



The Chaos of Now

Erin Jade Lange

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Is it real if it happens online?

Life at Eli's high school hasn't been the same since his classmate Jordan committed suicide after being tirelessly bullied. Schools now have access to students' online activities and students have less privacy than ever. Eli just wants to graduate—so he can get out of town, get away from his father's embarrassingly young fiancée, and get himself a prestigious coding job. But Eli's hacking skills get him roped into a vigilante website that—while subverting the school's cybersnoops— seeks justice for Jordan and everyone else being bullied. Suddenly Eli finds himself in way over his head as his keystrokes start to have devastating consequences in the real world . . . This timely story from the author of *Butter* is a thrilling tale about the power of the internet, the young people who wield it, and the fine lines between bully and victim, justice and vengeance.

The Chaos of Now Details

Date : Published October 2nd 2018 by Bloomsbury YA

ISBN : 9781619635029

Author : Erin Jade Lange

Format : Hardcover 352 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Realistic Fiction, Teen, Fiction

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From Reader Review The Chaos of Now for online ebook

Michele says

? @kidlitexchange #partner ?

Thank you to the #kidlitexchange network for the review copy of The Chaos of Now by @erinjadelange
Wow! 4 solid ?? from me!

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Eli is a very good high school coder who skates by in school. He's not popular and mostly unnoticed. He's got his best friend and that's all he needs. Haver HS was turned upside down last year when Jordan committed suicide in the cafeteria by burning himself. Since then federal legislation has put a block on any negative social media. (That in itself is an interesting concept.)

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Eli is approached to join a coding competition team. His involvement in this also means fighting against the bullies that caused Jordan's demise.

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Toss in an absent dad and a new soon-to-be stepmom, there's a lot of character development in this book. I easily fell right in and didn't want to put the book down! You can bet this book will be on my high school library shelves when it publishes in October!

Read InAGarden says

Gave up a fourth of the way through the book. Just didn't thoroughly capture my interest.

Blue says

Finally a YA book that not only draws attention to the power of social media but how the characters are attached to technology, whether it be their phones or their computers, which is fantastic. I'm sorry but if you are writing a YA book based around teenagers in this time line, you need to have them glued to their phones or at least have their interaction with technology more often. I am over YA books that are based in high school or around young adults that don't spend any time on their phones... really authors, have you stepped outside? Teenagers and their phones are inseparable and in the Chaos of Now you see their need for it and how parents removing it from the house is literally the world's worst punishment so bravo Lange!

Technology aside (Yeah sorry I got excited about it) The Chaos of Now is a book filled with tough topics such as bullying, suicide, cyber monitoring and cyber bullying and to be frank with you all. It was bloody brilliant.

You can find my full review for this book here:

<http://www.bluefairytale.com.au/2018...>

Laura Petrie says

Thanks to the @kidlitexchange network for the review copy of this book— all opinions are my own.--- “But it turns out, guilt doesn’t slide off so easy. It sticks to you like a film you can’t rinse away.” In his daily life, Eli does the bare minimum to skate by. The only thing he is really passionate about is coding. So when he is summoned by two students he barely knows that are also coding nerds, his interest is peaked. Seth and Mouse ask him to be their third teammate in an elite coding competition. To Eli, this is the perfect opportunity to get noticed by companies for internships so he can bypass college and start doing what he really loves. Eli agrees to the offer, and they begin their work. But he begins to realize that this coding project is actually a mission to seek revenge and humiliate everyone who wronged Jordan Bishop, a boy who committed suicide earlier in the year due to bullying. With the creation of the website "Friends of Bishop," Eli feels satisfied and powerful. But as secrets start to unfold and the effects of their project bring about extreme consequences, he starts to feel conflicted and extremely guilty. By the end of this novel, Eli learns that his actions can have a far greater impact than he ever imagined.

