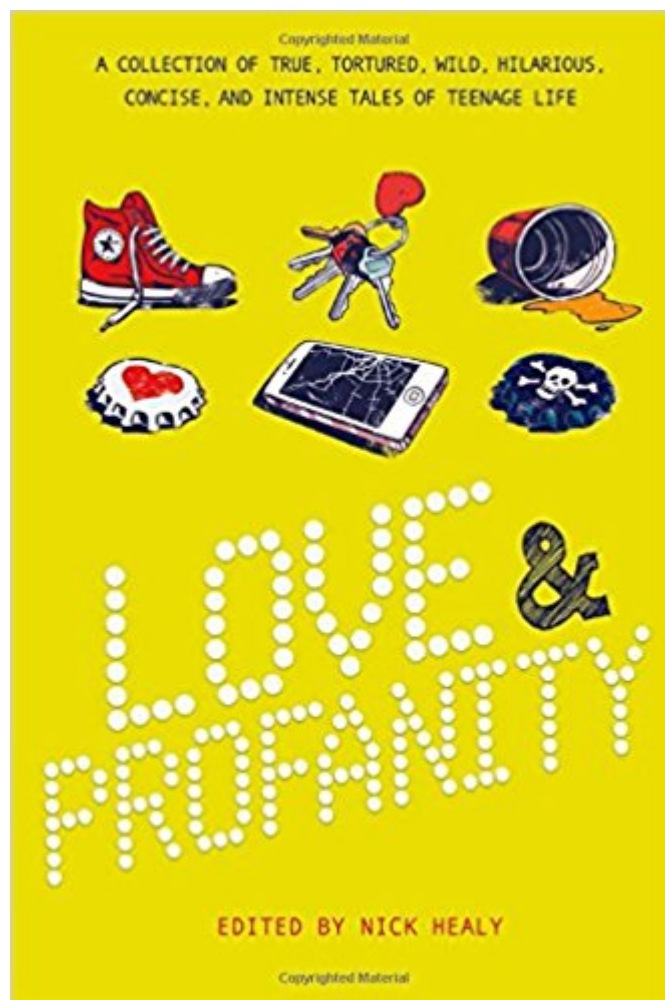




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# Love & Profanity: A Collection Of True, Tortured, Wild, Hilarious, Concise, And Intense Tales Of Teenage Life



## Synopsis

Love & Profanity features more than forty brief, brilliant, and unforgettable true stories from writers both renowned and on the rise. Discover strange and surprising scenes of people coming of age amidst the everyday intensity of teenage life. Witness transformative moments arising from the mundane. Behold the young adult in full splendor and horror, bursting with love and profanity.

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## Customer Reviews

Gr 8 Up—Short yet powerful autobiographical stories comprise this collection of consistently excellent, vivid writing. The 43 authors from various backgrounds include a few YA well-knowns—John Scieszka, Joseph Bruchac, Carrie Mesrobian, Will Weaver—and many new and upcoming names. The stories reflect the writers' adolescent experiences with conflict, bullying, family, school, friendship, unrequited love, sex, and more. They offer appeal mostly for high school teens and even adults, though there are several that would be appropriate for upper middle schoolers. Love, or the abysmal lack of it, is central to many of the stories, while profanity is primarily reflected in situations rather than word choice (though the language is occasionally graphic). The stories are, by turns, edgy, nostalgic, poignant, sad, and humorous, with some offering a combination of these qualities. Each selection is heartfelt and thought-provoking and could be a catalyst for intensive discussion. VERDICT Readers of *Break These Rules*: 35 YA Authors on Speaking up, *Standing out*, and *Being Yourself* edited by Luke Reynolds (Chicago Review, 2013) and *Dear Teen Me: Authors Write Letters to Their Teen Selves* edited by E. Kristin Anderson and Miranda Kenneally (Zest, 2012), may appreciate this compilation.—Diane P.

