



## Angry White Pyjamas

**Author:** Robert Twigger  
**Genre:** Aikido and Other Martial Arts  
**Publisher:** London: Phoenix, 1997  
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*Angry White Pyjamas, Robert Twigger's semi-autobiographical and award-winning novel, describes his journey through one of the world's most gruelling martial arts courses.*

It could be said that martial artists spilt roughly into two groups: those who have actually been to train in the home of their chosen art, whichever it may be, and those who want to. For the latter in particular, Twigger's book provides an interesting glimpse into the world of the ultra-committed athlete, something many of us wish to become.

Living a thus far directionless life in Tokyo as an English teacher, *Pyjamas* opens with the author witnessing an event that changes his life: a confrontation between a bully and a man unable to defend himself. This single event becomes the catalyst for Twigger and his friends to reevaluate their lives and train in the marital arts, or more precisely, to register at Tokyo's famous Yoshinkan Aikido Hombu, headquarters of one of the world's great martial arts organisations. However, Twigger's real journey begins as he leaves his friends to commit to the one-year intensive Riot Police course and all it involves. In addition, the fact that his stay at the dojo coincided with the most interesting period in its history, i.e. the death of the organisation's founder Gozo Shioda and the subsequent struggle for power, make this book an enthralling read as well as an interesting one.

Personally, few books I have read continue to affect me the way this one has. I first read it not long after starting my training, and it transformed my new hobby into a way of life. It planted an idea in my head: to train in Japan. From that moment on, my life changed; forever.

9 sausages out of 10

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