

## ‘Oh, honey, we’re *all* transgender’: the Journey towards Trans Subjectivity in US Fiction for Teens

Mark Macleod<sup>1</sup>

Charles Sturt University

The author of *Geography Club* (2003), Brent Hartinger, argues that LGBTI fiction in the United States has moved beyond its preoccupation with identity and coming out, and now includes characters who just happen to be gay (Hartinger 2009). He is defining his own practice as a writer accurately enough, but it’s not true to say that the coming out novel for teens is dead – or that it should be. Every young person’s experience of coming to terms with his or her sexuality is unique, but before we assume that acknowledging LGBTI sexuality is no longer a problem, we need to remember that it can still be a matter of life and death in an increasing number of communities. Namaste (2011) calls on academics to continue to make the invisible lives of transgender people, in particular, visible by focusing on the alarming facts of their homelessness, their suffering of poor health and violent crime, and the tragic rate of transgender suicide. It is too comfortable for theorists such as Butler (1990) and Garber (1991) to focus on LGBTI as merely contesting intellectual constructions of gender. For Namaste the function of discourse about diversity is to achieve social justice.

The list of titles that feature LGBTI subjects for teens published in the United States over the past 15 years is quite remarkable, although Milne (2013) is cautious about the sanitised image of reality that is constructed in many of these texts. The narrative of ‘progress, self-discovery and acceptance’, as she sees it, is mostly positioned within the white middle class with supportive families, and the fiction sanitises ‘some of the harsher lived realities of queer youth, who are at a much higher risk of suicide, homelessness and substance abuse than their heterosexual counterparts’ (2013, p. 177). Milne argues that it sanitises lived urban experiences to a degree that fiction about heterosexual teens does not.

In asking why that might be, we need to understand first who the implied readers of LGBTI fiction are. The cost of the books tells us, if nothing else does, that enthusiasm for

---

<sup>1</sup> Mark Macleod is an Australian academic and writer for children. He has been Children’s Publishing Director for Random House, publisher of his own name imprint Mark Macleod Books for Hachette Australia, a television and radio presenter and national president of the Children’s Book Council of Australia. He lectures in children’s literature and creative writing at Charles Sturt University, southwest of Sydney. Among his publications are *A Treasure Chest of Rhymes* (Bolinda Audio), a collection of 40 lyrics for children set to music by Peter Sullivan; the picture book *Just One More* (ABC Books), and in Brazil, *Onde Deus Está?* (Editora Fundamento, 2011). E-mail: [mmacleod@csu.edu.au](mailto:mmacleod@csu.edu.au).

children's literature is a middle class pursuit, or an aid to learning in the classroom. We don't assume that a novel about drug addiction is aimed mainly at those teens who are living with addiction; almost the reverse, in fact. Similarly, it would be wrong to assume that LGBTI books are aimed at the minority who are coming to terms with their own sexual difference. There are too few of them to sustain a publisher's print-run. Rather, these texts are aimed at educating the majority to accept and even celebrate gender and sexual diversity. As we look cautiously over the edge of the familiar at the potential rocks of otherness below, adult caregivers want reality in teen fiction – but only *up to a point*. And with LGBTI fiction we pull back from that edge because we want to offer LGBTI teens a future. That future is more positive, or 'sanitised' in its vision, as Milne suggests, but this may well change. I'm not sure that we regard fiction about heterosexual teen behaviour now as therapeutic in the way that we did 40 years ago.

In trying to understand the publishers' enthusiasm for LGBTI fiction, we need to note also that until recently these texts have been predominantly realist. Whether we agree with Stephens (1992) and Nodelman (2008) that texts for young readers are always about socialising them to accept adult values, or whether we emphasise the role of entertainment in children's literature, it is worth considering the argument advanced by Hume (1984) about the voracious need for fresh subject matter in realist narrative. As realism searches constantly for new material, it moves further away from the centre, so that what is unusual or unique becomes the focus in the text as if it were typical, although at the same time it remains clearly unrepresentative. Does the interest in LGBTI fiction merely reflect the boredom of middle class readers? If lesbian and gay characters are not representative of the general teen population, then surely transgender characters are even less representative, and some readers might ask how this subject matter is relevant to them. Part of the answer is in the contemporary concepts of gender and sexuality as performative and therefore always evolving. This is evident in the constant relabelling of queer subjectivity: from GLB to LGB to LGBT to LGBTQ to LGBTI to LGBTQQIA – the attempts to signal inclusiveness have led to the self-deprecating humour of the term 'alphabet soup' (Ring, 2012).