Tuccillo, Poudre River Public Library District, CO --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Rachael Hanel has written several nonfiction books for children, in addition to essays and news and magazine articles. Many of her books have focused on history and social studies. She has a bachelor's degree in journalism and history and a master's degree in history from Minnesota State University, Mankato. She works as a writer, college instructor, and university administrator from her home base of Madison Lake, Minnesota. Geoff Herbach's young adult novels, *Stupid Fast*, *Nothing Special*, *I Am With Stupid*, and *Fat Boy vs. The Cheerleaders*, have been listed in the year's best by many associations who seem to know what they're talking about. Prior to writing YA, he published a literary novel, *The Miracle Letters of T. Rimberg*, wrote comedic radio and stage shows, and traveled the country telling weird stories in rock clubs. He teaches creative writing at Minnesota State, Mankato, and lives in a log cabin with a very tall wife named Steph. Kasandra Duthie lives in Minneapolis, but she grew up on small islands in Washington State. She lives with her patient husband and two hysterical dogs. Anna Vodicka grew up in northern Wisconsin and has lived in Spain, South America, Palau (try finding it on a map), and many other parts of the world since. Before becoming a writer, she took on other roles to earn a living: English teacher, house painter, singer in the streets of Paris. She misses Wisconsin. She does not, however, miss babysitting. Sarah Beth Childers went to a tiny Christian school in Huntington, West Virginia, where she played basketball but never made a shot, ran track but never won a race, and played an old British woman who got strangled in a high school play. She now lives in Richmond, Indiana, where her cat pulled down the living room curtains so she could get a better view of passing cars and her Boston Terrier pried open a gap in the fence so she could play with the dog next door. Sarah Beth wrote about her and her mom's teenage years in her memoir, *Shake Terribly the Earth: Stories from an Appalachian Family*. Alicia Catt grew up in Wisconsin. In high school she terrorized her mother, rode a skateboard, flunked creative writing, and got suspended for wearing a bra on the outside of her shirt. (Don't ask.) She now lives in Minneapolis with her adopted pit bull, Piggy. Clint Edwards holds an MFA in creative writing and has published nonfiction through Boston College, Emerson College, The University of North Dakota, and The University of South Carolina. He currently lives in Albany, Oregon, but was raised on a farm in Provo, Utah. His family consists of a farmer, teacher assistant, construction worker, electric utility worker, nurse, schoolteacher, and plumber. Laurie J. Edwards ended up marrying that hot guy from the cafeteria, whose name is Richard. She still gets tongue-tied around people, but finds she's better at communicating on paper. She went on to become a freelance author,

editor, and illustrator with a dozen books and more than 2,200 articles in print. She is also the author of several adult and young adult novels written under pseudonyms. Carrie Mesrobian is the author of *Sex & Violence* and *Perfectly Good White Boy*. She and her older sister were raised in Mankato, Minnesota, by very nice people who didn't deserve such misbehavior from their children. To this day she is still known as "the bad daughter."

Anika Fajardo is a former teacher and librarian. Her writing for both children and adults has been published widely and earned awards and grants. Esther Porter grew up in North Dakota, where she and her best friend had enough small animals to open a zoo. She is the author of a number of science-y books including *What's Sprouting in My Trash? A Book about Composting* and *Sun Power: A Book about Renewable Energy*. Her only animals now are Chopstick the angry cat, Georgie the confused cat, and Samantha Turkey Porter the slobbery pup. Pete Hautman lives in Minnesota, where he writes whatever he feels like writing, from time travel adventures like *The Obsidian Blade* to vampire-free romances such as *The Big Crunch*. His latest book is *Eden West*, a love story about a teen who grows up in an apocalyptic cult in Montana. His next book will include talking dogs, nanobots, and sasquatches. Patrick Hueller always assumed he'd grow up to be a sports star. One problem: He never actually grew up. Not literally. Not yet. He may be in his thirties now, but part of him still believes that he's going to wake up someday soon and be 6-foot-3. Until then, he'll continue to pursue his backup plan of writing books. One of those books is *Foul*, a horror-sports novel (written under the pen name "Paul Hoblin"). Another (as "P.W. Hueller") is *Wolf High*. That one's got sports in it, too. And werewolves.