Eli is the epitome of a teenage boy narrator. At times, he is self-centered, self-conscious, and down right rude. In contrast, he has his moments of sheer loyalty, honesty, and kindness toward his friends and family. I appreciate that the author created a character that was so authentic. I also loved that this novel explored the fine line that exists between justice and revenge. The book did an excellent job exploring multiple perspectives, forcing the reader to walk in other people’s shoes. Readers of this novel will learn that it is not our job to control the universe and that technology can have intense consequences that can never be erased. I would recommend this book for high school readers and libraries due to the mature issues that Eli and his friends deal with.

Nicole says

Check out more reviews like this on: [NicoleHendersonReads](#)

Before reading this book, I hadn’t heard a ton of things about this author (other than the fact she wrote a book called *Butter* which was pretty popular in YA a while back). But the plot of this particular book was what intrigued me the most, specifically the coding element. I have never read a book with coding in it before so it was great to read something about it and in some ways learn about the technical side of technology. So when I got this book in the mail, I just had to read it right away.

Considering the fact that it’s a thicker contemporary novel, I didn’t expect to read it that quickly. The writing style made the book much easier to read, but it also packed a punch. This book truly made me think about the darker side of social media and how serious it can really be. We don’t often realize that social media has a dark element because we tend to ignore all that, but it is something we need to be mindful of when using social media. I personally thought that this book did a fantastic job at portraying this aspect. Besides that, I really enjoyed reading about coding and learning more about the subject matter. And I hope to read more about coding eventually.

Another aspect I loved was Eli’s character arc. I felt like I could relate to him in a lot of ways, such as his values and family life. I also thought Eli added a lot of humour to the (surprisingly) dark contemporary as I chuckled at a few lines throughout the novel. However, I do understand why other reviewers are saying that Eli and other side characters were underdeveloped. That’s because this book is mostly plot driven and so we

don't get to know the other characters as well as we do with Eli. And I really do wish the friends (Seth, Mouse etc..) were more developed.

This is definitely one I would reread again and again. Overall, it was a great book I would highly recommend you guys go check out.

I received this ARC from Raincoast Books so thank you to them for sending this my way.

Ghostly Writer says

I'm not entirely sure with how I feel about this... May edit this later, if I change my mind about the rating. In different ways, the latter part of the novel brought up a lot of things for me. Difficult.

Actual rating: 2.5 stars.

Kim Dyer says

The Chaos of Now is a really tricky novel to review as it does touch on some pretty important themes. It's a story about cyber bullying, data security and the importance of living in the now. However, it's also a very strange novel and I have some very mixed feelings about its ending.

To begin with the positive, The Chaos of Now is a very complex novel about a subject with no clear cut answers. It explores the futility of a school's halfhearted attempts to eradicate bullying (as if putting up signs in school will ever stop anyone) and looks into the murky ethical area about whether it is right to limit people's free speech over the internet. It also looks into if its ever right to beat bullies at their own game. While it seems harmless at first to create a forum for victims to get one back on their tormentors, it becomes more sinister as the bullies start to come to harm and have their lives forever damaged by the videos posted.

However, I felt that the novel did sometimes seem a little too over the top. I mean, with the opening pages a teenager sets himself on fire in a the school cafeteria. While teen suicides are no laughing matter, this felt a little too over the top and immediately made the story feel a little less realistic. I also didn't think that the story showed consequences very well. What happened to Ashley (as horrible as she was) was sickening, yet after the event she just disappears from the story and we do not learn what happened to her. In a story about the consequences of bullying, this feels very weak.

The ending of the story will also divide readers as it's not very final. The climax at the school play was quite powerful, revealing the true nature of Jordan's bullies and showing their raw guilt quite nicely, but still felt a bit over the top. The chapter that followed was a bit bittersweet, containing some positive notes but ultimately ending with Eli's future rather in the balance. While I did actually like this ambiguity, it did lack a bit of closure as it's really up to the reader to decide what the future will hold for him,

The characters in the novel are probably its strongest point as they did feel very real. Eli's narrative flows very nicely and it is very easy to empathise with him, especially as he starts to get in over his head. The novel is filled with complex and well-rounded characters, from the surprising depth of some of the "bullies" like Brett to the secrets that are held by Jordan's two closest confidants, Seth and Mouse. While the

characters aren't always likeable, they did all feel like real teenagers which is often something that writers struggle to achieve.

