

## ANNE FRANK'S THE DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL: TRUE CONFESSIONS OF TEENAGE BLUES

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**Abstract:** Elizabeth Gilbert rightly puts her opinion about teenage longings in following words, “Desiring another person is perhaps the most risky endeavour of all. As soon as you want somebody—really want him— it is as though you have taken a surgical needle and sutured your happiness to the skin of that person, so that any separation will now cause a lacerating injury.”<sup>1</sup> Quite in the same fashion Anne Frank, the famous author of her auto biography entitled *The Diary of a Young Girl*, records her true confessions of teen-age blues quite honestly. The book which is, in fact, a diary of events aptly registers Anne Frank’s adolescent longings which are not only bold and truthful but are also exquisitely delineated. Just as Susan Sontag says, “My Library is an archive of longings”<sup>2</sup>, Anne also suggests that her book is her library of longings. Just one burning excerpt of the autobiography would be enough to justify the intent of the proposed paper. In her letter to Kitty on Thursday, January 6, 1944 she writes, “Yesterday, I read an article on blushing by Sis Heyster. It was as if she’d addressed it directly to me. Not that I blush easily, but the rest of the article did apply. What she basically says is that during puberty girls withdraw into themselves and begin thinking about the wondrous changes taking place in their bodies. I feel that too, which probably accounts for my recent embarrassment over Margot Mother and Father. On the other hand, Margot is a lot shyer than I am, and yet she’s not in the least embarrassed.”<sup>3</sup> The erotic overtone of this extract amply testifies that Anne Frank earnestly wanted to confess her youthful longings to let the world know what the growing girls feel and think in their burgeoning state. The upcoming paper will be an in depth study on the psycho-sexual longings of the author as expressed in *The Diary of a Young Girl*.

**Keyword:** Teen-age, Longings, Autobiography, erotic overtone, burgeoning, psycho-sexual.

**Introduction:** Diary is usually a record of events or experiences that one undergoes everyday. Not that all write diaries but those who write and treasure are really special. Some of those diaries are the treatise of literature. Some of the famous diaries of the international personalities are those of Bob Dylan (musician), Dostoevsky (author), George Eliot (writer), John Adams (President of USA), Helen Fielding (author), Adolf Hitler (administrator), Ernest

Hemingway (novelist), Mahatma Gandhi (political philosopher), Hellen Keller (author) and Anne Frank (author) etc. Their diaries are the parts of the curriculum in different schools, colleges and universities of the world. Thus, a popular diary is definitely as delectable as any good work of fiction and is read and criticized by readers and critics. Talking about autobiography Helga Schwalm Opines

Notoriously difficult to define, autobiography in the broader sense of the word is used almost synonymously with ‘life-writing’ and denotes all modes and genres of telling one’s own life. More specifically, autobiography as a literary genre signifies a retrospective narrative that undertakes to tell the author’s own life, or a substantial part of it, seeking (at least in its classic version) to reconstruct his or her personal development within a given historical, social and cultural framework.<sup>(i)</sup>

The extant paper is a crisp and short research on the world renowned autobiography of an adolescent author Anne Frank whose work is entitled ‘*The Diary of A young Girl*’. Inside the diary there are many events, but this exclusive paper is focused on the psychology of the teenage author for whom transition from tween to teen age is quite tickling and refreshing. Sometimes it is horrible to share. But, Anne Frank is a highly sensible and prudent. Therefore, she has expressed her inmost feeling rather undauntingly. Born on 12<sup>th</sup> June, 1929 in Frankfurt, Germany, she died quite young at a Nazi

Concentration Camp in Bergen-Belson, almost three months before her sixteenth birthday. Anne and her family had lived in hiding to escape from being sent to a death camp like thousands of other Jews. From June 1942 to August, 1944 Anne wrote her diary in the Secret Annexe. Interestingly her diary was not all about her wishes and experiences, but it also dealt with her profound longings. The diary delineates that she was both scholastic and profound at such a delicate stage of life. She possessed the maturity that was beyond her age and in that stage she was able to decipher books purported for adults. She always

wanted to be a world-famous writer and leave her mark on the world. It was her father who had gifted her a blank diary on her 13<sup>th</sup> birthday. It proved to be her prized possession in which she confided all her

cardinal feelings and longings. Personifying the diary itself she wrote the following words in her maiden letter on June 12, 1942 :