Although there are relatively few texts for teens featuring bisexual or intersex protagonists, an increasing number do focus on transsexual and transgender characters. The Goodreads.com listing includes 113 titles, most popular of which are *Luna* (2004) by Julie Anne Peters, *I Am J* (2011) by Cris Beam, *Almost Perfect* (2009) by Brian Katcher and

*Parrotfish* (2007) by Ellen Wittlinger. These texts are referred to somewhat affectionately in English as ‘trans’, but as Meyerowitz (2002) points out, the two terms covered by this abbreviation derive from two historically quite different conceptions of gender dysphoria: ‘transsexuality’, a biological model, treated by medical intervention in what is now known as ‘sex reassignment surgery’; and ‘transgender’, a social constructionist model of dysphoria that results from a mismatch between the gender that the subject feels inside and the gender that is assigned to the subject by society. Various therapies are used to help the transgender subject alter this mismatch and surgery may – or may not – be an option.

Because gay-identified and lesbian-identified fiction for teens has for some time been comfortable with the construction of subjectivity through first person narration, it is at first surprising to find that in trans fiction the narrative is either in the third person or by a first person narrator who is not transgender at all: a brother, sister or friend. The story of *Luna* (Peters 2004), the male-to-female character who was given the birth name of Liam, but changed it to Luna, is told by his younger sister Regan. Pronouns are, of course, problematic in most trans texts: Regan starts by referring to ‘he’, then uses ‘he’ and ‘she’ interchangeably, until the narrative settles on ‘she’. Luna is dramatic, depressive, loves Regan, and yet is jealous of her because she was the one who got to have the female body. Regan says:

I knew he suffered. I just wished he wouldn’t take it out on me. It wasn’t my fault I got the body he wanted. I wanted Britney Spears’s body. Did I get it? No (Peters, 2004, p. 15).

Regan sees herself as having to support Liam, when all their father wants to do is push him into sport and bodybuilding; she is expected to do the cooking and housework, while their mother is preoccupied with her business as a wedding planner. So Regan sees her life as always determined by others, while Liam is determined to create a life that will allow Luna out of the cage that his body has been for as long as he can remember. Until Luna is free then, Liam will keep on performing, as he’s been doing all his life. The ongoing conversation in the novel, then, is between these two views of the degree of power teens have over their own futures.

When Regan considers Liam’s obsession with makeup and fashion, she asks whether he wants to be a drag queen like RuPaul. Liam’s answer is that even if he had RuPaul’s talent, that isn’t the future he sees for Luna. He just wants to ‘fit in’ (Peters 2004: 70). Nothing pleases him more than if no one in the mall ‘reads’ him when he dresses as Luna: it means he

can pass as female. Liam does not want to challenge existing typology; he wants to claim what he feels is his rightful place in it.

The preoccupation with clothing and the lighthearted humour in *Luna* implies a younger reader than, for example, *I am J*, or *Being Emily* and relates its construction of dysphoria to cross-dressing picture books, such as *Princess Max* (2001), *My Princess Boy* (2011) or *Jacob's New Dress* (2014). These texts construct the early childhood dress-up box as a source of imaginative play for boys, just as it is for girls, and male-to-female cross-dressing as carnivalesque (Flanagan 2011). Like the popular cross-dressing films for adults 'Some Like it Hot' (1959) and 'Tootsie' (1982), therefore, these picture book texts highlight briefly the social construction of gender, but eventually confirm hegemonic masculinity, although in *10,000 Dresses* (Ewert; Ray, 2008), Bailey's cross-dressing can change the world.

Regan is upset by the long periods of withdrawal into depression that she begins to observe and is not quite sure what Liam means when he announces that he wants to transition. Liam is thrilled when he dresses as a girl, asks Regan how he looks and is told 'ordinary' (Peters 2004, p. 88) – a judgement that would offend anyone else trying to look their best. However, his performing of Luna's gender eventually impacts on Regan's life in a way that can't be overlooked or forgiven. She asks him to stand in for her at her regular babysitting job, and while her employers are out, Liam goes into their bedroom, uses the mother's makeup, tries on her clothes, and is caught when they come home early. Regan is fired from her job and feels both let down and publicly humiliated. She says all she has ever wanted is a normal life with two happy parents, a brother, a boyfriend and friends at school: no drama. Instead she has ended up with a freak show.

