



**The New York Times Features Excerpt
Of Kevin Powell's *When We Free The World* Essay
“Letter To My Unborn Child”**

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/18/parenting/talk-to-kids-racism.html>

Please ORDER the eBook with this link then click “View in Apple Books” (you must have an iPhone, iPad, or Mac computer to order and read the book):

<https://books.apple.com/us/book/when-we-free-the-world/id1518098448>

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*“Minnesota, sadly, ironically, is what first inspired this book of mine, two years ago, a very racist experience I had there, so racist that it did major damage to my life. Damage that I am still recovering from, honestly. But there is no way I could have known that George Floyd would get killed in Minnesota, in broad daylight and on videotape, after what I had gone through, leading to national and global protests against racism. There is much about Minnesota in this book, much about the America that is. This book is written from my soul, from my heart, about our country, about the country I want to see, where all people, no matter what their backgrounds or identities, are treated equally, are treated as human beings. The diverse young people on the cover of **When We Free The World** represent the hope I have, in spite of all: people together, not apart; love, not hate; peace, not violence.”*

—Kevin Powell, Writer and Civil and Human Rights Activist

“When We Free The World is a dream, from one generation to the next ‘climbing Jacob’s ladder,’ as the scripture says.”

—Nikki Giovanni, Poet

Summer 2020 (New York City) - As Minneapolis, Minnesota received the nation’s wrath for being the location of the heinous police killing of an innocent Black man, George Floyd, acclaimed writer and activist Kevin Powell was reminded of his own encounters with racism in that Midwest city. In his 14th book **When We Free The World**, Powell exposes the scarring racism he experienced in Minneapolis in 2018.

In the essay “I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free,” Powell presents a stunning and brutally honest survey of America, yesterday and today, and what he hopes for its future through the window of his own very painful personal trials—as #MeToo, Black Lives Matter, mass shootings, immigration, a global pandemic, and Donald Trump rotate in the background.

The result is a deeply spiritual and emotional reminder of why freedom and justice and equality still remain so elusive for many, in this nation, on this planet. Inspired by the poetic dream montage of Langston Hughes, the prophetic letter sermon of James Baldwin, and Bobby Kennedy’s raw and naked eulogy speech for Dr. King, Powell has created a fearless literary and political manifesto that is a townhall meeting for an America seemingly at war with its own soul.

With a passion and sensitivity that few writers of his generation can match, Powell tackles leadership, history, family, community, parenting, education, the legal system, racism, sexism, love, hate, forgiveness, mental health, and violence in all forms. And he challenges readers, from beginning to end, on what that word “freedom” means, or ought to mean, for all human beings.

When We Free The World includes Powell’s impassioned essays “Letter to My Unborn Child” and “A letter to my 9-year-old friend during the coronavirus pandemic.” The latter was featured on “Good Morning America,” accompanied by an interview with the Brooklyn-based author. An excerpt, “Letter to My Unborn Child,” appears in *The New York Times* “Parenting” section.

Powell describes another featured essay, “Between Russell Simmons and The World and Oprah,” as the most difficult piece he’s ever written. Powell interviews the hip-hop pioneer and mogul about the allegations of rape and offers his reaction while also examining Oprah’s early work on the Simmons expose “On The Record” that premiered on HBO in May. A bonus for fans of Powell’s poetry is the inclusion of his poem “we them people,” a beautiful mirror and plea for an America now reeling in protests from coast to coast in the aftermath of George Floyd.

When We Free The World is here on the heels of Powell penning a string of riveting, major features on COVID-19 and Stacey Abrams’ political life and future for *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post Magazine*.

About Kevin

Kevin Powell is one of the most prolific literary, political, cultural, and hip-hop voices in America. He is a poet, journalist, blogger, civil and human rights activist, public speaker, filmmaker, former two-time candidate for the United States Congress in New York City, and author or editor of 14 books. His writings have appeared in many different publications through the years, including *The Nation*, *British GQ*, *HuffPost*, *CNN*, *The Guardian*, *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*, *The Washington Post*, *Vibe*, *Utne Reader*, *Ebony*, *Complex*, *African Voices*, *The Baffler*, *NPR*, *Esquire*, *The Progressive*, and elsewhere. Kevin’s critically acclaimed memoir, *The Education of Kevin Powell: A Boy’s Journey into Manhood*, is being adapted for television. His next book will be a biography of Tupac Shakur, the global pop culture and hip-hop icon. As a speaker Kevin has lectured widely across America and internationally in

places like Japan, the United Kingdom, and Nigeria, West Africa; he has also been a visiting scholar at several colleges, including Stanford University, Dillard University, and James Madison University. Kevin lives in New York City, the planet of Brooklyn.

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WHEN WE FREE THE WORLD



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– NIKKI GIOVANNI, Poet

KEVIN POWELL

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