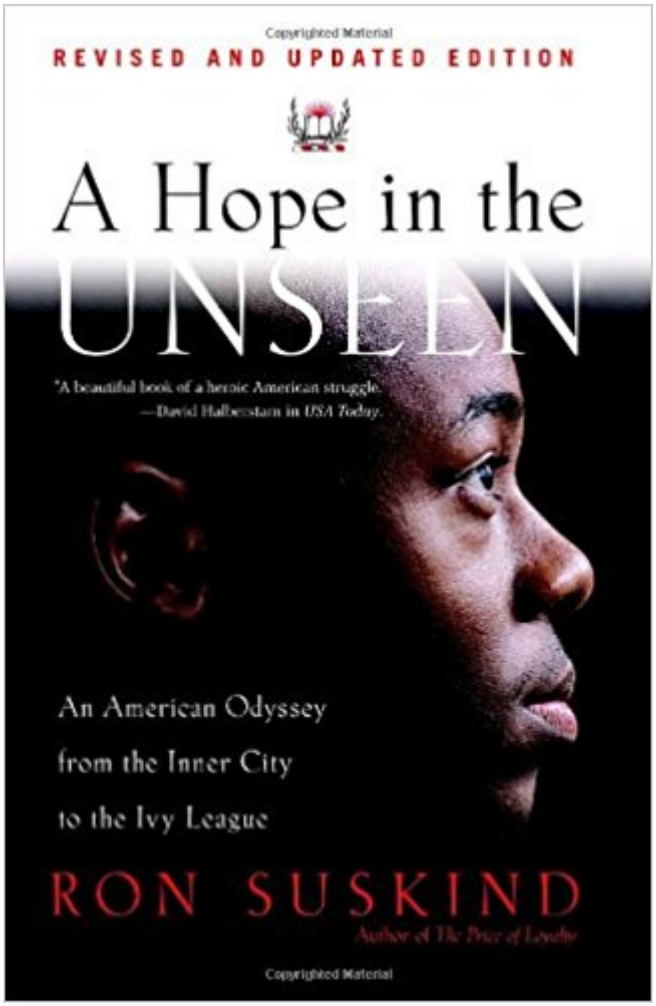
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A Hope In The Unseen: An American Odyssey From The Inner City To The Ivy League



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Synopsis

It is 1993, and Cedric Jennings is a bright and ferociously determined honor student at Ballou, a high school in one of Washington D.C.Ã¢â ¬â„¢s most dangerous neighborhoods, where the dropout rate is well into double digits and just 80 students out of more than 1,350 boast an average of B or better. At Ballou, Cedric has almost no friends. He eats lunch in a classroom most days, plowing through the extra work he has asked for, knowing that heÃ¢â ¬â„¢s really competing with kids from other, harder schools. Cedric JenningsÃ¢â ¬â„¢s driving ambitionÃ¢â ¬â œwhich is fully supported by his forceful motherÃ¢â ¬â œis to attend a top-flight college.In September 1995, after years of near superhuman dedication, he realizes that ambition when he begins as a freshman at Brown University. In this updated edition, A Hope in the Unseen chronicles CedricÃ¢â ¬â„¢s odyssey during his last two years of high school, follows him through his difficult first year at Brown, and now tells the story of his subsequent successes in college and the world of work.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ron Suskind won the Pulitzer Prize for feature writing in 1995 for his stories on Cedric Jennings, a talented black teenager struggling to succeed in one of the worst public high schools in Washington, D.C. Suskind has expanded those features into a full-length nonfiction narrative, following Jennings beyond his high-school graduation to Brown University, and in the tradition of Leon Dash's Rosa Lee and Alex Kotlowitz's There Are No Children Here, delivers a compelling story on the struggles of inner-city life in modern America. While it appears to have a happy ending (with Jennings earning

a B average in his sophomore year), A Hope in the Unseen is not without a few caveats (at times, Jennings feels profoundly alienated from his white peers). Trite as it may sound to say, this book teaches a lesson about the virtue of perseverance, and it's definitely worth reading. --John J. Miller --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

