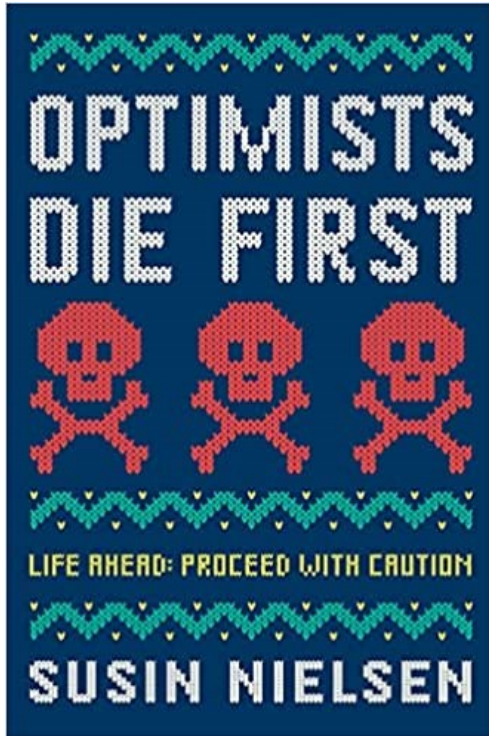


# OPTIMISTS DIE FIRST



*Young Adult*

**By Susin Nielsen**

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## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains profanity and derogatory terms; alcohol and drug use; and sexual activities.

**2** /5

**Teen Guidance**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
72	<p>“...pissed off so many people when I was drunk or high. Now none of them will talk to me.”</p> <p>...Alonzo showed us his piece. He’d cut out a black-and-white photo of a man carrying a rainbow flag.</p> <p>Over the image he had pasted letters that formed words. EVIL. ABBERATION. FAGGOT.</p>
117	<p>Jacob’s parents had gone to the art gallery. He pulled me into the apartment and down the hall to his room, leaving the door ajar. We collapsed onto his bed. This time we did more than just kiss. I could not get enough of him. He slipped his real hand under my shirt and I slipped a hand under his.</p>
145	<p>Things heated up, fast. His window literally got steamy. We’d fooled around a lot, but we always kept our clothes on. Until now. I unbuttoned his shirt and tugged it off. He carefully pulled my bleach-art T-shirt over my head. Soon our jeans were on the floor. I had a moment of panic when I realized I was wearing my old granny underwear. When I’d put it on I’d had no idea that this was where the day would take me. But Jacob gazed at scrawny me in my saggy underpants, my functional beige bra, and hand-knit toe socks, and said, “You’re beautiful.” I wanted to weep. I gazed back at him in his black boxer briefs and the shark socks I’d recently knit for him, which made it look like the sharks were eating his feet. His skin was so pale, it was almost translucent. “So are you.”</p> <p>...We started kissing again. I slid off his underwear. He slid off mine.</p> <p>“Are we doing what I think we’re doing?” he asked. “I’d like to give it a try.” “Have you ever...?” “Pssh, what do you think? Of course not. You?” “No.” “We have to be safe.” “Definitely. No teen pregnancies on our watch.” I was thinking of much more than that. But I didn’t want to spoil the mood by telling Jacob everything I’d read about pubic lice, crabs, genital warts, venereal disease, HIV, syphilis, and more. “I have condoms,” he said. “My uncle gave me a box of them for Hanukkah, mostly to bug my parents. He called it a preemptive strike.” He leapt out of bed, naked except for the shark socks, and got the box of condoms from his desk drawer. Then he crawled back under the covers and pulled out one of the packets. “I’ve never put one on before.” “Me neither. But I’ve stuffed a lot of sock monkeys.” He winced. “That does not inspire confidence.” “I also saw a demo once in health class, with a cucumber.” “Better.” “Let’s make it a team effort.” I took the packet out of his hand and tore it open. In a movie, this is where the script would read: Fade to black.</p>

Profanity	Count
Bitch	1
Faggot	1
Piss	1