When Trisha Speed Shaskan was a girl, she wanted to become a superhero. Her mother gave her a Wonder Woman costume. Her dad crafted her a tiara and bracelets out of metal to match. Trisha imagined she could fight evil, fly an invisible airplane, and get anyone to tell the truth. While she didn't grow up to be Wonder Woman, she still uses her imagination to write stories and to teach creative writing. Trisha has taught creative writing to children and adults for thirteen years. She has published 26 books for children, and more are forthcoming. She has an MFA in creative writing from Minnesota State University, Mankato. Trisha currently lives in Minneapolis with her husband, Stephen, and their cat, Eartha, named after Eartha Kitt, famous for her role as Catwoman. Joey Franklin survived his fight with Marty Manzoni and is still friends with both Marty and Amy, though he's changed their names here just in case they remember the story differently. He teaches creative writing at Brigham Young University and is raising three boys that he hopes will be nicer sixth graders than he was. Kyra Anderson lives in western Massachusetts with her husband, writer/illustrator David Milgrim, their dogs, Beegu and Havi, and their 13-year-old

child who loves all things potato, math, gaming, absurdity, and computers. Joseph Bruchac lives in the Adirondack mountain foothills town of Greenfield Center, New York, in the same house where his maternal grandparents raised him. Much of his writing draws on that land and his Abenaki ancestry. He has been a storyteller-in-residence for Native American organizations and schools throughout the continent, including the Institute of Alaska Native Arts and the Onondaga Nation School. Natalie Singer was born and half-raised in Montreal, Canada, before being uprooted and moved at age 16 to the mythical, ice-cream-colored land of California, where she had to finish raising herself. There, she discovered burritos, tried to become cool on the streets of San Francisco, and made out with lots of frogs before she finally found a prince. She's now a writer in Seattle. Kwame Alexander is the award-winning author of 18 books, including *The Crossover* and *He Said She Said*. When he's not running two literacy organizations, Book-in-a-Day, and LEAP for Ghana, he sits in his study writing love poems for his wife and daughters. Dayna Evans is a writer from Philadelphia who moved to New York when she was 17. She likes to eat doughnuts and travel, best of all when these things happen at the same time. Kim Lozano is a law school dropout who has five kids and wanderlust. She's an editor at a literary magazine and teaches creative writing to people over age 50. Her poetry and prose have been published in *The Iowa Review*, *Poetry Daily*, and elsewhere. Alexis Wiggins has been writing since she was five years old, when she wrote her first story, called *The Lincoln Magic Penny*; it was written on her dad's typewriter and may have been the best thing she ever wrote. Alexis loves: reading, teaching teenagers, New York City, lemons, Spain, her hubby and her two little boys. Alexis hates: the feeling of biting into peach fuzz, camping, mean people, and turbulence. Tom Moran spent much of his life in Southern California where he wrote about the surfers, boardwalk entertainers, artists, and dreamers who lived and played at Venice Beach. He currently makes his home in upstate New York where he has discovered that writing about his own days beside the California sand can help get him through the snowbound winters. Adam Rex lives in Tucson. He's the author and/or illustrator of a lot of things, including *The True Meaning of Smekday*, which is being adapted by DreamWorks into the film *Home*. He didn't write his YA novel, *Fat Vampire*, to cash in on the vampire craze; and that's fine, because it didn't. Aaron Brown won the Weekly Reader National Invention Contest in 2nd Grade. Having peaked early, he retired to write his memoirs in the mighty pine forest of Northern Minnesota. He writes stuff for things in places you find on the Internet, most notably his blog [MinnesotaBrown.com](http://MinnesotaBrown.com). Will Weaver was born in Minnesota farm country. In college, by having too much fun and not paying attention, he accidentally became an English major. Since there was no escape from good books, he was forced to become an author.

