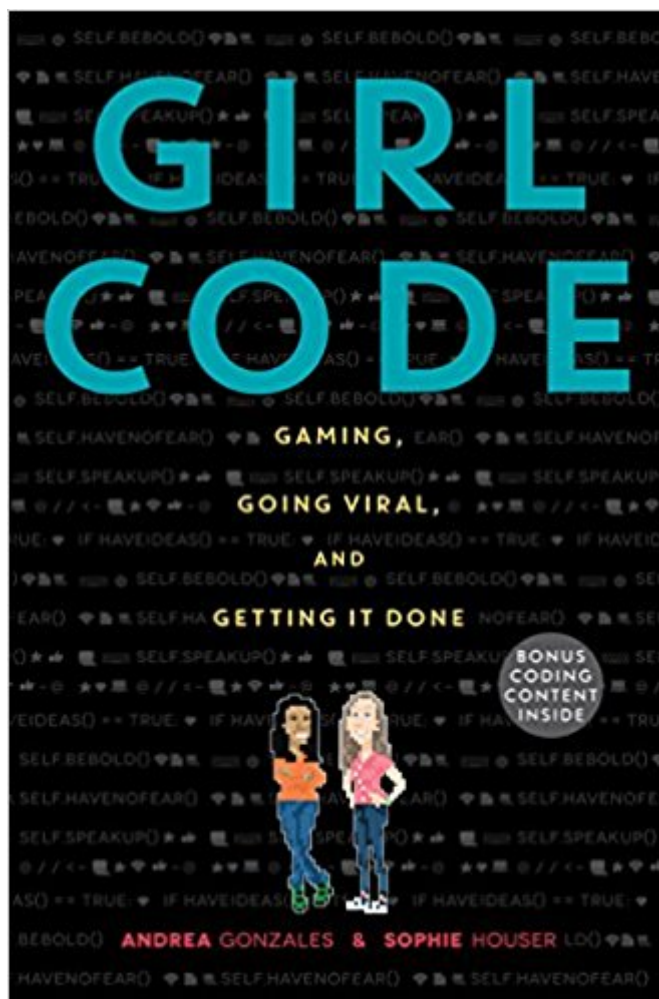


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# Girl Code: Gaming, Going Viral, And Getting It Done



## Synopsis

Perfect for aspiring coders everywhere, *Girl Code* is the story of two teenage tech phenoms who met at Girls Who Code summer camp, teamed up to create a viral video game, and ended up becoming world famous. The book also includes bonus content to help you start coding! Fans of funny and inspiring books like *Maya Van Wagenen's Popular* and *Caroline Paul's Gutsy Girl* will love hearing about Andrea "Andy" Gonzales and Sophie Houser's journey from average teens to powerhouses. Through the success of their video game, Andy and Sophie got unprecedented access to some of the biggest start-ups and tech companies, and now they're sharing what they've seen. Their video game and their commitment to inspiring young women have been covered by the Huffington Post, BuzzFeed, CNN, Teen Vogue, Jezebel, the Today show, and many more. Get ready for an inside look at the tech industry, the true power of coding, and some of the amazing women who are shaping the world. Andy and Sophie reveal not only what they've learned about opportunities in science and technology but also the true value of discovering your own voice and creativity. A Junior Library Guild selection

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## Customer Reviews

"Brilliantly funny... Readers seeking a factual title about enterprising teens creating solutions to social problems will find Andrea and Sophie's story inspirational" (Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books) "Tech-centered empowerment for those who feel

voiceless. (Kirkus Reviews) "[Andrea and Sophie] intelligence, humanity, creativity, seriousness of purpose, and humor will stick with readers, and inspire them. (Publishers Weekly) "Gonzales and Houser's writing styles are conversational and work well to dispel the aura of inaccessibility that often surrounds works on technology| Inspiring and hopeful; a great addition to libraries with novice and expert coders alike (School Library Journal) "A good text to add to STEM shelves needing female-centered information. (Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA))

Andrea "Andy" Gonzales is a graduate of Hunter College High School and is now attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as a Robertson Scholar. The summer before her freshman year of high school, Andy started learning to code. Since then, she's been passionate about computer science and women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). When Andy attended Girls Who Code, she learned the power of working with other girls, and that led to the creation of the video game Tampon Run, which she co-built with Sophie Houser. Tampon Run's success exceeded all expectations, and Andy was thrown into a world outside of her high school. Beyond her passion for computer science, Andy is a music, comic book, and video game enthusiast. She looks forward to remaining an active advocate for women in computer science. Sophie Houser is a student at Brown University who learned to code at the Girls Who Code summer program. As her final project she co-created a game called Tampon Run with Andrea Gonzales to break down the menstrual taboo in society. The game went viral, throwing her into the limelight of the press, the public, and the tech world. In addition to coding, Sophie also enjoys laughing with her friends, wearing socks with interesting patterns, and Photoshopping funny scenes. She is pursuing all of these passions as well as many more at college and beyond.

