

Delve Deeper into *From This Day Forward*

A film by Sharon Shattuck

This list of fiction and nonfiction books, compiled by Sarah Burris of Bay County Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *From This Day Forward*.

When director Sharon Shattuck's father came out as transgender, Sharon was in the awkward throes of middle school. As the Shattucks reunite to plan Sharon's wedding, she seeks a deeper understanding of how her parents' marriage, and their family, survived intact.

ADULT NONFICTION

Beam, Cris. *Transparent: Love, Family, and Living the T with Transgender Teenagers*. Orlando, Florida: Harcourt, 2007. When Cris Beam moved to Los Angeles, she thought she might volunteer just a few hours at a school for gay and transgender kids. Instead, she found herself drawn deeply into the pained and powerful group of transgirls she discovered. *Transparent* introduces four: Christina, Dominique, Foxxjazell, and Ariel. As they accept Cris into their world, she shows it to us—a dizzying mix of familiar teenage cliques and crushes and far less familiar challenges, such as how to morph your body on a few dollars a day.

Boylan, Jennifer Finney. *She's Not There: A Life in Two Genders*. New York, NY: Broadway Books, 2003. A memoir that tells the story of a person who changed genders chronicles the life of James, a critically acclaimed novelist, who eventually became Jenny, a happy and successful English professor.

Boylan, Jennifer Finney. *Stuck in the Middle with You: A Memoir of Parenting in Three Genders*. New York, NY: Crown Publishers, 2013. A father for six years, a mother for ten, and for a time in between, neither, or both, Jennifer Finney Boylan has seen parenthood from both sides of

the gender divide. When her two children were young, Boylan came out as transgender, and as Jenny transitioned from a man to a woman and from a father to a mother, her family faced unique challenges and questions. In this thoughtful, tear-jerking, hilarious memoir, Jenny asks what it means to be a father, or a mother, and to what extent gender shades our experiences as parents.

Ehrensaft, Diane, PhD. *Gender Born, Gender Made: Raising Healthy Gender-Nonconforming Children*. New York, NY: The Experiment Publishing, 2011. We are only beginning to understand gender. Is it inborn or learned? Can it be chosen—or even changed? Does it have to be one or the other? These questions may seem abstract—but for parents whose children live outside of gender “norms,” they are very real.

Howey, Noelle. *Dress Codes: Of Three Girlhoods – My Mother's, My Father's, and Mine*. New York, NY: Picador, 2002. When Noelle Howey is in her early teens, she learns that her father enjoys wearing women's clothing. This memoir explores her father finding his identity – morphing from distant father to an affectionate transgendered woman – while Noelle is simultaneously growing up and discovering her sense of self.

Mock, Janet. *Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love & So Much More*. New York, NY: Atria Books, 2014. With unflinching honesty and moving prose, Janet Mock relays her experiences of growing up young, multiracial, poor, and trans in America, offering readers accessible language while imparting vital insight about the unique challenges and vulnerabilities of a marginalized and misunderstood population.

Nutt, Amy Ellis. *Becoming Nicole: The Transformation of an American Family*. New York, NY: Random House,

2015. Wayne and Kelly Maines adopted identical twin boys, Wyatt and Jonas. Even as a toddler, Wyatt insisted that he was female. Over a stressful period of change, the Maines' readjusted their views on gender to embrace Wyatt's true self. This inspiring story follows Wyatt's transition to Nicole. The family became closer as a whole and are now strong advocates for trans rights.

ADULT FICTION

Fu, Kim. *For Today I am a Boy*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014. At birth, Peter had been given the Chinese name Juan Chaun, powerful king. The exalted only son in the middle of three daughters, Peter was the one who would finally embody his immigrant father's ideal of power and masculinity. But Peter has different dreams: he is certain he is a girl.

Plett, Casey. *A Safe Girl To Love*. New York, NY: Topside Press, 2014. Eleven unique short stories that stretch from a rural Canadian Mennonite town to a hipster gay bar in Brooklyn, featuring young trans women stumbling through loss, sex, harassment, and love. These stories, shiny with whiskey and prairie sunsets, rattling subways and neglected cats, show growing up as a trans girl can be charming, funny, frustrating, or sad, but never will it be predictable.

NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Andrews, Arin. *Some Assembly Required: The Not-So-Secret Life of a Transgender Teen*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2014. In this revolutionary memoir, Arin details the journey that led him to make the life-transforming decision to undergo gender reassignment as a high school junior. In his captivatingly witty, honest voice, Arin reveals the challenges he faced as a girl, the humiliation and anger he



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felt after getting kicked out of his private school, and all the changes—both mental and physical—he experienced once his transition began.