Of his many novels, his personal favorite is *Memory Boy*. Patti Kim was born in Pusan, Korea, and immigrated to the United States on Christmas of 1974 with her mother, father, and older sister. At the age of five, she thought she was a writer and scribbled gibberish all over the pages of her mother's Korean-English dictionary and got in big trouble for it. Her scribbling eventually paid off. She earned her MFA in Creative Writing at the University of Maryland. She is the author of *A CAB CALLED RELIABLE*. She lives with her husband and two daughters who give her plenty to write about every day. This is her first children's book.

Alison McGhee writes in all forms for all ages. She's the #1 New York Times bestselling author of books such as *Shadow Baby* and *Someday* and a slew of others. She lives in Minneapolis and Vermont, is irresistibly drawn to the color green, and would be happy to eat potstickers every day.

Da Chen is a New York Times bestselling author. He's published seven books, including *Colors of the Mountain*, *China's Son*, and *Wandering Warrior*. Da was born in a tiny village in Southern China. He now lives in Southern California where he also writes TV shows and film scripts. Daily he runs on the beautiful beach and swims in the sea.

Jackie Buckle lives in England and is author of *Half My Facebook Friends are Ferrets*. She doesn't have a ferret but would like one. She does have two slightly crazy teenage daughters and an even crazier big furry dog.

Jessica Gunderson grew up in the small town of Washburn, North Dakota. She has a bachelor's degree from the University of North Dakota and an MFA in Creative Writing from Minnesota State University, Mankato. She has written more than fifty books for young readers. Her book *Ropes of Revolution* won the 2008 Moonbeam Award for best graphic novel. She currently lives in Madison, Wisconsin, with her husband and cat.

Melissa Brandt is an educator and a screenwriter with a script called *Chicken Day* that is moving ever closer to being realized on the screen. She lives in Rochester, Minnesota, and loves to travel, read, and secretly record the conversations of her teenage daughter and son. She later uses these conversations in her stories. Seriously, she's not to be trusted.

Jenna Scarbrough attends college in Minnesota and sometimes admits to living in South Dakota. She can neither confirm nor deny allegations that she and her twin sister switched places on occasion in high school. She can confirm an unsuccessful attempt prior to her recent surgery.

Andrew Gottlieb lives in Irvine, California, and spends more time than he should letting fly fishing get in the way of his writing. Remarkably, he now helps raise two teenagers. He prefers road trips to work of any sort. Find him at [www.andrewcgottlieb.com](http://www.andrewcgottlieb.com).

Rebecca Stanborough spent her teenage years in a ramshackle community house with 21 people and two bathrooms. Now she lives and writes in St. Augustine, Florida, surrounded by alligators, island rats, and roseate spoonbills, none of whom has ever asked to share her bathroom.

Melissa Cistaro is a writer and bookseller at the legendary bookstore Book

Passage in Marin County, California. Writing is the only way she has been able to make sense of her world—both past and present. Her memoir *Pieces of My Mother* will be published in spring of 2015. Melody L. Heide grew up moving between New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania but now calls Minnesota home. She writes a lot about the transient life, and her work has appeared in numerous publications. Kara Garbe Balcerzak has been writing for fun ever since elementary school, when she wrote a series of mystery stories starring her two best friends. Now, as an adult, she's the author of several children's books as well as published essays about her life experiences. She is currently writing a memoir about her experiences living and teaching in Burkina Faso, West Africa, where she spent two years as a Peace Corps volunteer. In addition to writing, Kara loves traveling, camping, teaching, and eating international food. She grew up in Virginia, but now lives in Minnesota with her husband, two stepsons, and a lot of houseplants. Jon Scieszka was born in Flint, Michigan. The second oldest, and nicest, of six boys. No girls. Author of *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs!*, *The Stinky Cheeseman*, *Knucklehead*, and a mess of others. New series in the works with Abrams about Frank Einstein, kid science genius. With robots. And a chimpanzee. Heather Sellers is a professor of English. Her books include the memoir *You Don't Look Like Anyone I Know*, the short story collection *Georgia Under Water*, a children's book *Spike and Cubby's Ice Cream Island Adventure*, three volumes of poetry, and three books on the craft of writing. She loves to ride her Bianchi bicycle, preferably in the rain. Heather was born and raised in Florida. Margaret MacInnis holds MFA degrees from the University of Iowa and Queens University of Charlotte. Her essays have appeared in *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Brevity*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Colorado Review*, *DIAGRAM*, *Gettysburg Review*, *Massachusetts Review*, *Mid-American Review*, *River Teeth*, *Tampa Review*, and elsewhere. Kyle Minor lives in Indiana with his wife and two sons. His most recent TV series was not picked up by a network. His most recent book is *Praying Drunk*, a collection of short fiction.