A must read for young girls and their parents too! These young women share insights into the tech world, but this book offers so much more - from raising awareness of important social issues to wrestling with anxiety about your own self-worth and the personal growth that comes from getting out of your comfort zone.

You go girls!! Great account of the duos adventure into the world of code.

A wonderfully inspiring book; very current. A very good gift for young girls! Great writing!

Confession - i borrowed this book from the library where I work. But it is SO worth a good review. These young women did something pretty amazing at a young age. And they are incredible role models. Coding changed their lives - the changes had their ups and downs, but they learned a lot and they applied what they learned to do something to change hurtful social attitudes. I have done a little (read VERY little) coding and admire them for their tenacity in completing their projects under pretty wicked time constraints. And more important is their desire to code with a social conscience. Girls in our society tend to be encouraged to think they are not math/science/logical (or that these careers are not sexy????) which is so wrong. Hopefully this book - if it reaches a teen audience - will inspire more young women to explore rewarding careers in technology.

See more of my reviews on The YA Kitten! My copy was an ARC I got as a reviewer for YA Books Central. I kinda like Photoshop, digital design in general, and web design. I took web and digital design classes in high school, but the web design class kinda devolved into a business class once the teacher left to teach math and her husband took over. We didn't learn much about websites and coding after that. Thankfully, Gonzales and Houser didn't have teachers like that and were able to create the fabulous little game that is Tampon Run. Girl Code is Gonzales and Houser taking us through how the game came about and the aftermath of their viral fame. Whether you're a STEM girl or firmly on the English/History team like I am, these girls are pretty inspiring! The linear structure of Girl Code tracks their journey from everygirls to viral stars from start to finish to epilogue: Sophie got into coding to get over her anxiety about speaking and find a new language in which to express herself; Andy was interested in coding from a young age and took it as one of her interests even while listening to her Filipino family's "doctor, lawyer, engineer" motto for her future. Their paths collided when they attended the same Girls Who Code summer program in the summer of 2014 and decided to partner up for their final project. Beyond informing me that the incredible original title of Tampon Run was Texas Tampon Massacre and the game was inspired by a Huffington Post article about an abortion vote, the girls take you step-by-step through how it came together as though they'd kept very precise diaries about the process. (To be fair, Sophie did. She keeps a personal diary.) Even when the tech talk got more advanced than rudimentary little me could understand, I stuck to it. Anyone without knowledge of coding games won't be able to replicate their work very easily, but they'll understand what the girls are doing and that's the important part. The game, once

they decided to release the full product online, didn't go viral solely by chance either. The girls smartly used social media to its fullest by tweeting the link out, posting about the game on Reddit, etc. Marketing: it ain't always fun, but you don't get anywhere without it. Girl Code takes us through what it was like to be in the international spotlight and, even better, what they've done since those fifteen minutes of viral fame died down. Sophie is pursuing entrepreneurial paths to eventually create her own start-up and give back the same way people gave to her; Andy is sticking with coding. Oh, and the girls explicitly call out the tech nightmare Gamergate movement as just a tiny, big-mouthed group of cyberbullies. 1000% AGREE, WOULD SCREAM INTO A MEGAPHONE. In general, the book is very positive about the future of women in tech industries, but it doesn't address the cultural issues so few women stay in STEM programs and later enter STEM professions.

Yeah, know, rampant sexism and classmates who make them so miserable they bail. To be entirely fair, this wasn't something I expected the book to address. If they've experienced that toxic tech atmosphere besides the cringeworthy radio interview they write about, they didn't make mention of it or detail it at length. My strongest criticism is reserved for the book's prose. Though accessible, it's also pretty rough and my thoughts wandered away from the text easily thanks to the basic "we did this, we did that, we felt like this" way the girls write. Nonfiction books can have engaging writing that goes beyond that and it's clear Gonzales and Houser are not top-notch writers. Though it makes reading this short little book take a little longer, that's still not a deal-breaker. Gonzales and Houser's incredible accomplishment and their determination to one day give back to women in STEM is inspiring and will make its readers want to go out and create after they read Girl Code. Video games, writing, paintings, a scholarly article about how this one historical figure was definitely gay—there are no limits on who this book will spark inspiration in. For instance, the original title Texas Tampon Massacre gave me an idea for a short story and I want to work as hard on that as the authors worked on their game.

As a female that major in Computer Science back in the early 80's after having the opportunity to take a Fortran class in high school, I really enjoyed this book. I think all young people should read it and us older folks that may need a kick in the pants once in a while would enjoy it also. It is a easy read.

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