So, all in all, this novel is a bit of a mixed bag and won't appeal to everyone. However, it does contain some strong characters and touches on some very modern themes. If you're a fan of high school set contemporary fiction, I'd definitely suggest giving it a try.

Lindsey Lynn (thepagemistress) says

Trigger Warning: suicide, bullying, self harm, amongst other similar topics. Wow. So this was an absolute page turner. I couldn't put it down. The writing was well done. I enjoyed how real the characters were. The emotions and inner debate was very relatable. The plot was simple but had twists you didn't see coming. The dialog flowed really smoothly. Overall, I just really enjoyed and flew through this. The ending is still with me and has left me with lots to think about.

Katy Noyes says

Cyberbullying is at the heart of this pertinent school story.

In the aftermath of a suicide in the lunch hall a year ago, a nationwide reaction focusing on cyberlaws to protect students restricts online freedoms for everyone. The online bullying that resulted in Jordan Bishop's death has caused much underground hacker activity. Eli is approached by fellow hackers to help take revenge upon those who caused Jordan's death and begins to enjoy the power of scoring points against the bullies.

It's a classic tale of "power corrupts...", in a very contemporary context. I was reminded of *Thirteen Reasons Why* at times, though the victim here is a male, the bullies are widespread and none identifiable as a 'main' culprit in Jordan's demise.

Eli becomes a convincing Everyman, one who is blessed with superior coding skills, but one faced with a problem we would all struggle to choose the moral direction with. Who deserves to be punished, and who gets to decide?

There are a few red herrings and some good 'nasty' characters at school that show other sides to themselves later on, in the way they tend to. Eli has a slightly uncomfortable home life, with Dad's new (much younger) girlfriend causing yet more guilt and dilemmas. There's a love interest for Eli that is rather sweet, and the girl in question is quite a strongly rounded character too, I wanted more from her but she was, alas, not the focus.

I liked the social media angle and how it is used by the hackers and by the school community as a way of venting frustration and grievances. I did want more at the end though, more assurance of the future direction of the characters and 'what will happen next' - the sign you've grown to care.

For ages 12 and above.

Unseen Library says

I received a copy of *The Chaos of Now* from Allen & Unwin to review.

Rating of 4.5.

From one of the most intriguing authors of modern young adult fiction comes this powerful story about bullying in the modern cyber world and the potential impacts our choices can have on those around us.

One year ago, a student at Haver High, Jordan Bishop, walked into the school cafeteria and committed suicide by setting himself on fire, a reaction to the relentless online bullying he was experiencing. Since that event, life at Haver High has not been the same. Not only do the scars of Jordan's actions remain but radical legislation brought in to combat cyberbullying ensure that students' online lives are openly monitored by federal cybersnoops.

Eli Bennett is a young hacker who is desperate to graduate and leave town in order to escape his father and his father's new girlfriend, Misty. Eli is happy enough at school with his only friend, Zach, although he wouldn't mind getting to know the beautiful Isabel. But when he is approached by fellow hackers Seth and Mouse, he finds himself drawn into an entirely new challenge. Seth and Mouse were Jordan's friends, but have had to keep their relationship with him a secret to avoid backlash from the other students. Desperate to get some sort of justice for their fallen comrade, they are seeking a way to get back at those students who drove Jordan to kill himself. Their idea is to create a website where Jordan's bullies can be publicly shamed, and they need Eli to make it untraceable to the authorities. Despite being haunted by a previous hacking mistake, Eli agrees to help, interested in the potential of this sort of website.

