



The Popularity Rules

Abby McDonald

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The meek don't inherit a thing. Nice girls win nothing but regret. Virtue is wholly overrated.

If you don't do it, some other girl will.

Kat Elliot has spent her life fighting against phony schmoozing-and it's led her nowhere. A rebellious music journalist, Kat is down on her dreams when her ex-best friend Lauren swishes back into town. Ten years ago, Lauren dumped Kat for high school gold: popularity. Now Lauren wants to make amends by teaching Kat the secret to her success: The Popularity Rules, a decades-old rule book that transformed Lauren that fateful summer.

Broke and desperate, Kat reluctantly agrees to a total makeover-what does she have to lose? She's gotten nowhere on her own. Maybe becoming someone new is just what she needs.

The Popularity Rules Details

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From Reader Review The Popularity Rules for online ebook

Bev Taylor says

rule 1 - all's fair in love, war and popularity

kat is a loner, feminist and rebellious. she works as a reporter on a music magazine and her articles r always close to the bone. then she goes too far one night with an up and comping boy band and is fired

she sinks into depression and is rescued by an unlikely person - lauren. she was her best friend at school but then betrayed her and she has not spoken to her since

h/e she is the only one who can help and this is where the popularity rules come in as she is given a makeover re-invented. but is this what she truly wants?

lauren ha s sacrificed everything to get ahead but is kat ready to accept that popularity is the only prize that counts?

well written but did seem a bit rambling at times. would have been nice to know what happened to devon - i had visions of him and kat getting together

there was no mention of the actual wedding in the states and also u will have a lot of grammatical errors to navigate and also mis-spelling of fashion brand names

bev

Cheryl says

Katherine Elliot is a music journalist for Think Louder. Though, she is at the bottom of the totem pole. This is because she does not kiss ass. Her co-workers disrespect her and so does her room mate. As if it could get worse, Kat's ex-friend, Lauren Anderville reappears. The last time that Kat saw Lauren was when Lauren was ditching Kat for popularity. Lauren is pretty, rich, hangs with the coolest people and has a successful job. Lauren tells Kat that she wants to start over with Kat. In fact, she is willing to break one of the rules of the Popularity Rules book by sharing her secret.

The Popularity Rules book is based on the simple, psychological truth that nobody ever recovers from high school. In reality, this actually makes sense. While, we all strive to better ourselves, there is a small part of us that still reverts back to our former self in high school. I liked Kat. She showed spunk, however I also felt like she needed to take a stronger and louder stand for herself. She left Lauren just step in take the reins. Lauren did not have much substance in the way of being a three dimensional character. I knew that this book would be about clichés and popularity but I did not realize how much this turned me off. I guess if the story had been up to par and the characters than I may have liked the book better but the book and me just did not click. I do know that Abby can write as I read The Liberation of Alice Love and liked it a lot.

Shoshanah says

Back in high school Kat's best friend Lauren dumped her to hang out with the popular crowd. Except 10 years later when they run into each other, Lauren explains that it was because of the popularity rules that she's changed and offers to teach them to Kat in hopes to turn around her life.

Going into this I wasn't sure what to think. It felt a little like a YA plotline, except these were supposed to be 20-somethings. And now that I read the book, it IS basically a YA book for 20-something and it makes complete sense. Recently Jessica at Cover to Cover wrote a post asking, "Where Are All The Books For Twenty-Somethings?" While this isn't an entire genre it fits that niche perfectly. This book is Kat's journey towards finding her character, establishing a social life, and exploring and reevaluating friendship. There is a subplot that involves dating, but I wouldn't define that as a defining plotline.

I loved how each chapter began with one of the popularity rules, and each time I thought about how I could make use of it in my daily life. So often I read YA books, and think, "This would have been perfect for me back in high school," but being a 20-something this is perfect for me now.