*Luna*, therefore, explores the subjectivity of the onlooker, on whom the bizarre behaviour of the trans character has little impact, except as a catalyst for her own development. When he is bashed, Liam tells Regan that he is leaving home and school and flying to Seattle to begin the process of evaluation for sex reassignment surgery, and she realises that 'Goodbye, Liam' means 'Hello, Regan': the last words in the narrative (Peters 2004, p. 248).

Given the conservative positioning of the reader who gazes over Regan's shoulder, it is not surprising that *Luna* is rated number 1 on the Goodreads.com list. It confirms traditional male-to-female cross-dressing tropes, and in making no reference to sexuality does not challenge the adult gatekeepers of children's literature.

The introduction of sexuality is, however, a complication that makes Brian Katcher's *Almost Perfect* (2009) and Cris Beam's *I Am J* (2011) far more challenging. Both texts imply an older teen reader, and yet neither fully embraces transgender subjectivity. The narrator of *Almost Perfect* is Logan, an 18-year-old track star, who is obsessed with the beautiful, difficult Sage Hendricks, a newcomer to his school and to public schooling generally, since her overprotective parents have home-schooled her. Despite his sporting achievements, Logan does not conform to one of the most powerful masculine stereotypes: he has had only one girlfriend, and the relationship collapsed when she cheated on him. Sage is intelligent, strong, independent enough to rebel against helicopter parenting, but, like Logan, inexperienced sexually.

When their friendship begins to develop into romance and they kiss, Sage tells Logan that she is transitioning. She was born with the body of a boy. Logan explodes. As well as assaulting her for lying to him – when ironically she has just volunteered the truth – he is angry to think that if they had gone any further, he might have touched 'it': her penis. Although in his overreaction the reader may suspect that Logan is more interested in 'it' than he claims, he pushes Sage away and says he never wants to see her again. He can't push Sage's unique qualities out of his mind, however, and their friendship eventually resumes, kindled by the plans they are both making to go to university, away from their family homes. This time, however, Logan is interested in exploring their friendship sexually. Unlike his former girlfriend, Sage allows him to see her breasts, and a long session of making out follows, although Logan makes it clear that – somewhat incredibly – Sage kept her shorts on the whole time, thus absolving him of the need to deal with her penis.

Sage lands in hospital when she is once again the victim of bashing, and her father blames Logan for not looking after her well enough and punches him in the face. Sage tells Logan that she doesn't know whether she can endure the continuing violence in her life, and might abandon her transgender journey altogether and he is devastated by the thought that the life she has planned will be trashed by the transphobia of others. Although *Almost Perfect* offers more detailed insights into the challenges faced by male-to-female transitioning, in this text the transgender character is again focalised by a narrator with no personal experience of gender dysphoria.

Since the percentage of the US population identifying as transgender is small – 0.3 per cent (Gates 2011, p. 6), and the percentage of those identifying as gay or lesbian is also

surprisingly small at 3.5 per cent – it is important to ask again who these texts are for. Clearly they are expressing concerns shared by a far broader sector of the population. One concern in both the LGBTI and the heterosexual population is with the dismembering and commodification of the body, which is familiar to readers from their daily exposure to advertising, the reporting of violent crime, cosmetic surgery and pornography. It is significant that both Sage and Logan are punched in the face – in Sage’s case repeatedly – as if to eradicate their individuality. Then there is the metonymic reading of the penis. To Logan, this bit of flesh *is* Sage. And in her desire to have it disappear surgically, to Sage it *is* her sexuality; unlike Logan, however, she does not regard her penis as a metonym for her whole being. So there is violence to parts of, and to the whole of, the self in this text. Specifically, however, there is violence against transgender and transsexual people. Although they may be 0.3 per cent of the population, 41 per cent of them attempt suicide, compared with 4.6 per cent of the population generally (Haas, 2014, p. 2). The statistics are alarming, then, and challenge middle class assumptions that US society is not merely accepting, but embracing diversity.