“ I hope I will be able to confide everything to you,  
as I have never been able to confide in anyone, and  
I hope you will be a great source of comfort and  
support.”<sup>(2)</sup>

The diary is written in the format of letter. Anne has addressed her letter to a friend, might be imaginary or real, called kitty who also belongs to her own age. It is a fact well-known to all that sharing innermost longings to an equal aged person is more easy than to others. Perhaps, that is why Anne opted kitty. Since

this paper intends to invent true confessions of the young author, only those letter are being examined where her adolescent longings and feelings are coming to the fore. In her diary dated January 6, 1944 she talks about her longing to be close to boy Peter- her Annexe mate- in following words :

“ It gave me wonderful feeling, when I looked into his dark blue eyes and saw how bashful my unexpected visit had made him. I could read his innermost thoughts, and in his face I saw a look of helplessness and uncertainty as to how to behave, and at the same time a flicker of awareness of his masculinity. I saw his shyness, and I melted.”<sup>(3)</sup>

Again her desire for Peter is found in her diary dated January 12, 1944 where she writes :

“ Now God has sent someone to help me: Peter. I fondle my pendant, press it to my lips and think, ‘what do I care! Peter is mine and nobody knows It!’ with this in mind I can rise above every nasty remark. Which of the people here suspect that so much is going on in the mind of a teenage girl?”<sup>(4)</sup>

The above two excerpts amply prove that longing for the association of the opposite sex in pre-teen age

and teen-age is natural. Rebecca Hageline of the Heritage Foundation in her book entitled writes :

“ Teenagers could see the examples that are set for them by parents or adults that they look up to, who are more sexually active than the teenager themselves.”<sup>(5)</sup>

It is well-known fact that Anne lived with her sister and parents in a very small enclosure for fear of the Nazis. It is but natural for teenaged children to note amorous gestures or even erotic maneuverings of the parents occasionally. Naturally, Anne too might have learnt about attraction towards the person of opposite gender from her parents itself. Since secret

things attract adolescents quickly, Anne too might have developed longing for lustful gestures from them. Anne’s confessions about her physical transformation are also evident in some of her letters to kitty. In her later dated January 6, 1944 she describes about the changes exclusively as follows

“ I think that what’s happening to me is so wonderful, and I don’t just mean the changes taking place on the outside of my body, but also those on the inside. I never discuss myself or any of these things with others, which is why I have to talk about them to myself. Whenever I get my period (and that’s only been three times), I have the feeling that in spite of all the pain, discomfort and mess, I am carrying around a sweet secret. So even though it is a nuisance, in a certain way I am always looking forward to the time when I’ll feel the secret inside me once again.”<sup>(6)</sup>

In an another letter which is actually not published in the diary available in the market because the publishers thought it to be inane, Anne has talked about body transformation more openly. In fact, it

was her father who got Anne’s diary published after her death. He did not relish it to be relevant to publish this part in translated versions. But it is actually there in the original Dutch version entitled

'Het Achterhuis'. But after seventies some change in the contour of her vulva. It read like this translations of this section appeared. It was about the

"...until I was 11 or 12, I didn't realize there was a second set of labia on the inside, since you couldnot see them. What's even funnier is that I thought urine came out of the clitoris. In the Upper part, between the outer labia, there's a fold of skin that, on second thought looks like a kind of blister. That's the clitoris. When you are standing up, all you see from the front is hair. Between your legs there are two soft, cushiony things, also covered with hair, which press together when you are standing, so you can't see what is inside."<sup>(7)</sup>

Mystery of *vagina* and *pubic hair*, apart of growing *boobs*, etc. are some of the typical body changes that haunts every teenaged girl. Definitely all talk about it to their close friends. They think more about them when all these changes start taking place. But, a few dare to write about these things in a diary or an

autobiography. Anne Frank is honest enough to discuss such issues. Had the above excerpt been included in all the translated versions, the autobiography entitled. 'The story of A young Girl' would have become all the more popular.

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