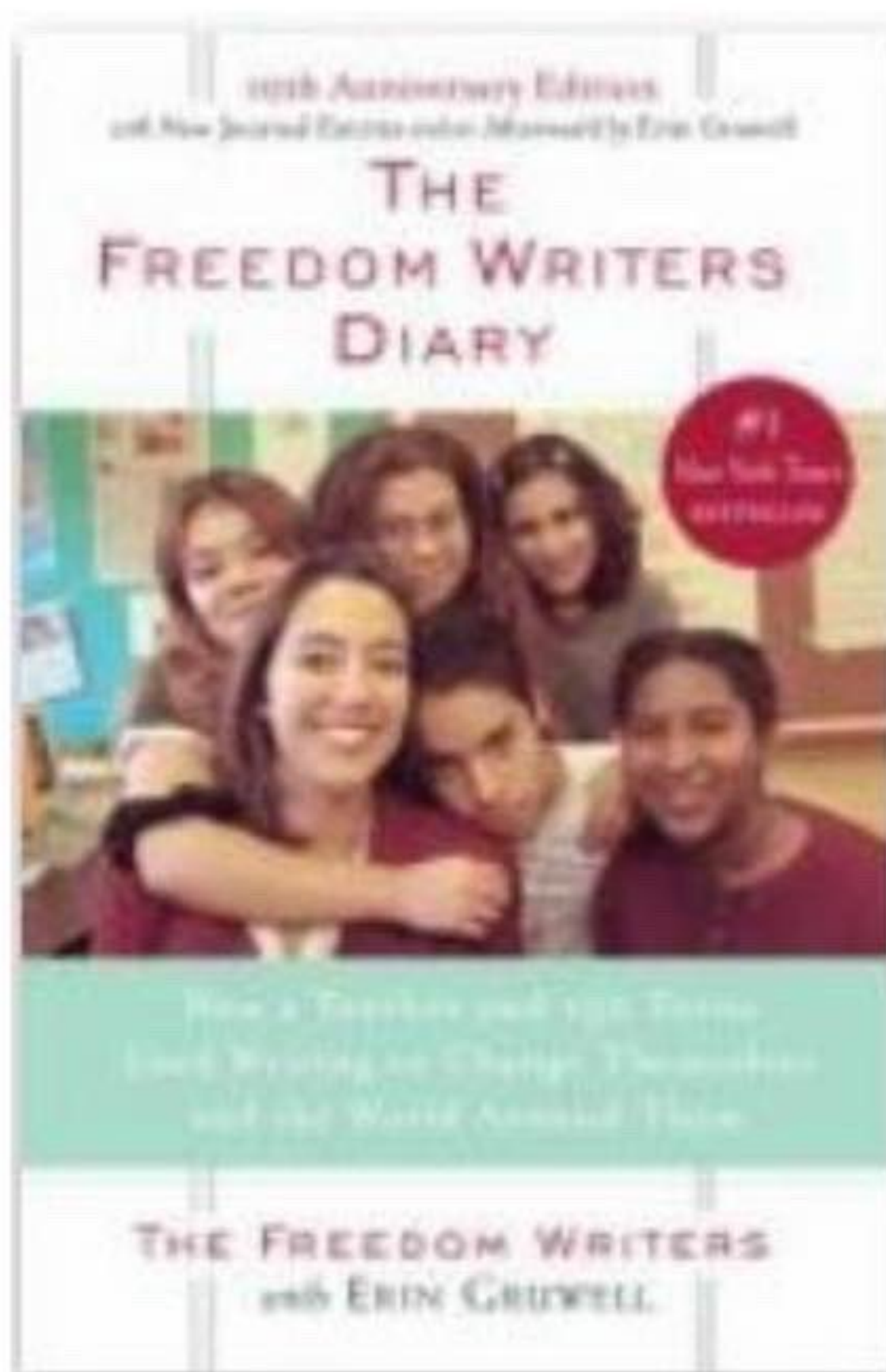


THE FREEDOM WRITERS DIARY



Adult

By The Freedom Writers with Erin Gruwell

ISBN: 0-385-49422-X

CONTENT WARNING

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Not For Minors
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3	The illustration on this page depicts a drawing of a man in silhouette. His lip size is greatly exaggerated.
4	One of my disgruntled neighbors had the audacity to say, "If you love black people so much, why don't you just marry a monkey?"
7	Most of these niggas come strapped and ready to bust a cap. ...I don't even think everyone in this class is supposed to be in here, because there's a white boy in the corner looking down at his schedule, hoping that he's in the wrong room. For his entire life he's always been part of the majority, but as soon as he stepped into this room, he became the minority. Being white in this class is not going to give him the same status that he gets in society.
8	What the hell am I doing in here? I'm the only white person in this English class!
9	I'll lie and insist that there's been a computer error and that I am supposed to be in the Distinguished Scholars class, even though I suck in English and have a learning disability. I know she'll believe me 'cause I'm white.
10	That's just the way it is, and we all respect that. So when the Asians started trying to claim parts of the 'hood, we had to set them straight.
13	I opened my backpack, took the gun out, and put it in my waist, then I slowly walked to the back and waited for the door to open. ..."Fuck them niggas..." ...Usually, I would have run, but this time I had a gun. I knew they were getting closer, so I turned around, reached for my gun, took it out, and pointed the gun at his head. ...I put the gun back in my waist, and went home. No big deal, just another day in the 'hood.
17	Risking life, dodging or taking bullets, and pulling triggers ...It's all worth it.
18	But Sarah's boyfriend is a senior, and all of the members knew the kind of things the "senior men" did with freshman girls.
19	I presumed she must have been given specific instructions because while we sizzled, she kneeled in front of David O'Neal, a popular junior boy. I couldn't make out exactly what was happening, but he was holding something in front of him that looked like a bottle, and I think she was crying. Then her head started moving back and forth, and as a crowd of rowdy boys gathered around them she started to go help her I was pushed back to the ground as a voice screamed, "Where do you think you're going, whore? Did I say you could get up?" It was one of the members. ...I reeked of beer that had been poured on me multiple times.
20	Now that I've been initiated, and I'm officially in, my only concern is parties and stuff. All the older girls drink and really "party." ...I guess everybody in high school drink, though, so it's not too bad.
21	I got into tagging, because bangin' and dealing drugs or kickin' it with gangsters was not my thing. I started to hit up on walls with markers or cans. Kickin' back with the homies, smoking bud, and fuckin' shit up.