Both *Luna* and *Almost Perfect* also highlight the role played by competitive sport in perpetuating homophobia and transphobia. Twenty years after Sedgwick and Butler argued that sexuality is not essentialist but performative, why is LGBTI fiction for teens still focused on what the characters *are*, rather than what they *do*? One answer lies in competitive sport as a paradigm for identity in fiction with a school setting. In most LGBTI fiction, the protagonist is attracted to or pitted against the sports jock, who epitomises the taxonomy of the schoolyard, where you are either masculine or feminine, on the team or not, straight or gay, good looking or a dog, winner or loser. And when the protagonist *is* the sports jock, the conflict is doubly internalised. In my own country, the increasingly conservative government has recently begun referring to citizens as being on ‘Team Australia’ or not, with regard to terrorism (Summers, 2014). The implications of this apparently harmless sporting metaphor are divisive and alarming.

Anderson (2011) argues that discourse and behaviour in the locker room are now more sexually inclusive than ever, but headlines occasionally focusing on the coming out of a gay footballer, or the focus in Australia, for example, on diver Matthew Mitcham as the ‘one gay member’ of the Olympic team, tell a different story about the relationship between competitive sport and sexual diversity. A 2013 survey of LGBTI Americans identifies a familiar binary:

70% describe the entertainment industry as friendly

63% describe the Obama administration as friendly  
57% describe the Democratic Party as friendly

On the other hand:

76% describe the Republican Party as unfriendly  
59% describe professional sports leagues as unfriendly  
47% describe the military as unfriendly  
(Pew Research Center 2013, p. 10).

It is not surprising, then, that the LGBTI character in teen fiction is constructed as an adversary of the sports jock, or that the sports are usually those that emphasise display of the body or physical contact.

Although anecdotal reportage suggests that children experiment sexually in primary school, in LGBTI texts the protagonists are often 16 or 18 when they have their first interpersonal sexual experience: thereby positioning them closer to the age of consent and possibly further from the grasp of the adult censors. Compared with heterosexual characters in teen fiction, trans characters in particular have few sexual experiences, if any, which is odd, given that the LGBTI community is so highly eroticised in popular culture. In texts such as *Almost Perfect* or *I Am J*, the trans character hates to be touched. This fear derives from a denial of the body, from fear of being possessed and controlled, and fear of assumptions about their sexuality.

*I Am J* is about the female-to-male transitioning of Jenifer Silver, who has known he was a boy for as long as he can remember, but is struggling with the pain of chest-binding, and with the opposition of his parents and of health services. He loathes his female body, and he is in love with Melissa. Like him she is an artist, and she self-harms by cutting her body. J cannot bear to look at his body in the mirror, and he hates to have his body touched. In one scene where his mother is trying yet again to control him, J buries his head in a pillow and talks at her through it. It is an unconscious image of violence to the body, and perhaps of euthanasia by suffocation.

On the other hand, J's inner life slowly gathers strength and when he finally meets a supportive trans woman named Marcia at the clinic, her experience in surviving the journey gives him confidence to say for the first time that he is transgender. She replies, 'Oh, honey, we're *all* transgender' (Beam, 2011, p. 137). The narration of *I Am J* almost embraces first person trans subjectivity, but remains as ambivalent as the protagonist's gender through the

use of free indirect discourse. While, strictly speaking, the text is written in the third person, it comes very close to a first person perspective, and occasionally slips into interior monologue.

He gives this girl a necklace, manages to give her his time and attention when his whole life is falling apart, and she says he's acting *different*? *You don't know the half of it*, J wanted to say (Beam, 2011, p. 183).

The inclusion of dialogue that is not actually uttered is a feature of many trans texts. Luna and his sister Regan lie constantly to protect one another, and unexpressed thoughts in italics are part of Regan's narrative. In *Almost Perfect*, as Logan battles his obsession with Sage, his inner monologue becomes inner dialogue:

My best friend was a beautiful girl! What was wrong with that?  
*Plenty, Logan, she's a –*  
*I DON'T CARE!* I kissed Sage harder to drown out the voice...  
*I'll be just fine.* I mentally repeated the drunk driver's mantra (Katcher, 2009, p. 250).

Grady, the female-to-male narrator of *Parrotfish*, anticipates crises with family members and friends by scripting scenes that never take place, sometimes up to a page in length.

We didn't say much in the car – Kita drove carefully and I wrote a little scene in my head.  
 GUM GIRL: So, like, how do trans...whatever-you-ares...have sex? I mean cause you're so abnormal and all.  
 ME: Well, sex for us abnormal is very strange, as I'm sure you can imagine.  
 GUM GIRL: Ooh, yes, I'm imagining it!  
 ME: First of all we have to be in the same room with the person we're having sex with.  
 GUM GIRL: [writing it down] Right. In the same room...(Wittlinger, 2007, p. 197).

