



2016

Backlash

Aylea Stephens

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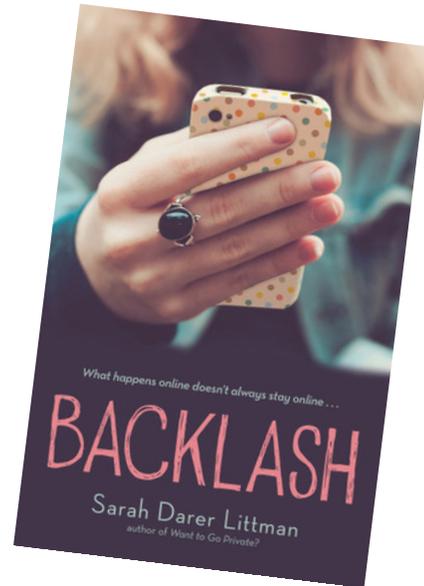
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Stephens, Aylea (2016) "Backlash," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 37 : Iss. 9 , Article 4.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol37/iss9/4>

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Book Review

Title: Backlash
Author: Sarah Darer Littman
Reviewer: Aylea Stephens
Publisher: Scholastic Press
Publication Year: 2015
ISBN: 9780545651264
Number of Pages: 336
Interest Level: Young Adult
Rating: Excellent



Review

Lara thought that Christian liked her, but then one day he publically posts on her Facebook wall that the world would be better off without her. Lara tries to commit suicide, leaving her and the people around her to deal with the backlash. Bree, Lara's former best friend, is partly responsible for what happened on Facebook, but in some ways she feels that Lara deserves it for being depressed and self-absorbed for so long. Sydney, Lara's sister, is dealing with feeling constantly overshadowed by her sister and feels like her life is constantly ruined by what is happening with Lara. Liam, Bree's sister, is dealing with a sister and mother he can't understand and not wanting his life to be ruined by their decisions. Online life collides with real life in this book while they all work on dealing with the backlash, anger, forgiveness, and moving on from the mistakes that have been made.

This is a hard book to read because of how much it can apply to real situations. Based on real-life episodes of cyberbullying and online manipulation, *Backlash* tells the story from the perspective of innocent bystanders, the victim, and the bully. No one in this book is perfect. In fact, they are all deeply flawed but perfectly human. Some people might think that Lara's willingness to kill herself over a boy she's never met is unrealistic, but that is something that has happened in real life. This book shows the consequences of online bullying and how people need to carefully think before they do something. The ending is perhaps a little too neat and hard to believe that they moved on from the horrible things that happened to them that easily, but the overall book shares an important message about how something that might seem like a simple act can ruin someone's or multiple people's lives. *Backlash* is an emotionally-charged story to help prompt discussion about the consequences of cyberbullying.

*Contains suicide and self-harm.