



This Will Go Down on Your Permanent Record

Susannah Felts

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When the school year at tony Nashville Arts and Science ends, Vaughn Vance ditches her upper class friends for a summer of solitude. Content to be alone and work on her photography, Vaughn's seclusion is disrupted when she meets her new neighbor, Sophie Birch. The two form a tentative friendship, hanging out at Dragon Park with the rest of Nashville's teens. There, the relationship deepens: Sophie becomes the subject of Vaughn's artistic experiments and Vaughn becomes the subject of Sophie's social experimentation as she pushes Vaughn to loosen up and let down her guard. After a fight with her mother, Sophie moves in with Vaughn and her academic parents who embrace Sophie's wild side — until the girls push each other a step too far. In her debut novel, Susannah Felts perfectly captures the feel of growing up Southern-style, the universal push-pull of adolescent limit testing, and, above all, the intoxicating power that comes with burgeoning creativity.

This Will Go Down on Your Permanent Record Details

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Author : Susannah Felts

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From Reader Review This Will Go Down on Your Permanent Record for online ebook

Miriam says

A fun and sometimes poignant story about finding yourself and what it means to be friends in high school. I have to admit that I think featherproof is a very cool new indie publisher with good taste.

Amber Drea says

Fun/heartbreaking coming-of-age story about a 15-year-old budding photographer who befriends the troubled girl-next-door and drama ensues.

featherproof says

At the beginning of a lonely summer, 16-year-old Vaughn Vance meets Sophie Birch, and the two forge an instant and volatile alliance at Nashville's neglected Dragon Park. But when Vaughn takes up photography, she trains her lens on Sophie, and their bond dissolves as quickly as it came into focus. Felts keenly illuminates the pitfalls of coming of age as an artist, the slippery nature of identity, and the clash of class in the New South. *This Will Go Down on Your Permanent Record* is a sparkling and probing debut novel from a rising literary star.

Sheila says

I had heard good things about local publishing company Featherproof earlier this year, so I stopped by their table at the Printer's Row Lit Fair this year, and was recommended this book. I wanted to like this book a lot more, but I honestly didn't. There's not much to the story, and I wish the author had more to say about class. Also, for a book about photography, I thought it'd be graphically more interesting to actually include photos with the text, much like Aleksandar Hemon does with his books. I still think Featherproof is a promising company, I just wasn't blown away by this book.

vani says

I am still thinking about this book, read over a month ago. If you like taking photographs or reading about photography, read this! Also if you want to read about a small Southern town in the nineties, read this too. One of the awesome YA novels that is chiefly about young people making art (see also : Autobiography of My Dead Brother by Walter Dean Myers).

Jessica says

I borrowed this book from my roommate while stranded at an overlong vet visit (a moribund guinea pig needed emergency resuscitation in the middle of our cat's exam, no lie), so I started in on it without having any idea about the book or author and with no particular expectations other than of killing some time.

It turns out this is a really smart, engaging coming-of-age tale. It takes place in the summer and fall of 1989, and our 16-year-old narrator has just decided to reinvent herself. She's tired of her cliquish, shallow best friends, so she decides to stop hanging out with them and takes up photography instead. She meets a new girl while hanging out in a local park and quickly befriends her, although the friendship is a bit of a wary one, with neither girl entirely understanding the other or being willing to be completely open. Vaughn, the narrator, spends a lot of time taking pictures of her new friend Sophie, and the two slowly enlarge their circle of friends as they meet other kids who hang out in the park. Because the park is neglected and the kids who hang out there are the weird kids, the burnouts, the ones who don't really fit in, Vaughn finds herself in some new situations that push her out of her comfort zone as she works to figure herself out and find a place for herself.

I particularly liked that the author was honest about the activities the kids engaged in without trying to make them overly serious or significant, and without passing judgment. Vaughn is a smart, practical girl, but she's curious to experience new things, and she can be prone to give in to peer pressure, which can include drinking too much and experimenting with drugs. These experiences are presented matter-of-factly, warts and all; Vaughn may learn things from them some of the times, but mostly she's just trying to figure things out and see where life takes her.

I also liked that the park central to the story is Dragon Park in Nashville. I've been there & had a clear mental image of the place these kids were hanging out in - though Dragon Park of the mid-to-late 2000s is not the wasteland it seems to have been in 1989. It always feels like an added bonus when a book with a strong sense of place is situated in a place you know.

Jill says

I liked that the author was honest about how it is to be a teenager and the drug use they encounter (at least, it was true to how I remember it) without glorifying or condemning it. She just said how it is. Otherwise, not a particularly memorable book, but worth reading. I think some teenagers would adore it, but most adults will not find any overarching truths that they haven't already discovered.

If I had been the main character's parents, I probably would have said, hey you dragged this girl into our lives, now you've gotta buck up and not just throw a fit when you changed your mind about her. Still, she's a teenager, and just learning about the world, so I guess it's not her fault.

