



NPR AND RADIO DIARIES REVISIT PIONEERING 'TEENAGE DIARIES' SERIES, 16 YEARS LATER

NEW STORIES FROM FIVE ORIGINAL DIARISTS,
MAY 6-10 ON 'ALL THINGS CONSIDERED' & NPR.ORG

CONTEST TO FIND NEXT TEEN DIARISTS AT COWBIRD.COM

April 17, 2013; Washington, D.C. – Sixteen years ago, independent producer Joe Richman equipped a group of teenagers with tape recorders to report on their own lives. The groundbreaking series, *Teenage Diaries*, produced some of the most personal and memorable stories heard on NPR, and helped to pioneer a movement of first-person narratives on public radio. Since then, listeners have often asked: where are those teenagers now?

In May, NPR and [Radio Diaries](http://RadioDiaries.com) present *Teenage Diaries Revisited*, a series of new stories from 5 of the original diarists. The series is broadcasting May 6-10 on the newsmagazine [All Things Considered](http://AllThingsConsidered.com). Additional features accompany the series online at NPR.org, including the five diarists' original audio journals and their photo portraits, taken by NPR photographer David Gilkey.

Along with the series, Radio Diaries and NPR are searching for a new generation of teenage diarists using the storytelling site Cowbird.com. Teens are invited to submit their multimedia stories through May 31. Out of the hundreds of contestants, two winners will be selected to produce their stories with Radio Diaries, to air on NPR's *All Things Considered* in 2014. Preview the Cowbird submissions here: <http://cowbird.com/saga/teens/>

For *Teenage Diaries Revisited*, Richman called on five of the original diarists, now in their 30s, to document their lives for NPR listeners. "There's something magical about handing someone a microphone to tell their own story," says Joe Richman, Executive Producer and Founder of Radio Diaries. "The tape recorder is there for all the surprises and lucky accidents of daily life." *Teenage Diaries Revisited* gives listeners a rare, intimate look into the lives of five individuals and how they've grown up. "A lot of life happens in 16 years," says Richman.

[Amanda \(New York City\)](#)

At the age of 17, Amanda knew she was gay, but her Catholic parents kept insisting she'd grow out of it. Today, a lot has changed in the country, and within her own family. In her new story, Amanda goes back to her parents to find out how they came to accept her sexuality.

[Juan \(Colorado\)](#)

Sixteen years ago, Juan documented his life as a recent Mexican immigrant living in poverty in Texas. Juan's updated diary tours the life he has built since he first crossed the Rio Grande. It looks a lot like the typical American dream: a house, 2 cars, 3 kids – except for the fact that he's still living as an undocumented immigrant in the U.S.

Melissa (New Jersey)

As an 18 year old raised in the foster care system, Melissa took NPR listeners along when she gave birth to her son, Issaiah. Since then, Melissa and her son have faced many challenges, from eviction notices to her son's life-threatening medical diagnosis. In her new diary, she talks to her son for the first time about the circumstance of his birth.

Frankie (Alabama)

Frankie was a high school football star and a staple feature in his hometown newspaper. Years after graduating, Frankie was back in the paper – this time, for a drug-related arrest. Now, after a devastating addiction to crystal meth and with a baby on the way, Frankie documents his attempts to repair his relationship with his family.

Josh (New York City)

In high school, Josh documented his life with Tourette's Syndrome: a neurological disorder that causes uncontrollable tics and involuntary verbal outbursts. Today, Josh has overcome Tourette's enough to become a NYC public school teacher, but not enough to remain one. Josh's new diary is about trying to live a normal adult life with a brain that often betrays him.

Find local stations and broadcast times at www.npr.org/stations; listen to the original *Teenage Diaries* as a [podcast](#) and at radiodiaries.org; and follow the conversation on Twitter [@NPRGenListen](#) and [#TeenDiaries](#); and on [Facebook](#). For more information about *Teenage Diaries Revisited*, visit: <http://www.radiodiaries.org/presskit>

Launch Event

Kicking off the broadcast of *Teenage Diaries Revisited*, Radio Diaries is presenting a [live show](#) featuring the original teen diarists at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) in New York on May 6, 2013. The event is hosted by Ira Glass of *This American Life*.

About NPR

NPR is an award-winning, multimedia news organization and an influential force in American life. In collaboration with more than 900 independent public radio stations nationwide, NPR strives to create a more informed public – one challenged and invigorated by a deeper understanding and appreciation of events, ideas and cultures.

About Radio Diaries

Since 1996, Radio Diaries has been giving people tape recorders and working with them to report on their own lives and histories. Radio Diaries has won every major award in broadcast journalism and has produced some of the most memorable documentaries ever heard on public radio. The stories are broadcast on NPR's *All Things Considered*.

About Joe Richman

Radio Diaries Founder and Executive Producer Joe Richman is an award-winning producer who helped to pioneer a movement of first-person narratives on public radio. Richman also teaches radio documentary at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. The *LA Times* called Joe "a kind of Studs Terkel of the airwaves."

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