In *I Am J*, J feels stifled by his family.

He couldn't handle any more interrogations; he'd used up all his words. This apartment was too small for three people; he needed to breathe. *I can't be myself here*, J thought. *How can I explain myself to you if I can't explain myself to me?*(Beam, 2011, p. 91).

The frequency of unexpressed dialogue in these texts points to the loneliness of the trans character's life, the impossibility of speaking the truth to family and friends because they won't listen, and also the desire to protect them in the character's or narrator's dialogic journey towards subjectivity. This draws the reader into a conspiracy of sorts: the silent reader may be the only person who won't talk back and who might understand.

That is a surprising or desperate conclusion, given the objectification of transitioning in popular culture referred to earlier. Denny (2004) argues that the social constructionist model

of transgenderism had replaced the medical model of transsexualism by the 1990s, but in these teen novels, the trans characters' journey is towards surgery. This may reflect transphobic stereotypes. In Duncan Tucker's 2005 film *Transamerica*, for example, when the male-to-female protagonist Bree finally faces her estranged mother, her mother lunges at her penis and says triumphantly 'Thank God...still a boy!' It is an act so crass and invasive that it needs no comment from Bree or her father. The preoccupation with surgery in these novels may also reflect the young characters' limited understanding that there are other options.

A feature that *Almost Perfect* and *I Am J* share with other trans texts is the inclusion of an author's note, making it clear that the subject matter is not drawn from personal experience, but is the result of research with transgender correspondents. How do we read these disclaimers? Given the cult of celebrity and the invasiveness of gossip online, are they attempts to deflect any assumption that the writers are transitioning themselves – and any online trolling as a result? Or are they simply grateful acknowledgements of the contributions others have made to their writing? Maybe both, but it is hard to think of writing from a position outside a politically or socially sensitive minority being accepted in other instances. In Australia, for example, it would be unthinkable for a non-Indigenous writer to attempt to render Indigenous subjectivity in a narrative. Does the comparison simply tell us that our society does not see the need to defend the rights of transgender citizens? But the question also raises an issue that became a major legal and ethical concern in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century: who owns the subject matter for art? If transgender writers are not yet ready to publish their stories, or if the quality of their writing is not good enough, is it all right for non-trans writers to appropriate their material?

The question is not resolved by the ambiguous acknowledgements in Rachel Gold's *Being Emily* (2012), but this novel embraces transgender subjectivity with a clarity and optimism that are lacking in other texts. *Being Emily* is narrated in the first person by the male-to-female athlete Chris. She is a swimmer, and lucky to be in love with Claire, whose story is told in alternate chapters in the third person. At the beginning of the novel, Claire doesn't know that Chris has felt all her life that she is a girl who was born in a boy's body. When Chris tells her the truth, it is hard for Claire to understand, because as she says, they have a good sex life and Chris's penis functions quite well. If Chris is in fact a girl, though, does that make their relationship lesbian? It's the same conundrum that tears the lovers apart

in *I Am J*, when Melissa wonders whether her relationship with a female-to-male boy makes her a lesbian.

Claire doesn't mind whether others, such as her mother, think she is lesbian. She and Chris share an interest in role-playing games, so she is not disturbed to learn that Chris has the username 'Emily' online and that she has formed a friendship with another male-to-female girl called Natalie. Claire even drives the long journey into Minneapolis with Chris to meet Natalie, and to meet Natalie's therapist. Although *Being Emily* occasionally sounds didactic in its providing of information about transitioning, the first person narrative by Chris/Emily is refreshingly frank and Claire's response so accepting that there is little need for the unvoiced dialogue of the other texts. When Chris locks the bedroom door and dresses as a girl, she feels at home, and as if the outline of a drawing has at last been coloured in. Even her troubled relationship with her parents improves, because she is no longer trying so hard to act like a boy.