The book was originally published in the UK, and takes place in London. Based on this fact I was expecting, and looking forward to, a British type book. Except Kat and Lauren are American, and the book didn't necessarily have a British feel towards it. My thought is that since I love reading books that feel British and I'm American the opposite is true for Brits. And since it was written initially there, that's the market for which it was written.

I'm definitely glad I read this and the book more than exceeded my expectations. I am a little worried that since this book is different than a lot of books currently out there, it may be difficult for it to find its niche. But here's to hoping it does!

Disclosure: I was provided this book through a Goodreads First Reads giveaway. All opinions expressed are my own.

Mary (BookHounds) says

Kat loses her music journalist job just as her former BFF from high school returns to her life. What Kat doesn't know is that Lauren had dumped her as a friend when she discovered a book called The Popularity Rules much like those *RULES* books on how to get a guy. Now, Lauren is back to make amends and help Kat discover her inner popularity. Each chapter starts with a bit of wisdom from the book. Kat goes through an extreme makeover of personality, career and appearance which help propel her into a whole new lifestyle. The chapters headings are actually pieces of advice which might really work, but I imagine that they are a bit sarcastic at the same time. There are some real gems mixed in the snark like: Chapter 33 "Like it or not, nothing stays the same, and neither should you."

After a bit of research, I found that this is the author's second book and first adult story. Kat and Lauren both seem stuck in their teen years when they ultimately discover that you must remain true to yourself to be happy. Overall, the story will leave you feeling good and you might even try a few of the rules yourself. I

really wonder if the chapter headings are part of some actual book on popularity. I really enjoyed this one and it is a super pick me up story that should appeal to those who love Rachel Johnson and Jane Green.

Thomas Olivent says

I'll start out by saying I never read Chic literature, but I won a pre edited copy of this on here. I wasn't entirely sure if I would like it, but after reading the first chapter, I thought it seemed pretty good. I was honestly loving this book for so long, then about 3/4 of the way through, the story changed. The book went from telling a story to pushing an agenda. I was really disappointed in the entire last quarter of the book. Even after she started pushing her agenda, I was willing to give it a shot still, but I really just didn't like the ending at all.

Patty says

Kat Elliot enjoys her job as a music journalist writing about alternative music and occasional diatribes about the awful behavior of rock stars towards young women. One of those stories goes just a little too far and she finds herself out of a job and blacklisted from just about every magazine around. At her lowest she agrees to meet her boarding school friend Lauren who betrayed her in the worst way but who is now offering her a new life.

Is it possible to forgive?

While this might sound like a simplistic chick lit book it really goes much deeper and I found it to be a very enjoyable read. Neither Kat nor her friend Lauren are cardboard cutout characters and as they explore the personas they have exhibited after high school they learn what is important in life. Once I started the book I had a hard time putting it down as I found myself wrapped up in Kat's transformation and Lauren's efforts to help her.

This is a great book for vacation or a rainy day. The story is compelling and the characters are interesting and well developed. The plot moves along with some unexpected turns along the way.

Stacey says

Review to be printed in the October 1st issue of Library Journal.
XPress Reviews, September 16, 2011: <http://www.libraryjournal.com/lj/news...>

In McDonald's (The Liberation of Alice Love) latest chick lit title, protagonist Kat is rocker Bridget Jones, though she prefers to take journalistic vengeance on sleazy players than hem and haw over her boss's affections. A hard-core feminist with indie leanings, she strives to be genuine in a world that doesn't value truth. When an old friend shows up with the answer to all of Kat's problems (like getting fired for printing inflammatory remarks about a beloved singer), she decides to try out the "popularity rules." Said rules

suggest that no one ever really "recovers" from high school, a premise that seems more fitting for a YA novel. Kat does change, while questioning if she's really being true to herself.

Verdict: Having missed the British chick lit craze that started with Helen Fielding, McDonald's novel feels a little dated; mentions of a crew of white-boy rappers as 'the next big thing' doesn't add freshness. While not bad by any stretch, the stale feel and British slang might be obstacles for this fun romp. Purchase if chick lit circulates well; otherwise, skip it.