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22	If it passes, the government can take away health care benefits and any other public program, like school, to all illegal immigrants. I'm scared because it will personally affect my family since my mom came here illegally. ...Someone in Ms. G's class reminded us that "187" is the police code for murder. If this proposition passes, it may murder the opportunities for immigrants like me to succeed.
25	When I felt the rush of air from his fist whizzing past my face, I went crazy! I started kicking him in the head!
39	I began to analyze and reflect on my life, my many encounters with injustice and discrimination.
45	I didn't do much except sit at my homie's pad and smoke. That was all I did when I ditched- chilled and smoked.
46	I was smoking out with my homies when the cops rolled up.
52	The only job I could get in my neighborhood was selling drugs- so I decided to pass.
67	I am struggling with a deep secret- being a "closet drinker." ...It's so hard for me to change because I fear that people will not like the sober me. I've been doing it for so long, it's just a daily routine like getting up in the morning, going to the bathroom, and brushing your teeth. ...I woke up craving orange juice with a little hint of vodka. Guess what I did? As usual, I went to my secret stash, and poured my favorite drink, vodka and orange juice. ...Of course my mom was already at work, so I walked out the door with my water bottle filled with O.J. and vodka and went to school like it was an everyday thing.
72	I watched him steal money from my mother's purse and sell our belongings for drugs. ...I can still feel the sting from the belt on my back and legs as he violently lashed me in his usual drunken state of mind.
75	I was only six when a friend of my father's molested me in his home. ...Even standing at the bus stop, I realized that the women and girls standing next to me may have been molested, harassed, or even impregnated at one point in their lives. ...Round one- What if the elderly woman sitting across from me was sexually molested by her uncle when she was young? ...Knowing that people are getting murdered and that thousands of women were being raped is shocking.
78	Matthew was simply walking home when a van full of gangsters pulled him into their car, drove him down to the railroad tracks, beat him up and then shot him repeatedly in the head.
91	He says, "Why don't you have any black friends?" or " So you're going over to those honky's house again?" ...Worse, he grew up in the South, and racism was all he saw.
98	Did he ever think of suicide? ...Sorry, diary, I was going to try not to do it tonight, but the little baggy of white

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	powder is calling my name. As I chop up the white rock on my special makeup mirror into very fine powder I start thinking about the past week with Zlata and our infamous toast for change.
99	I'm what you call a closet tweaker. To clear things up, a tweaker is someone who smokes or snorts speed. Nobody knows my secret, especially Zlata, and I'd like to keep it that way. It's not something to brag about. I'm getting to a point where I can hide it in plain sight. When Zlata was here, she and Ms. Gruwell had no idea that I was high. I even got high before we went to Universal Studios with her, but I played it off as much as I could.
100	I was put in rehab after our toast for change for possession of marijuana, but now that I'm in rehab, I'm addicted to speed. ...When I think of an addict I think of someone walking the streets, begging people for change, sucking dick for a score, leaving their babies in the trash still alive. ...For me, a quick line has turned into a fast hit from the glass pipe. The higher the intensity, the better the high. That's my preferred party favor, the glass pipe.
101	With all that behind me, I whip out my straw, sit down on the toilet, making sure the bathroom is locked; bring it to my nose and snort. The burn is a sure sign that I'm on my way to my next high. Oh yeah, it's going to be good. No more headaches, body aches, or stomachaches until of course, the high is over, but only until I reach for my best friend called crystal meth.
113	I asked her why, and her response was "We don't read black literature in this class because it all has sex, fornication, drugs, and cussing."
117	A carton of milk was thrown, someone shouted "Fuck Niggers," a big crowd formed, and fighting began.
118	The boy who confronted him suddenly punched him in the face. He fell unconscious into the bushes then everyone rushed him at once. There were twenty angry boys against one. Someone grabbed him by the neck and dragged him out on the street. They started kicking, and punching him in his ribs, face, and anywhere they could reach. Someone picked up a metal trash can and slammed it into his face.
121	Suicide is something that's always on my mind, "24/7." There isn't a day that goes by without the enemy shooting suicidal thoughts through my mind. ...There I was, standing in the dark, holding a kitchen knife to my wrist. My heart began to beat faster and faster as I held out my arm. I pulled back my sleeve, exposing my wrist. My mind blacked out. I looked down to see that the knife had barely cut into my skin. The knife was too dull.
125	A guy in the corner even said, "Misogyny? Did you say massage me pee-pee?" and started laughing. ...My male cousins were advised, "Make sure you put a hat on that Jimmy!" or "Get as many girls as possible!" ...My boyfriend and I had been together for two years before we decided to have sex. Then when it came time for what was supposed to be my special moment, I thought there would be caressing and passionate kisses. Instead, it was a five-minute bang, bang, bang.