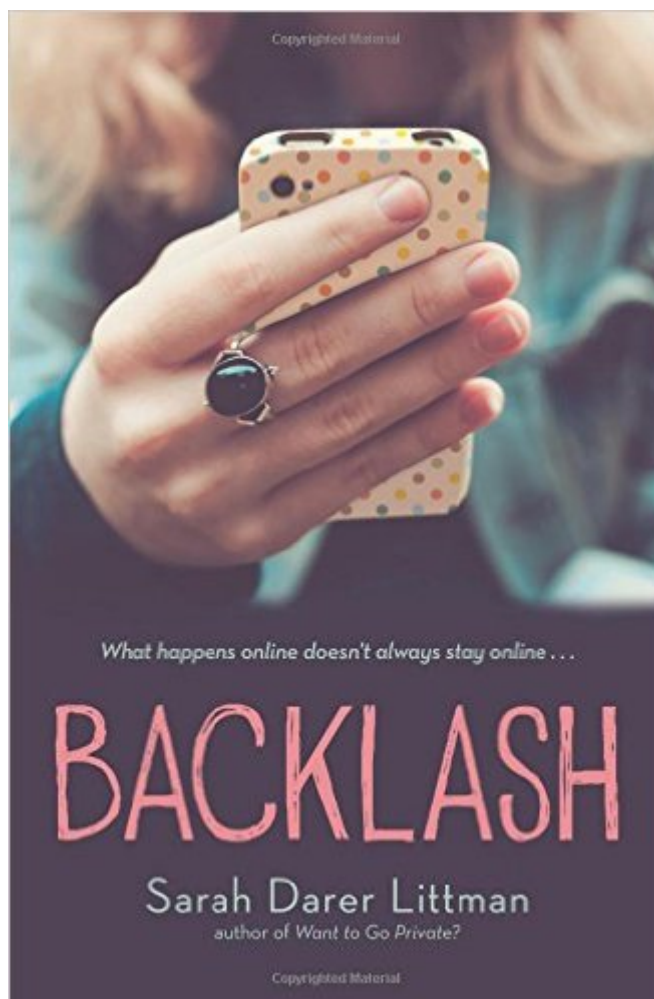


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# Backlash



## Synopsis

Lara just got told off on Facebook. She thought that Christian liked her, that he was finally going to ask her to his school's homecoming dance. It's been a long time since Lara's felt this bad, this depressed. She's worked really hard since starting high school to be happy and make new friends. Bree used to be BFFs with overweight, depressed Lara in middle school, but constantly listening to Lara's problems got to be too much. Bree's secretly glad that Christian's pointed out Lara's flaws to the world. Lara's not nearly as great as everyone thinks. After weeks of talking online, Lara thought she knew Christian, so what's with this sudden change? And where does he get off saying horrible things on her wall? Even worse - are they true? But no one realized just how far Christian's harsh comments would push Lara. Not even Bree. As online life collides with real life, the truth starts to come together and the backlash is even more devastating than anyone could have imagined.

## Book Information

Paperback: 336 pages

Publisher: Scholastic Paperbacks; Reprint edition (July 26, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0545924146

ISBN-13: 978-0545924146

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.8 x 7.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (23 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #34,984 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #24 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Bullying](#) #27 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Depression & Mental Illness](#) #71 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Emotions & Feelings](#)

Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

I found Backlash at the library. It was on the new release shelf in the young adult section. I was not familiar with author Sarah Darer Littman, but I certainly plan to pick up her other books after this. It's hard to describe Backlash. The story is told from multiple perspectives, and this is an absolute necessity when it comes to getting the whole story. As Backlash begins, a girl named

Lara tries to kill herself because Christian, the boy she had a crush on, just publically humiliated her on Facebook and told her the world would be a better place without her. Lara has a history of depression beginning when she was in middle school, but she gained new insight through therapy, lost 30 pounds, and made the cheerleading squad. As Lara is rushed to the hospital, her neighbor and former best friend Bree snaps a picture of Lara on the stretcher and posts it to Facebook. Many classmates post messages of support, but some take the opportunity to post nasty comments. At the hospital, Lara is stabilized, and her parents begin to ask questions. Who is Christian and why would he have such an effect on Lara? And that's when things begin to unravel. I found *Backlash* to be enthralling. I think I read the whole thing in 2 sittings. As the truth comes out, every answer leads to even more questions. As I mentioned, having multiple narrators allows the reader to get the whole story, and this helps explain the motivations of certain characters. I won't go so far to say that certain characters were more sympathetic, but at least the reader has an understanding of why decisions were made. In a sense, *Backlash* is terrifying. It shows the lengths that some people will go for revenge. The reasons for seeking revenge and the revelation of those who feel wronged were absolutely shocking. I would absolutely recommend *Backlash*. This novel will mostly appeal to teens, but I thoroughly enjoyed myself. On its surface, *Backlash* is gossipy and sensationalistic, but it is also a tale of depravity and shows the aftermath of cyberbullying from all sides. I will certainly be seeking out the rest of Sarah Darer Littman's books.

Grade: A-When Lara tries to kill herself after a nasty online breakup, her next door neighbor and former best friend Bree videos her being wheeled on a stretcher into the ambulance and posts the clip on Facebook. Told through Lara's, her sister Sydney's, Bree and her brother Liam's points of view *BACKLASH* is a cautionary tale about online bullying and its unintended consequences. Sarah Darer Littman brilliantly crafted a timely story that will appeal to both teens and tweens drawing upon some recent stories that have made the news. Each of the narrators had positive and negative traits and multiple layers. Liam was my favorite character, wise beyond his years. The parents had fewer dimensions. The mothers were integral to their daughters' issues, while the fathers were more supportive and nurturing. Despite Bree's meanness, I could see how she came to be that way. THEMES: bullying, depression, suicide, mental illness, parent, siblings, families *BACKLASH* should be required reading for parents and kids before they're allowed to touch social media.

Sarah Darer Littman's novel *Backlash* was published by Scholastic Press on March 31, 2015. I read this book in the spring of 2015, but I have read certain especially compelling parts

numerous times since. Backlash is a thrilling novel that shows the damaging effects of cyberbullying. The story is told from four perspectives: Lara, the victim; Sydney, her younger sister; Bree, Lara's old best friend; and Liam, Bree's younger brother. I would recommend this book to teens and adults. Backlash tells the story of Lara, a high-school cheerleader who finally managed to turn her life around after suffering from obesity and depression in middle school. When a cute boy named Christian DeWitt seeks her out on Facebook, she feels happier than ever. That is, until he suddenly lashes out on her on a public Facebook post. After he harshly implies that Lara should kill herself, she attempts to do just that. The hospital is able to save her, but Lara wishes they hadn't. And so begins the tragic consequences for everyone with even the slightest of connection with the events leading up to Lara's suicide attempt. The events in this book are absolutely horrifying, even more so because the novel provides a very realistic example of the threat of cyberbullying in today's society. I think all teenagers should read it before they decide to go online and post something that may hurt someone in the long run. Backlash is extremely well-written and I couldn't put it down.

I read this to 7th and 8th graders as part of a class rotation that shares time between the library and the guidance lessons. The students were completely absorbed in this book, and were eager to discuss the topic every time the guidance counselor came in. They were so excited to learn what would happen next that they would beg me to read it to them any time they saw me. Several asked if they could steal my copy and take it home that night to read ahead. When you're looking for a book to teach a class an important lesson, having them hooked on the material is key, and the kids were definitely into this book. Not only that, when I gave them writing assignments later, they almost all chose Backlash or the topics addressed within it. Not only did they love it, but the message stayed with them.

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