Bert says

Remember that summer when you were obsessed with your cool but troubled best friend and got drunk and tried dope and acted all slutty for the first time? Oh and it was the late eighties and you sweated a lot and got heavily into photography and listened to a bunch of R.E.M and Sonic Youth and Pixies? Well, this book was

nearly as good as that.

Tobias says

Damn good. It's a coming of age story, with multiple elements that make the story being told fresh: the structure, which very subtly in its second half revisits the themes that are seemingly taken for granted in the first; an exploration of class that's very much rooted in a specific time and place; an attention to detail (specifically, photography) and a conception of how the making of art can affect the people in an artist's life.

Also, it reminded me that I need to look at more of William Eggleston's work.

Also, unless I'm completely hallucinating, there are multiple subtle tips of the hat to 'Wings of Desire' in the second half, which seemed like a nice touch.

And it's a fine entry into the underrated genre of Only Child Lit, for which I have a natural affinity for obvious reasons.

Ami says

I was really thrilled with this book--it's a semi-perfect debut novel. Smart, funny, and with enough drama to keep me reading until the end. It's not a perfect book--there are tiny flaws and moments that could ring false. But for me that was kind of the best part: this is clearly a DEBUT novel, as in, there are more coming and I bet that they are going to be even better.

Featherproof Books, you are now my go-to indie press.

Melanie Page says

The title is inspired by the damning potential of a photo printed and kept as evidence. Sophie is Vaughn's model all summer; she has a unique defiant yet poverty-stricken look. But when Sophie gets the camera in her hands, she catches Vaughn in incriminating situations. The power of the camera is never fully explored, as the potential to control someone through blackmail, even the high school kind, is left untouched. Overall, *This Will Go Down on Your Permanent Record* cracks open doors but never explores what's in the room.

Full review at [Grab the Lapels](#).

Rachael says

From the first moment they meet at the Dragon Park, Vaughn and Sophie have a rocky friendship. It seems hard to believe they're friends at all, considering Vaughn is quiet and thoughtful while Sophie is wild and outspoken. However, they do form a bond, although a volatile one. As Vaughn begins to take pictures of Sophie for her photography project, she feels like she's getting to know Sophie even better. But a drunken

mistake wounds their friendship, and Vaughn finds herself missing Sophie's presence greatly. She can't bring herself to find a new subject for her photography.

I enjoyed the extensive characterization of both Vaughn and Sophie, through Vaughn's perspective. At first sight, they seem to be complete opposites, but they are both just girls in need of a good friend. They fulfill this role for each other, and I liked that they were able to work out their conflict.

One of my favorite parts of this novel was the incorporation of the art of photography. It was very insightful and never got confusing, even for strangers to the fine points of photography. It was also very interesting to read about the controversy over picking subjects and the interpretation of different photographs. For me, the addition of photography was what made this story so unique and enjoyable.

This Will Go down on Your Permanent Record is a lovely coming-of-age story. It is a little slow at times, but definitely a worthwhile read that I recommend.

reposted from <http://thebookmuncher.blogspot.com>

Alexis says

Great details about friendship, photography and life in the 1990s, but the story itself didn't keep me terribly interested. I kept on waiting for more things to happen and the other shoe to drop. A fast and easy read.

Mark Staniforth says

I liked this book. The sun came out and I read it in a comfy chair out the back with a beer. I read the whole thing in pretty much one go. I recommend it. There's nothing especially challenging or pretentious about this book, but that's its beauty. It's a unique take on the tired old coming-of-age genre: Vaughn, a Nashville teen, is ready to start a photography course when Sophie arrives in her life, wreaking havoc with her plans. The photo angle is a clever one, allowing - literally - a zoom-in on some of the regular adolescent confusions: identity; belonging; trust. It's great. Jump in it when things are going just nice. You'll see exactly what I mean.

Lisa says

Because of the title, I expected This Will Go Down On Your Permanent Record to be a humorous book. I was surprised to find that it was anything but amusing. The story is the tale of Vaughn a lonely teenager from Nashville, Tennessee who gets caught up in the life of Sophie as she uses her as a model for her photography. Vaughn, who tends to be a loner in her private high school, gets drawn into a friendship with Sophie who comes from a very dysfunctional background with an implication that she has been a victim of sexual abuse. It is easy to imagine how things can quickly go awry and they do. This aspect of the book was very believable. The ethical conflicts that Vaughn was contemplating about her art work were also interesting. The one aspect of the book which I found difficult to fathom was her relationship to her parents. They are supposedly ex-hippies turned middle class parents. Her father is a high school teacher and her mother is an artist who makes jewelry. Vaughn has a good relationship with them but manages to get

involved with alcohol, pot, unsupervised parties, and a few other risky activities while her parents don't seem to notice that anything is wrong and Vaughn says nothing to them about it. To me, this didn't compute at all. Nevertheless, I found the characters engaging and the story suspenseful. For the most part, I enjoyed the book and would recommend it.
