



Awkward and Definition: The High School Comic Chronicles of Ariel Schrag (High School Chronicles of Ariel Schrag)

By Ariel Schrag



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Ariel Schrag captures the American high school experience in all its awkward, questioning glory in *Awkward and Definition*, the first of three amazingly honest autobiographical graphic novels about her teenage years.

During the summer following each year at Berkeley High School in California, Ariel wrote a comic book about her experiences, which she would then photocopy and sell around school. Some friends thrilled to see themselves in the comic, others not so much, but everyone was interested.

Awkward chronicles Ariel's freshman year, and *Definition*, her sophomore year. With anxiety in excess and frustration to the fullest, Ariel dives in -- meeting new people, going to concerts, crushing out, loving chemistry, drawing comics, and obsessing over everything from glitter-laden girls to ionic charges and the constant pursuit of the number-one score.

Totally true and achingly honest, with every cringe-inducing encounter and exhilarating first moment documented -- *Awkward and Definition* is an unflinching look at what it's like being a teenage girl in America.



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Many memoirs both inside and outside the world of comics cover the author's high school years. Far fewer are actually written during those years. Touchstone has started reprinting Schrag's comics chronicling her teenage years through the mid-'90s. Each of the volumes in Schrag's series was created in the summer of the year it chronicles. This book includes *Awkward*, about Schrag's freshman year, and *Definition*, which concerns her sophomore year. It's hard not to notice that the books were written and drawn by a young artist. The artwork is simple and, yes, awkward, especially in *Awkward*, where the characters look like punk versions of the Peanuts cast. But rather than being a drawback, the artwork is actually charming. It's clear that Schrag is pushing herself. Even at this age, she had already attained the ability to keep the storytelling smooth and fast-paced, even if the stories she's actually telling aren't remarkable. The typical teenage concerns of sex, drugs, drama with friends and the importance of music are all covered. The book is comfortable because it's so easy to relate to. (Apr.)

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Review

"An imaginative anthropologist of the post-punk set."

-- *The Village Voice*

"Impossible to put down."

-- Maggie Overfelt, *The Minnesota Daily*

"Schrag's perceptiveness and incredible eye for detail make *Definition* brilliant. Rarely have I seen such substantial work come from a person of her age."

-- Jennifer Joseph, *The San Francisco Bay Guardian*

"A scathing and meticulously documented autobiographical triumph."

-- Alison Bechdel, author of *Fun House*

About the Author

Ariel Schrag is also the author of the autobiographical comic books *Potential*, which was nominated for an Eisner Award, and *Likewise*. She divides her time between Los Angeles and New York.

Users Review

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