Calling the website 'Friends of Bishop', the site provides the students of Haver High with an anonymous forum to post videos about bad behaviour in the school. With the help of a few bombshell videos, the site becomes a hit, and Eli and his friends believe they are making some real changes. With the cybersnoops desperately trying to shut down the site, the hidden Friends of Bishop revel in their notoriety and the praise of many of their classmates. But when their quest for justice takes a nasty turn, Eli finds himself facing the real-world consequences of his actions and must try and work out what the right thing to do is.

Click link for full review:

<https://unseenlibrary.com/2018/10/29/...>

Or visit my blog at:

<https://unseenlibrary.com/>

Rae says

The Chaos of Now by Erin Jade Lange is a thought-provoking book that discusses tough topics like bullying, suicide, and cyber monitoring. When Jordan, a geeky computer wizard, commits suicide by lighting a match, it irrevocably changes the lives of those he went to school with. Eli Bennett gets caught in the middle of a vigilante scheme to pay tribute to Jordan, but unfortunately, it does not go as planned . . .

This was such an interesting book! It's going to be a tough book to review, because I feel conflicted. On one

hand, it was entertaining to read. Tough to read, too, especially since I have kids of my own. On the other hand, much of the book was shallow and lacked good character and plot depth, so I had a hard time connecting with the characters.

I did like the the story concept. When Jordan commits suicide, it changes the lives of everyone around him. Jordan's friends want to get revenge against the bullies who destroyed Jordan's lives, so they rope Eli into helping them create their vigilante website. While doing so, their actions repeatedly raised the questions: Were Eli and his friends now the bullies? Did the bullies deserve their punishment? How narrow is the line between right and wrong?

I appreciated the complexity of the bullies. While the main characters lacked depth, the author provided insight into the lives of the bullies. No one is simply good or bad--there are so many shades of gray. I think it was interesting watching Eli process his actions and how they affected other people's lives. It's hard to feel good about something when empathy gets in the way. I liked that the book forced you into the shoes of a bully. It's easy to see how that line can be crossed!

The ending of the book left me wanting more. While suicide was a primary topic in the book, I wish it would have been discussed further. At one point a character called Jordan's suicide selfish. I wish there would have been more elaboration during this interchange, especially on the topic of mental illness. Simply saying suicide is selfish makes light of what suicide is actually about and doesn't pay homage to the mental illness that often runs rampant before a person commits suicide.

Overall, this was a quick read, easily consumed in a day. Should you read it? I can't say I would highly recommend this book, but if it sounds like your cup of tea, give it a read!

Thank you to NetGalley for providing the Kindle version of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Barbara says

This YA novel starts off with a strong premise, but it loses momentum three-fourths of the way through. There are plenty of twists and turns that will keep teens reading to see how things turn out, but I wish the ending had been a bit more solid. As another reviewer mentioned, while it might be comforting to some to simply say that the act of suicide is selfish, that seems to be a simplification of a complicated decision. Parts of the plot made me think of recent headlines and events at various schools, of course, and the use of a flawed narrator in Eli, a sophomore, makes the story more interesting to read. After the one-year anniversary of the suicide of freshman Jordan Bishop at Haver High, two of Jordan's friends enlist Eli's hacking services for an online competition, which turns out to be more of an attempt to wreak vengeance on all those who did wrong to Jordan and contributed to his death. Eli has secrets of his own about some of his own online actions, but as he watches some of those who disparaged Jordan when he was alive be brought to their knees by embarrassing online videos and materials, he finds himself feeling sorry for some of them. As he is drawn further and further into the plot, he's also dealing with keeping everything a secret from his best friend, a budding romance, and with an overprotective woman who's come into his father's life. But how far can he trust his new friends? After Jordan's suicide, the school gained access to students' online activity, a move that I would have liked to have seen explored even more. There is always a way around those sorts of controls and attempts to thwart the free exchange of ideas, just as there will most likely always be those who will want to basically spy on others. But how legal are those sorts of actions? Did no one express concern about them? Examining these questions would have given the book additional heft, and make it even more timely.