In *Transamerica* the actor Felicity Huffman transitions from the awkward opening sequences, where she overdresses, stumbles like Tootsie, and mostly fails to speak like a woman, to a touching conclusion where she welcomes her estranged son into her modest but friendly house. In doing so, she demonstrates that what this transgender character has wanted all along, more than passing as a woman or having a sexual partner, is to feel at ease in a body that is also a home (Sandercock, 2014). Similarly, in *Being Emily*, both Chris and Claire want to enjoy the sunshine, the moon, the feeling of being buoyed up by water. Not long after Chris reveals her transitioning, Claire celebrates her ability to accept it by joking that if the opposite of 'gender dysphoric' is 'gender euphoric', then that's how she feels (Gold 2012, p. 140). In the epilogue three years later, however, Chris acknowledges that their sexual relationship did not survive. She says it was distance that came between them, when they went to different universities, not surgery, and the text closes with the quiet belief that transgender subjectivity can at last find a home.

Claire says she used to think ordinary life was boring before I came out to her, but now she realises that every ordinary moment has extraordinary worlds contained within it. But then she's the mystic. I'll take my ordinary moments and enjoy every one of them (Gold 2012, p. 210).

And if rest can be found in such a troubled young life, then perhaps that above all else is a reason for the appeal of a story that embraces transgender subjectivity such as this.

**References:**

- ANDERSON, E. *Inclusive Masculinity: the Changing Nature of Masculinities*. Abingdon UK: Routledge, 2009.
- BEAM, C. *I Am J*. New York: Little Brown, 2011.
- BUTLER, J. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1990.
- DENNY, D. Changing Models of Transsexualism, *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Psychotherapy*, 8 (1-2): 25-40, 2004.
- EERT, M; RAY, R, illus. *10,000 Dresses*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2008.
- FLANAGAN, V. *Into the Closet: Cross-Dressing and the Gendered Body in Children's Literature and Film*. New York: Routledge, 2011.
- GARBER, M. *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety*. New York: Routledge, 1991.
- GATES, GJ. *How many people are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender?* Los Angeles: Williams Institute UCLA, 2011.
- GOLD, R. *Being Emily*. Tallahassee: Bella Books, 2012.
- HAAS, AP, JL HERMAN & PL RODGERS. *Suicide Attempts among Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Adults: findings of the national transgender discrimination survey*. New York & Los Angeles: American Association for Suicide Prevention & Williams Institute UCLA, 2014.
- HARTINGER, B. *Geography Club*. New York: HarperTempest, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (2009). [www.brenthartinger.com](http://www.brenthartinger.com).
- HOFFMAN, S; & I, C CASE illus. *Jacob's New Dress*. Chicago: Albert Whitman & Co., 2014.
- HUME, K. *Fantasy and Mimesis: Responses to Reality in Western Literature*. New York: Methuen, 1984.
- KATCHER, B. *Almost Perfect*. New York: Delacorte Press, 2009.
- KILODAVIS, C & S DESIMONE illus. *My Princess Boy*. New York: Aladdin, 2011.
- MEYEROWITZ, J. *How Sex Changed: a History of Transsexuality in the United States*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2002.

MILNE, H. Isolation, Exploration, Affirmation: Dominant Patterns in Four Books for Gay Teens, *Jeunesse: Young People, Texts, Cultures*, 5 (1): 171-178, 2013.

NAMASTE, V. *Sex Change, Social Change*. 2. ed. Toronto: Women's Press, 2011.

NODELMAN, P. *The Hidden Adult: defining children's literature*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008.

PETERS, JA. *Luna*. New York: Little Brown, 2004.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER. *A Survey of LGBT Americans: Attitudes, Experiences and Values in Changing Times*, Washington, 2013.

RING, T (2012). 'LGBTQQIA', *The Advocate*, 22 August. <http://www.advocate.com/arts-entertainment/advocate-45/2012/08/22/lgbtqqia>.

SANDERCOCK, T (2014). "'Stanley Schupak Doesn't Live Here Anymore': Un/Becoming Transsexual and Coming Home in Duncan Tucker's *Transamerica*", *Outskirts* 30. <http://www.outskirts.arts.uwa.edu.au/volumes/volume-30/tom-sandercock>.

SEDGWICK, EK. *Epistemology of the Closet*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.

STEPHENS, J. *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction*. London; New York: Longman, 1992.

STILLER, L & G Rogers. *Princess Max*. Milsons Point: Random House Australia, 2011.

SUMMERS, A (2014). 'Tony Abbott's Team Australia entrenches inequality', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 August. <http://www.smh.com.au/comment/tony-abbotts-team-australia-entrenches-inequality-20140821-106sdk.html>.

WITTLINGER, E. *Parrotfish*. New York: Wittlinger, 2007.