A great collection of stories and voices from a wide range of up and coming writers. I think everyone can find at least a few stories in here that they can relate to or that will feel terrifyingly familiar to them. Definitely worth picking up!

I thought that *LOVE & PROFANITY* would be like the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series, filled with true banal stories with cute twists and funny endings. I thought the stories would be about teens who were older than me (at 16, I still have a lot to learn about the trials of teenage life), and that I wouldn't relate to them. I was wrong --- the stories struck me as honest and

relevant. Unfortunately, I didn't come to appreciate this until I was a quarter into the book because the introduction was a bit misleading --- it highlighted a few of the stories, but it didn't explain why they were all placed together in the same book. I suppose it was my job to solve the case. The table of contents split the stories up into four groups:

“Love and Profanity, “Love and Physics, “Love and Madness and “Love and Apologies. Honestly, I could have placed any of the stories into any of these very broad categories. I would have preferred that the editor split them according to the age of the writer, or if they had just been divided into parts one through four. I received the uncorrected proof of the book, which didn't include writers' bios or an index. This was troubling at first, but once I got about half of the way through, I was glad I could read the stories without being influenced by the authors' backgrounds. Happily, I loved most of the stories and I did figure out why they all fit into one book: they did not tell you what teenage life should be like, but they showed you what it is like. None of the authors begged the reader to learn from their mistakes. Rather, they shared a bit about themselves in hopes that you would listen. From the title and cover I did not know that this book would be one of the sweetest and most terrifyingly authentic things I've read. None of the stories were groundbreaking or shocking; they were simply beautiful and honest. For example, “Confession by Anika Fajardo highlighted the butterflies of a first crush. She wonderfully described feelings that we have all felt before, explaining [t]he thought of saying his name out loud •even in the dark, even to my best friend •made me feel like I was standing in my underwear in homeroom. On a more serious note, “A Most Dangerous Game by Alexis Wiggins showed me that girls don't know that the world is a game more dangerous than they think, and they are more naive than they know. After she recalls her childhood of hoping boys would like her, wearing dresses with a stuffed bra and high heels, she tells us about the time she was almost raped, and how the world had ill-prepared her for this. She writes, “and you felt lighter-fluid flames of anger rise in you at the teacher who taught the wrong lesson. Or at the girl in the back row, in her cheap dress and scuffed heels, drawing hearts around boys' names, hoping. This story (confusingly categorized in “Love and Physics) sent chills down my spine. I would love if a future edition updated the introduction and table of contents, so readers don't feel confused and assume mediocrity. Because really, these are undeniably

genuine and heartfelt stories --- teen readers, give them a try! Reviewed by Maya B.

