



<100 Word Desired Bio

Known as a leading generational voice, Rahiel Tesfamariam is an award-winning activist, journalist, theologian, and international speaker with decades of impactful community organizing and media experience. A former *Washington Post* columnist, she is the founder of *Urban Cusp*, a cutting-edge online community. Amidst the Ferguson Uprising, Rahiel led #NotOneDime, a national economic boycott. For years, she worked in Africa, organizing with Pan-African movements across the continent. *Essence* magazine named Rahiel one of the nation's "New Civil Rights Leaders." Rahiel's debut book, *Imagine Freedom: Transforming Pain into Political and Spiritual Power*, is available wherever books are sold.

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Rahiel is a graduate of Stanford University and Yale Divinity School, where she was the inaugural William Sloane Coffin, Jr. Scholar for Peace and Justice. At age 23, she served as the youngest editor-in-chief in the history of the *Washington Informer* newspaper. She has over two decades of organizing experience with national and international social justice organizations.

Rahiel has traveled the world on various delegations and humanitarian projects. For years, she worked in Africa, organizing with Pan-African movements across the continent. Rahiel is a recipient of countless national fellowships and awards for her social justice and media work, including the Root100, the National Action Network's "Who Got Next" Award, the National Newspaper Publishers Association National Leadership Award, the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) Salute to Excellence Digital Media Award, and the Selma Bridge Crossing Freedom Flame Award.

Rahiel has spoken at prestigious universities and historic churches throughout the nation. As a generational voice, she has been featured in the *New York Times*, *Forbes*, *Ebony*, *Elle*, and on BET and Revolt TV. *Essence* magazine named Rahiel one of the nation's "New Civil Rights Leaders." Rahiel's debut book, *Imagine Freedom: Transforming Pain into Political and Spiritual Power*, is available wherever books are sold.

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Rahiel Tesfamariam is an award-winning activist, journalist, theologian, and international speaker. A former *Washington Post* columnist, she is the founder of *Urban Cusp*, a cutting-edge online community highlighting faith, social change, culture, and global awareness. Rahiel has also served as a young adult pastor in Washington, D.C. and led *The Insaka*, an intergenerational gathering space for spiritual healing and restoration.

Rahiel is a graduate of Stanford University and Yale Divinity School (*magna cum laude*) where she was the inaugural William Sloane Coffin, Jr. Scholar for Peace and Justice. Prior to attending seminary, Rahiel served as the youngest editor-in-chief in the history of the *Washington Informer* newspaper, at age 23. She went on to work as a community organizer for anti-violence youth initiatives before launching *Urban Cusp* in 2011. Rahiel has over two decades of organizing experience with student-led, community-based, national and international social justice organizations.

Rahiel has traveled the world on various delegations and humanitarian projects, including to Darfur, Sudan and occupied Palestine. She has spoken at prestigious universities and historic churches throughout the nation. Responding to the 2014 Ferguson non-indictment decision, Rahiel led a national Black Friday economic boycott supported by dozens of celebrities called #NotOneDime. As a leading generational voice, Rahiel has appeared in countless media outlets, including The New York Times, Forbes, MSNBC, BET, ELLE, and more. Rahiel has been ranked on The Root 100, featured in *Ebony* and Revolt TV amongst "Leaders of the New School" and was one of six women *Essence* Magazine named "The New Civil Rights Leaders." She is a recipient of countless national fellowships and awards for her social justice and media work, including National Action Network's "Who Got Next" Award, the National Newspaper Publishers Association National Leadership Award, the National Association

of Black Journalists (NABJ) Salute to Excellence Digital Media Award, and the Selma Bridge Crossing Jubilee “Spirit of the Flame” Freedom Flame Award.

Rahiel is a contributing essayist to the book *Talking Taboo: American Christian Women Get Frank About Faith*,” published by White Cloud Press (October 2013) and a contributing author to the NIV Bible for Women by Zondervan (September 2015).

In 2019, Rahiel returned to the U.S. after being on sabbatical in southern Africa for three years, serving in solidarity with Pan-African resistance movements on the continent. The withdrawal made way for transformative and revolutionary global ties. Rahiel’s debut book, *Imagine Freedom: Transforming Pain into Political and Spiritual Power*, which takes readers on a one of a kind, Afrofuturistic freedom and healing journey, is available wherever books are sold.

The world-renowned nonprofit Black Girls Rock, Inc. previously featured Rahiel on their annual awards show on BET, saluting “her tireless dedication to global issues, community activism and youth advocacy.” Black Girls Rock, Inc. recognized Rahiel because she “leads with her faith, inspiring awareness and inciting change around the world.”

About *Imagine Freedom: Transforming Pain into Political and Spiritual Power*

A social activist, journalist, public theologian, and international speaker who has become a powerful and brilliant voice of her generation offers a bold path to liberation and healing for people of African descent struggling in the shadows of the American Dream. *Imagine Freedom* by Rahiel Tesfamariam takes you on a one of a kind, Afrofuturistic freedom and healing journey.

The United States is at a critical juncture in its history. Race has come to the forefront of every American’s mind in today’s climate— whether for good or for bad. White supremacy remains America’s Achilles’ heel—a moral failure that haunts us and holds us back from being the great nation we profess. For centuries, people of African descent have endured unimaginable hatred and discrimination which has manifested in pain and trauma passed from generation to generation. To break free from this historical cycle of suffering and be truly free at last, Black and brown people must reimagine ourselves, our communities, this country, and our relationship to Africa.

Weaving storytelling, socioeconomic analysis, and cultural criticism with the spiritual and political threads of liberation theology and Pan Africanism, *Imagine Freedom* empowers us to begin the difficult but necessary work of decolonizing our minds and overcoming the lies we have been told about ourselves for centuries. Sobering and inspiring, filled

with despair and hope, Rahiel Tesfamariam dares us to see the world through a larger historical and global lens— to understand how our quests for freedom and healing are intrinsically connected to our past, present, and future. By widening our vision, we discover new ways of imagining self, community, nation, and world, and most importantly, a new way to achieve the freedom that has been too long denied.