Julie Heckman says

Note: I received an advance readers copy of this book from the Goodreads FirstReads program.

Brittish Chic Lit is my guilty pleasure. I love it. I crave it like ice cream on a hot summer day. If I've had a bad day at work or dating is getting me down, all I want to do is go home, draw a bubble bath, pop open a bottle of cheap red wine and read something deliciously entertaining. I'm somewhat of a chic lit snob in the sense that I still expect the book to be funny, witty, engaging and the characters to be well developed and likeable (or very unlikeable) and seemingly realistic (or realistic in my fantasy perfect world). The Popularity Rules did not disappoint.

I was hooked from the first page and couldn't put it down. I read it while waiting for my car to get fixed, drying my hair in the morning, and waiting at a restaurant. It's funny, sassy, full of quirky humor, fashion and music references and just enough romance (realistic chic lit romance) to satisfy a wholesome Midwestern girl having a bad day. The main character is someone whom many girls can relate - she's the outsider who has battled uphill every step of the way to get to where she is in life only to continually get knocked down time and time again by a "popular" girl. She harbors a deep resentment towards a best friend from high school who went away to camp and came back transformed and immediately dropped her. And just when Kat hits rock bottom, said (ex) best friends shows up with a plan to change everything.

I laughed, I cried, I groaned in agony - pretty much all the cathartic emotional releases one needs from this type of book. I think what made it so enjoyable is that the women are smart and successful and still show weakness and vulnerability and a love for teenage country girl pop music. And the end might surprise you - I won't spoil it but I will say that it ties everything up with a funky bow - not the perfect ending that you might expect from this genre.

I absolutely adored this book would wholeheartedly recommend it to anyone who is also a fan of Cecilia Ahern, Sophie Kinsella or Helen Fielding.

Melissa says

OK, I have to be honest. This book is an example of why I don't generally read Chick Lit. I realize that sounds harsh, and I apologize for that, but I don't know how else to express it. I found the story and the characters to be very superficial and for much of the book I was absolutely annoyed with Kat. As I am so far behind on my review reading, I was tempted to call it quits on this book and pass it along after reading a few chapters, but I decided to persevere. And you know what? The book did improve for me and I found myself sucked into the story. Not only that, I imagine that regular readers of Chick Lit will really enjoy The Popularity Rules.

Despite some obvious predictability with the storyline, Abby McDonald has produced a well-written, sharp, and at times amusing story of Kat's foray into popular circles. My issue with stories like this is that I find myself getting depressed and disappointed when characters act the way Kat and Lauren did. I like to think that people in general are better than they are portrayed to be in books that focus on popularity and how to find success. Maybe I am overly optimistic and give people too much credit, or perhaps it's because I personally have never been (or aimed to be) part of the popular, "in" crowd.

Bottom line: While it wasn't for me, I imagine Chick Lit fans (and fans of the movie *Clueless*, for that matter) will enjoy *The Popularity Rules*. There is also a web site for the book that you can check out! It will be released on September 24th in the UK. A special thanks to Ruth with Random House UK for sending me an advanced copy.

Sam says

When Kat Elliott was in school she had a best friend, Lauren Anderville. They were inseparable. They stood against cliques, bullies, equally hated, and equally alone. But as long as they had each other they didn't care. Until one summer when Lauren's parents sent her to camp and Lauren was introduced to "*The Popularity Rules*" and came back to school a changed girl. Now years later she is back in Kats life to explain to her what happened and also to teach Kat the lessons she learned that summer. But will Kat accept her help.

I instantly fell in love with this book. The characters are well written and likable. At times I wanted to scream at Kat to just shut up and listen which I think I did a time or two. If you want a book to snuggle up with then this is the book to read. I give it 5 stars I enjoyed it that much.