Love & Profanity edited by Nick Healy (2.84 rounded to) 3 stars This is another short story analogy/essay collection that had the potential to be great but fell flat. Love & Profanity revolves around author essays on true events in their lives. I haven't read any essay anthologies before this, but I know that several out there, like Bully, exist and are highly acclaimed in hopes that young readers will pick them up seeing high profile authors' names on the covers. It's a good marketing skill, but I don't think I know almost any of these authors. Almost all of them are names I've never heard of before and I think that lessened my connection. I have a theory that if I know what an author writes like and follow them on social media then I'll be more likely to enjoy reading snippets of their teen lives and experiences. Since I knew almost none of these authors, I'm putting stock into that theory for this anthology (I'll test that theory with Bully later on). This collection is huge- 84 stories- if I counted correctly and most of the essays are brief. I think the longest one was ten or twelve pages so it's hard to judge writing style completely for every story, but I had my trusty notebook and pink pen handy while reading and was able to chronicle all my thoughts while reading. (It's a good thing I did that since I read this collection literally one year ago.) My formatting will be the essay, rating, brief thoughts, and then some research I compiled on the author.

Three Stories About Water & Vomiting by Adam Rex- 1 star I personally wasn't impressed by this story. I considered it to be lame and irrelevant and probably the worst way to start a collection of essays. The first story should be good enough to make me want to keep going, no lackluster enough to make me question continuing with the collection because it makes me question how good the rest will be.

After Teen Years- Besides having a dinosaur last name, Adam doesn't focus his genre writings to dinosaurs, but illustrious characters such as vampires and Frankenstein. His most famous novel is The True Meaning of Smekday, which is MG science fiction. He also wrote Fat Vampire, which is the only story I ever heard of.

Breathless by Heather Sellers- 2 stars Apparently this essay touches on all the things that I consider to be very unsafe.

After Teen Years- Sellers is predominately a writer of short stories and creative writing non-fiction. Her most famous piece of work is a memoir focusing on her neurological condition that prevents her from remembering people's faces.

Girl Fight by Joey Franklin- 3 stars Interesting perspective on what a young man thought about the label of "fat" and dating a fat girl.

After Teen Years- Franklin made his debut in 2015 with a collection of essays surrounding what it's like to be a

middle-aged white man with balding hair. Power Drift by Jon Scieszka- 1 star What an idiot. After Teen Years- This man writes a lot of essays, and children's stories. He has over 144 distinct works on GR- impressive. Polypropylene by Ali Catt- 4 stars Pretty sad that this captures how a lot of teen girls treat each other. After Teen Years- Only featured in Love & Profanity and I can't find anything about her. Elusive. Why Is It Wet Here? By Carrie Mesrobian- 3 stars A pretty funny story about a party and a party failure. After Teen Years- She's the writer of Sex & Violence (which I'm excited to read) and that story from last year that everyone hated called Cut Both Ways. M-E-L-I-S-S-A by Melissa Brandt- 3.5 stars Essay about a girl who is very unattached from her father. After Teen Years- Debut author of a novel called Chased by Fame. I Don't Believe You by Clint Edwards- 2.5 stars An embarrassing story about Edwards crapping his pants in high school. Poor soul. After Teen Years- Debut author of a collection humorous nonfiction piece on parenting and marriage. Vietnam, Minnesota by Pete Hautman- 2 stars A story about him befriending a Vietnam vet and going way too fast in a speeding car. After Teen Years- This guy has written a lot of novels in the YA and MG genre. I checked out his novel Sweetblood once at the library during my vampire phase and never read it. Island Girls by Kasandra Duthie- 2 stars The story focuses on Duthie's teen years on two islands. After Teen Years- She's featured in this anthology. The Ranks of a Million Guys by Kwame Alexander- 1 star Focuses on Alexander's experience on becoming the number one tennis player in hopes of impressing the girl he likes. After Teen Years- A writer of poems, children's books, and YA fiction in free verse form. This guy won a Newbery! Confession by Anika Fajardo- 2 stars She confesses her crush to her best friend and then ends the essay with a sentence about dying at the dance? After Teen Years- She's a nonfiction writer. First Gear by Melodie Heide- 3.5 stars After recently losing her mother, Heide finds solace in a guy who kind of likes her back. After Teen Years- According to , her work has appeared in numerous publications. She writes about transient life. The First Time I Had Sex, My Mouth Was Numb by Kyra Anderson- 4.5 stars One of the most awkward and truthful representations of first time sex plus it has a killer title. After Teen Years- She's a mother of an autistic child and collaborated on a project about what it's like. Ambushed by Andrew Gottlieb- 2.5 stars The story focuses on Gottlieb's experiences working on a painting team during the summer as a teenager. After Teen Years- He's a writer of reviews, poems, essays, and memoirs. A Ghost in the Mall by Natalie Singer -4 stars A reflection of Singer going to the mall after school and not being able to buy anything due to her poor family life and being blessed with an okay-face; a very touching story. After