Huegel, Kelly. *GLBTQ: The Survival Guide for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Teens (2nd ed.)*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Free Spirit Publishing, 2011. This frank, sensitive book is written for young people who are beginning to question their sexual or gender identity, those who are ready to work for GLBTQ rights, and those who may need advice, guidance, or reassurance that they are not alone.

Jennings, Jazz. *Being Jazz: My Life as a (Transgender) Teen*. New York, NY: Crown Books for Young Readers, 2016. Teen advocate and trailblazer Jazz Jennings—named one of “The 25 Most Influential Teens” of the year by *Time*—shares her very public transgender journey, as she inspires people to accept the differences in others while they embrace their own truths.

Kuklin, Susan. *Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out*. Somerville, Massachusetts: Candlewick Press, 2014. Author and photographer Susan Kuklin met and interviewed six transgender or gender-neutral young adults and used her considerable skills to represent them thoughtfully and respectfully before, during, and after their personal acknowledgment of gender preference.

FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Cronn-Mills, Kirstin. *Beautiful Music for Ugly Children*. Woodbury, Minnesota: Flux, 2012. “This is Beautiful Music for Ugly Children, on community radio 90.3, KZUK. I’m Gabe. Welcome to my show.” My birth name is Elizabeth, but I’m a guy. Gabe. My parents think I’ve gone crazy and the rest of the world

is happy to agree with them, but I know I’m right. I’ve been a boy my whole life. When you think about it, I’m like a record. Elizabeth is my A side, the song everybody knows, and Gabe is my B side—not heard as often, but just as good. It’s time to let my B side play.

Gephart, Donna. *Lily and Dunkin*. New York, NY: Delacorte Press, 2016. Lily Jo McGrother, born Timothy McGrother, is a girl. But being a girl is not so easy when you look like a boy. Especially when you’re in the eighth-grade. Dunkin Dorfman, birth name Norbert Dorfman, is bipolar and has just moved from the New Jersey town he’s called home for the past thirteen years. This would be hard enough, but the fact that he is also hiding from a painful secret makes it even worse. One summer morning, Lily Jo McGrother meets Dunkin Dorfman, and their lives forever change.

Gino, Alex. *George*. New York, NY: Scholastic Press, 2015. When people look at George, they think they see a boy. But she knows she’s not a boy. She knows she’s a girl. George thinks she’ll have to keep this a secret forever. Then her teacher announces that their class play is going to be “Charlotte’s Web.” George really, really, REALLY wants to play Charlotte. But the teacher says she can’t even try out for the part . . . because she’s a boy. With the help of her best friend, Kelly, George comes up with a plan. Not just so she can be Charlotte—but so everyone can know who she is, once and for all.

Katcher, Brian. *Almost Perfect*. New York, NY: Delacorte Press, 2009. Recovering from a painful break-up and living with his distant mother, Logan Witherspoon feels alone. He befriends Sage Hendricks, the quirky new girl in school. Logan quickly develops feelings for her resulting in a kiss. This kiss causes Sage to reveal that she was born a boy. Logan becomes

incredibly angry for he doesn’t want to be seen as gay and distances himself from Sage. After Sage battles extreme depression, Logan tries to rekindle the relationship and be the supportive friend Sage needs.

Peters, Julie Anne. *Luna*. New York, NY: Little, Brown, 2004. Regan’s brother Liam can’t stand the person he is during the day. Like the moon from whom Liam has chosen his female namesake, his true self, Luna, only reveals herself at night. In the secrecy of his basement bedroom Liam transforms himself into the beautiful girl he longs to be, with help from his sister’s clothes and makeup. Now, everything is about to change—Luna is preparing to emerge from her cocoon. But are Liam’s family and friends ready to welcome Luna into their lives?

Russo, Meredith. *If I Was Your Girl*. New York, NY: Flatiron Books, 2016. Amanda Hardy is the new girl in school and can finally be herself. At her old school, she was Andrew. While Amanda keeps to herself, she quickly finds friendship with Grant. If she tells him the truth, will she ruin their friendship and her new life? Russo wrote *If I Was Your Girl* guided by her own experiences as a trans woman.

Wittlinger, Ellen. *Parrotfish*. New York, NY: Flux, 2012. Angela Katz-McNair has never felt like a girl. She makes the decision to become Grady. Coming out as transgender creates friction with Grady’s family and best friend. Grady is miserable until he begins to make new friends. This includes school geek, Sebastian, who teaches Grady about the parrotfish. Parrotfish can change gender when they need to. Grady’s struggle for acceptance allows him to find himself and his friends.

