insight into why he bullies in the first place, but he also describes the process of bullying and tricks of the trade.

I Like:

- The Bullying threat levels. It explains how to manage your expressions of anger using five different levels. The levels explain when to use each level and have pictures to show what the levels mean.
- Bullying Hall of Fame. Six famous bullies are listed in this entry of the Hall of Fame. It tells a little about the bully and his actions that gained him nomination.
- Stages of grief. Niko is forced to spend the weekend with Dr. Shaeffer and he describes the stages of grief he went through. The comics that were included in these descriptions were spot on and hilarious.
- The drawings in the book. I love the way the drawings depicts emotions and help you to better understand what is happening with Niko and his peers.
- The changes Niko goes through throughout the book and the understanding he gains.

I Did Not Like:

- The Print. It was just a little weird. I didn't have trouble reading it. It wasn't the most comfortable print to read.
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## **Teri says**

I struggled with reading this book. I kept waiting for the bully to realize the pain he was inflicting on his victims and change his ways. This never happened. Actually at the end he wants to become an even bigger bully. This sends the wrong message to kids. This definitely will NOT be put in my classroom library.

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## **Zulabin says**

This book is a little bit hard because there are a lot of pages but I like the book because It has lots of pictures. This book is about a bully how like to bully kids He bullied so many kids that the principle came and told him that one more time you bully a kid you will get expelled from the school and will never come back . So he bullied other kids but by making other people bullying them. This book is great because it tells you about a bully who bullies other kids and people how don't go to his school and goes to other schools and bullies them. I recommend this book to people who wants to read a quick book.



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## **Heidi says**

I was selected to receive this book through Goodreads First Reads Program. Both my 10-year-old daughter and I read the book.

Journal of a Schoolyard Bully: Notes on Noogies, Wet Willies, and Wedgies is a book similar in style to Diary of a Wimpy Kid and The Dork Diaries. It features cartoons alongside text to tell the story of Niko Kaylor, the school bully. Niko has been asked to keep a journal by his therapist.

This book does have several amusing moments. I did find myself chuckling out loud a couple of times. However, I have to say that I was very disappointed overall in the tone of the book. Slated to be released in September 2011, the time when kids will be returning to school, I think that this book is really more of a celebration of bullying than a lesson to bullies. The author, Farley Katz, touches on issues of why Niko may bully such as an absent father and weight issues. However, I kept hoping that the bully would change his ways and become a better person and that never happens. At a time where bullying has become a serious epidemic, I fear that this book may only make matters worse.

My daughter states that she thought that the book was going to be really funny. She thought that in the end the bully would see the error of his ways. Instead, it seemed to encourage bullying and gave bullies ideas on how to be a "better" bully. At the end of the book he didn't discover the error of his ways but decided to try to become an even better bully. She thought it was a very bad book for children - especially her age or younger. She thinks this book could cause big problems. She gives the book only 1 star.

Review also found on <http://pagesofgold.blogspot.com>

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## **NFYDAL says**

It was hard to read what was written

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