Teen Years- Her author profile is so funny to not just copy and paste: "Natalie Singer was born and half-raised in Montreal, Canada, before being uprooted and moved at age 16 to the mythical, ice-cream-colored land of California, where she had to finish raising herself. There, she discovered burritos, tried to become cool on the streets of San Francisco, and made out with lots of frogs before she finally found a prince. She's now a writer in Seattle."

• A Most Dangerous Game by Alexis Wiggins- 5 stars  
 My favorite essay of the collection! Essay focusing on the perils of being a young woman and has a chilling scene where her co-worker says that someday he'll rape someone and it could be Wiggins.

• "It wasn't men who were hunted."

• After Teen Years- She's been writing since she was little, but has yet to publish a novel. I think this is her first time being published in a book!

The Causeway by Margaret MacInnis- 3 stars  
 Focuses on when Margaret is eight-years-old and sees her father not being able to do the things he used to because of age.

After Teen Years- She has a lot of essays published in review publications and that's cool.

Orchard by Kim Lozano- 2.5 stars  
 Essay about the time she offers a place to stay for a young lady who seems to be on the run.

After Teen Years- She's an editor of a literary magazine and teaches creative writing. Her poetry has been published.

Weightless by Steve Brezenoff- 2 stars  
 Brezenoff was a wallflower who attended a party.

After Teen Years- This is the only author who I knew by name for sure because I used to want to read his book The Absolute Value of-1.

After the Party by Geoff Herbach- 1 star  
 I honestly have no clue what even happened in this essay.

After Teen Years- He has a lot of published YA novels and his most popular is the title Stupid Fast.

On the Third Day by Tom Moran- 2.5 stars  
 Dirty fighting!

After Teen Years- Has a humorous novel called Dinosaurs and Prime Numbers.

How to Succeed by Actually Trying by Dayna Evans- 3 stars  
 Discusses Evans meeting full potential as an already smart student and pushing herself.

After Teen Years- She's been published in two essay collections.

Ten Years Ago by Sarah Beth Childers- 3.5 stars  
 A deep essay focuses on ten years ago from Childers' perspective and then twenty years as time goes by.

After Teen Years- Write short stories and has been featured in two YA ones and her own essay collection.

End of the Half by Patrick Hueller- 1 star  
 Focuses on Hueller's coach getting mad at his failure of a basketball team.

After Teen Years- He has a few published indie works.

Suspended by Kyle Minor- 1.5 stars  
 When Minor finally got rid of one bully he gets cornered by his brother.

After Teen Years- He has several short stories and novellas published into personal collections.

Girl/Thing by Anna Vodicka- 3.5 stars  
 The story focuses on Vodicka's experience as a babysitter and being taken advantage of by the