Spanglemaker9 says

Probably more like 3.5 stars.

I'm still learning how to express what it is I like about certain books and I'm sure I won't be clear here.

I like Abby McDonald's writing a lot. Her prose is very clean, uncluttered, and descriptive without ever venturing near purple. For that reason, I really enjoyed reading this. She has a particularly adept hand with characterizations, especially secondary or support characters. They're all very vividly drawn and fully realized. It makes the read so much more enjoyable.

I did have my issues with this book. The basic premise felt far-fetched, although once I bought into it, I found the blurbs from the *Popularity Rules* at the start of each chapter hilarious. Like a particularly Machiavellian *Mean Girls*.

I liked that Kat's morals were so compromised for so much of the book. She abandons all her principals and OMG it works! I liked *Vanity Fair* and *Bel Ami* for the same reason. Sometimes it's fun to see a ruthless, ambitious character climb to the top and... win. Even though in the end, these characters rediscovered their moral compass, it was fun to watch them lose it for a while.

The ending felt truncated, like there was a lengthy conversation that was about to happen that we didn't get to see. In the end, it could have been improved, but I liked it a lot.

Becky Mowery says

I'm not one to not finish a book, especially with only 120 pages left, but I just couldn't do it. I didn't care enough to wait for the inevitable fallout and reconciliation. The story was just so sore moving and about 200 pages too long. I'm glad I only paid \$0.75 for it.

Wendy Hines says

As Kat's life is taking the final whoosh down the toilet, an old friend from high school shows up and offers her a way to finally take control of her life. The Popularity Rules are secret and sacred, but Lauren is willing to share them with Kat if she's only willing to listen. When Kat finally reaches the point of desperation, she gives Lauren a call and they both embark on a journey to remake Kat's life.

After reading *The Liberation of Alice Love*, I wasn't really sure what to expect from this book, but I was eager to get my hands on it. Though I wasn't overly thrilled with *Alice*, it was a thought-provoking read that I enjoyed. *The Popularity Rules* exceeded my expectations. Abby has definitely grown as a writer. Her character creation is more intense as is her ability to keep me tuned into the story.

The characters are bold and bright with a smattering of sarcasm and wells of intricacies. Each character in the book is flayed apart to perfection; letting us not only take a peek at them, but analyze them without even trying. For me, this was truly the best part of the book. I was able to psychoanalyze myself as well as the characters without even realizing I was doing so until I'd finished reading. I hesitate to say, I may have actually learned something about myself and others.

As for entertainment value, this book is spot on. Kat is a music journalist, so we're thrown smack dab into the glitzy glamour of the hip rock crowd and all of its fame. Though there weren't many laugh-out-loud comedy moments in the book, I found myself smirking and grinning through parts. *The Popularity Rules* was a relatively quick read, considering all the content. I found myself turning page to page without being able to put it down.

Each chapter begins with one of the rules. Some of them I agreed with, some I didn't, but all had a bit of truth hidden in them. After finishing the book, I found myself comparing it to *Mean Girls*. Of course, it's a much deeper adult version, but similar.

Aphie says

A story about friendship and "what's truly important" in a Very Special Presentation style. This book straddles the great divide in the lives of many intelligent women - between the allure of pop culture and its critique. It doesn't make the mistake of painting feminism as Angry Hairy Manhaters (though it does skirt dangerously close). Mostly this is done by means of the manchildren the protagonist seems to be surrounded by; in light of their behaviour, her views are realised as justified. But it does make out that feminists are dull academics without a grasp on Real Life.

It does this by painting popularity (wow! never saw that coming!) and the trappings of "fame" and success as hugely desirable and, at least at first, the only way to get ahead and/or enjoy yourself.

Heavy-handed and moralistic with no real resolution, this is highly readable junkfood for your head.

Kim Friant says

despite disagreeing politically and morally, i did enjoy this book. it kept me interested and engaged and constantly thinking. a pretty good read.