As things stand, I sometimes felt as though I was reading a book set in today's world and sometimes one in the very near future. Teens might enjoy debating whether school or government officials can behave as they did in this book and what the consequences of posting certain materials might be for them and for others.

Clare Bird says

I want to thank Netgalley for a free advanced copy of *The Chaos of Now* in return for an honest review!

Things I enjoyed about this book:

I love the fact that Erin Jade Lange tackles such a prevalent topic bullying. Anti-bullying is my jam so I was super excited to pre-read this book! I also enjoyed that coding was the a main concept in this book, it's not the norm to have some as "nerdy" as coding in a novel.

The Things I Didn't Enjoy:

The Chaos of Now had so many parts that felt far-fetched. It was hard to believe every twist and turn. There were times when it was hard to connect with the characters. I couldn't tell if it was because of ME or because of the writing.

MRS BIRDS WORDS REVIEW

Erin Jade Lange deserves 3 out of 5 bird feathers for her novel *The Chaos of Now*. I truly wanted to give this book 4 feathers, but the lack of reality really pulled me back. The plot felt slow in a few places. I truly loved that *The Chaos of Now* was littered with coding talk. I appreciated the hard subjects tackled including suicide and bullying. I think these are subjects that need to be talked about. The one relationship that I did love was the main character, Eli and his father's girlfriend. For some reason, I was excited every time they interacted. I don't often read a book and think, "I'd definitely recommend this for a boy." I do think many boys would find it interesting. With that said, I think girls would enjoy it too- perhaps just more relatable because of the three male protagonists not because its about coding... Girls should code! Overall, I'd recommend it but would be prepared for some literary stretching.

Parent's Guide:

Swearing, sex, crime, and suicide. It would make a great conversation starter to read with your teen and discuss!

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Sara (A Gingerly Review) says

2.5 to 3 stars from me.

This was a quick read but I struggled to connect to any part of the story.

Carin says

Last year, a boy who had been teased and bullied committed suicide at school by lighting himself on fire in front of everyone in the cafeteria. This book begins one year later, on the anniversary of his death at a school assembly meant to honor him. But Eli notices quickly that the students coming up and saying nice things about him, didn't even know him, and certainly weren't his friends. Right after, a couple of his actual friends reach out to Eli. The three boys were going to enter a coding competition together (you must have a team of three) and now they want Eli to be their third. He quizzes them on why they didn't stand up for him at the assembly but agrees to be on the team, overlooking some red flags, as he loves to code, and he wants to get out of his house, where his father's very young, very hot, former stripper girlfriend is always trying to act like his mom.

In the aftermath of the suicide, national laws were passed regarding bullying, particularly as regards social media. Kids are no longer allowed to really have any social media accounts except the most innocuous on heavily-policed (literally) sites. It hasn't really cut down on bullying which has just gone old-school but it has meant that students no longer feel they have any place to vent or to actually call out bullies. So the coding project is that these three boys are going to make a website that is untraceable where students from their high school can post things to out bad people. They start it off with a video of an obnoxious wrestler shooting steroids.

But later, Eli overhears some boys at school talking. It turns out that the wrestler was doing what every wrestler did in order to compete. He didn't want to do it. He's lost his college scholarship which means he can't go to college at all. He was pressured into the steroids, and his life is now destroyed. And Eli starts to realize that even bullies might have more to their story and be real people with their own problems. But by this time, the website has taken down more people, and begins to take on a life of its own. He also starts to realize he doesn't know these two other boys very well and they might have an alternative agenda for this project.

This book really delves into the complications of bullying. How bullies are often themselves bullied at home, how bullies aren't just 100% evil, how even bullied kids can themselves bully others, how we can be bullied by people who we think are friends, and so on. It's thoughtful, multilayered, and really timely, with topics super-relevant today. The book really has stuck with me and I think it's both a great story, and a really important one.