father. After Teen Years- It says in her profile she doesn't miss babysitting. It's funny, but it's not because of the incident she went through. Saying Goodbye to Anna by Jackie Buckle- 5 stars I just realized the author above the before story is named Anna; did they do that on purpose? Another absolute favorite about Anna or anorexia and it was absolutely harrowing and beautiful. After Teen Years- She wrote something called Half My Facebook Friends are Ferrets and lol. The Catch by Melissa Cistaro- 1.5 stars The mother finds beauty in fish guts? My notes are so weird. LOL After Teen Years- Cistaro is the writer of Pieces of My Mother: A Memoir. The World is in a Stump by Will Weaver- 2 stars Weaver's experiences hunting by himself for the first time. After Teen Years- He has a lot of books published and his prominent is Memory Boy. Mosquito Man by Da Chen- 2.5 stars Chronicles Chen's love for the blind man's stories in his village and how he became his own storyteller. After Teen Years- He has several published works and his most popular novel is Color of the Mountain. Confessions of a Pretend Boyfriend by Aaron Brown- 3 stars As a freshman Brown was invited to prom only to be replaced by an army buff once he arrived. After Teen Years- Brown has many published works and his most well-known is The Poker Face of Wall Street. Dating Magic by Laurie Edwards- 3.5 stars A cute story about Edwards trying to get a date for friends and coincidentally ended up meeting a cute guy herself. After Teen Years- She is a nonfiction author who focuses on mental illnesses. Smiling Joe by Joseph Bruchac- 3 stars Joe smiles throughout everything; even when breaking a tooth. After Teen Years- He has multiple published works, and I mean multiple as in 177! Warrior by Trisha Speed Shaskan- 2.5 stars Essay focuses on her skater girl years. After Teen Years- She teaches creative writing to both children and adults. Solo by Esther Porter- 2.5 stars Essay focuses on Porter overcoming her fear of her solo choir performance in high school. After Teen Years- She's the author of multiple children's books. Singing Along by Kara Balcerzak- 3 stars Two unlikely girls build a friendship over a band and experience seeing them live. After Teen Years- The author of children's books and essays. Hard to Swallow by Jenna Scarbroguh- 2.5 stars In her freshman year of college, Jenna finds a lump in her breast that could be cancerous. I just couldn't connect to this one. After Teen Years- She is currently attending college and I think that this is a very recent diagnosis. Best Friends by Rachel Hanel- 4 stars Representation of how one friend symbolizes the good part of life no matter how little time is spent together. After Teen Years- She's the writer of several interactive history novels and that sounds really cool! Big Red by Jessica Gunderson- 3 stars Story focuses on what it's like to take the ACT test the morning

after being drugged at a party. After Teen Years- She writes children's fiction predominately focusing on black people in history. The Later Days of Jean by Rebecca Stranborough- 3 stars A brief look into what dealing with a grandma who has passed away is like. After Teen Years- She writes novels focuses on the world's greatest architectural sites. All Treasures by Patti Kim- 2 stars Kim lies about her life throughout high school because she is ashamed her low financial background. After Teen Years- She has two published works. Letter to My Sixteen-Year-Old Self by Alison McGhee- 5 stars Emotional letter about being free when you are older and I just really connected to this. After Teen Years- She's a NYT #1 Bestselling Author! There were some good ones in here, but also some duds. If you are interested in picking this up I definitely recommend checking it out from the library. Cover Thoughts: This book has three different covers. The one I was accepted for on NG. The one that popped up on my galley copy and then the rereleased cover. I like the newest one best. Thank you, Netgalley and Switch Press for allowing me the opportunity to read this book in exchange for an honest review.

Love & Profanity is a fascinating collection of short stories about love, life, and growing up as seen through the eyes of a teenager. The selected authors tell stories from their respective teenage years and allow for the reader to relate to at least one if not more of the experiences told. Although my high school years are behind me, I found myself able to relate to the stories of lost friendships and peer pressure. The feeling of being the only person in a room full of people. Love & Profanity is written for the young adult audience, but I believe it is a must read for people of all ages. It helps you look back on those formative years and allows you to realize that you survived and that not everything was as awful as it seemed. It may even provide some closure for some readers. I know I found myself relating to the story of a girl who lost her best friend to the "popular" clique. A common occurrence for many a teenager and a story that shows how it can be a haunting loss for some time, even when you believe you've moved on. This is a well written collection of stories and, as I stated, it is a book for readers of all demographics. It is a book of how we all grow up and face life and whatever it may throw at us. <http://novelideareviews.blogspot.com/2015/10/love-profanity-by-various-authors.html>

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