YA-Cedric Jennings is the illegitimate son of an off-and-on drug dealer/ex-con and a hardworking, badly paid mother; it is her single-minded vision to have the boy escape the mean ghetto streets unscathed. Cedric has listened to her and is, as the book opens, an A student at a run-down, dispirited Washington, DC, high school, where he treads a thin line between being tagged a nerd and being beaten by gang leaders. Suskind, a Wall Street Journal reporter, follows the African-American youth through his last two years of high school and freshman year at Brown University. Inspirational sermons at a Pentecostal church, guidance from his mother, a love of black music and singing, and a refuge in the logic of math combine with the young man's determination and faith in the future to keep him focused on his goal of a topflight college education. Despite many low moments and setbacks, Jennings's story is one of triumph within both cultures, black and white, which together and separately put tremendous obstacles in his path out of the inner city. It is a privilege and an inspiration for readers to accompany Cedric on part of his long, difficult journey to maturity. His journey continues at this moment, since he is now a senior at Brown this fall. YAs of any background will be introduced to new worlds here.Judy McAloon, Potomac Library, Prince William County, VACopyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The only way you can understand what it's like for a Black child in America is to walk in their shoes. No one wants to do that, especially when the walk is difficult and confusing. A Hope Unseen is difficult and confusing. Comprehension of WHY and HOW are questions that can't be answered for you because it's not part of your reality. Ron Suskind attempted to provide a glimpse into the world of hope unseen. The world of children born into generational poverty with no stimulus for improvement. You're predestined to become a product of your surroundings - or are you. Cedric Jennings was born to a mother who wanted more for him, as most mothers do. But Cedric's mother built a foundation of "you are better than what we live in." Cedric was smart, curious and because of his foundation, rooted in his church through his mother, he wanted more. I was encouraged by Cedric's life. I wondered about other students in those circumstances and I hurt because they learn to give up so early in their lives. We throw so many people away, but occasionally one shines

enough to be lifted.

I was surprised to look up and see this book listed on Harvard’s Summer reading list for incoming freshman, and then i went and read the book myself and found the reason why. it is a well written portrayal of the struggle of one particular youth to over come the odds and grab hold on the brass ring. Cedric took a journey that is not often an option for many African-American youth, and beat the odds in spite of his short comings! reading through the book what really stood out to me the most was his sat score. let college board tell the story, they will insist that a strong sat score is necessary to achieve success in college. it was after reading this book that i realized that the sat test cannot measure a man’s level of determination, or his work equity. whatever score is achieved, it has no finality in the life of the man."I shall arise from the ashes, though defeated, with my head unbowed"Nate Silver

Intriguing Read. I had to read this book for class. The author does a great job of inviting readers into the world of the main character -- Cedric, who is a young black male who has to deal with various types of environmental, racial, economic, and personal obstacles in his life. We get to see how young Cedric lives and battles with his surroundings as goes through his unique life journey. It is a solid read.Readability Factor - below averageUplifting Factor - averageOverall Story -- pretty good

Good part of a teaching curriculum that doesn’t always have teaching strategies to address students who are very intelligent but underprivileged. Easy reading and includes chapters that take the reader beyond the end of the book into the subjects current life.

Everyone working in higher education should read this book. Ron Suskind has provided such great insights into how much disadvantaged students must overcome. International students may have some cultural challenges, but they almost always come from a solid educational foundation. How any students with Cedric’s background manage to make it through this type of educational path is amazing. It takes all the qualities Cedric had to get to be part of "both Americas", with a lot of support from those wanting him to succeed.

Suskind’s non-fiction narrative of Cedric Jennings is to say the least compeling. He retells the struggle of an inner-city black young man who against all odds wants to make it out. Cedric’s struggle, however, does not end with graduating with honors from High School. That event is just

the tip of the iceberg. Suskind allows us to picture Cedric at Brown in the middle of yet more struggles to function and understand the complexities of a new mostly white- high middle class- always priviledged- clueless about his reality and that of others- culture. And at the same time we understand that Cedric becomes a rarity at Brown and also at home, and struggles with feelings of displacement.Yet, far beyond being a well-written and "entertaining" account (as some choose to devaluate it); it is the story of public school education in America’s inner cities.Cedric Jennings is just one of many who chose the hard way out, because of, and inspite of, the surrounding sometimes unsurmountable negatives. Yet, we now that the great majority still exist who feel forced to take the easy way out and succumb to the pressures and in the end they never make it out or beyond. The most devastating truth is that there also exists an educational system incapable of providing enough hope for enough of these children to find a way out in the unseen.Thus, "A Hope in the Unseen" should not only be required reading in High School but it shoud be required in all teacher training courses. This, in the hope that future teachers might be able to turn the tide around, and provide some hope to more of our children in what is clearly unseen now.

An inspirational and interesting story about facing the odds against you and succeeding. Granted, this kind of thing rarely happens, but it is good to know that it does sometimes. I cried lots of tears reading this because it shows what a hard life people can have through no fault of their own. Too many have their lives ruled by circumstances.

FANTASTIC BOOK. I loved loved loved this book. Cant beat it when trying to view our education system through the eyes of an inner city brilliant kid. Even the best have to struggle to get out. I recommend to ANYONE for a good read, but especially anyone in education, social work, government, politics, and interested in race topics.

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