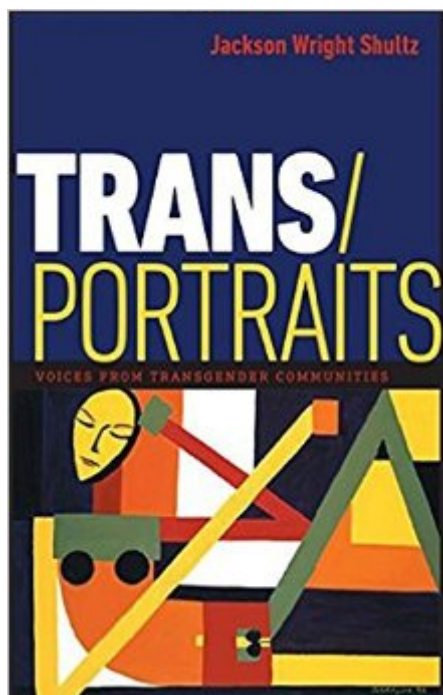


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# Trans/Portraits: Voices From Transgender Communities



## Synopsis

Although transgender people are increasingly represented in academic studies and popular culture, they rarely have the opportunity to add their own voices to the conversation. In this remarkable book, Jackson Shultz records the stories of more than thirty Americans who identify as transgender. They range in age from fifteen to seventy-two; come from twenty-five different states and a wide array of racial, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds; and identify across a vast spectrum of genders and sexualities. Giving voice to a diverse group of individuals, the book raises questions about gender, acceptance, and unconditional love. From historical descriptions of activism to personal stories of discrimination, love, and community, these touching accounts of gender transition shed light on the uncharted territories that lie beyond the gender binary. Despite encounters with familial rejection, drug addiction, and medical malpractice, each account is imbued with optimism and humor, providing a thoughtful look at the daily joys and struggles of transgender life. With an introduction and explanations from the author, this work will appeal to transgender individuals, their significant others, friends, family, and allies; health-care providers, educators, and legal professionals; and anyone questioning their own gender, considering transition, or setting out on their own transition journey.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (7 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

This book is simply phenomenal. I was hesitant that it would cast transfolks in too polished of a light, and we already have too much plasticizing of trans people in the media; however, this book far exceeded my expectations. There are people of all different races, ethnicities, abilities, etc.

throughout the book. Whereas many times diversity can feel forced, Shultz managed to include a melting pot of folks whose stories interconnect while keeping a genuine feel. It's neither campy nor strained. Shultz writes in a really down to earth and genuine manner, while at the same time elevating the conversation and highlighting nuance. He provides helpful commentary throughout, but mostly he lets the characters tell their own stories. The interviewees speak in the vernacular of the community, and the theme of gallows humor is often present. As funny as the book can be, it simultaneously rains truth. There are lines that are agonizingly raw in their beauty and vulnerability. I could imagine this being used as a text in a women and gender studies course, a humanities course, a writing course or even as a unique common reading on a college campus. As a nonbinary trans person, this book hit the spot. If you're trans, if you love someone trans, if you don't know anyone trans but want to: this is the book for you. I would also highly recommend it to professionals with trans clients as well as family members of transfolk - they may miss some of the inside jokes, but it's still a great primer for them, too.

"Nothing educates like stories; apparently human beings are wired for the narrative. Jackson Wright Shultz, scholar, activist, teacher, and writer knows this. His book, *Trans/Portraits: Voices from the Transgender Communities*, just published by Dartmouth College Press, contains the words of thirty-four transgender people. They talk, in real-people rather than academic style, about their transition experiences in small towns and big cities, the need for not "going it alone" and how race and class may make a difference. In the final chapter, called *Accidental Activists*, they recount the many ways they try to advocate, including protests, mentoring a young person, or insisting on rights and respect in their workplaces. . . It is the stories that will stick. . . Shultz's dedication page reads: "For Those Whose Truths Haven't Yet Been Told." With this book, at least some of those truths have been." For a fuller review, see <https://www.dailyuv.com/news/823309>

There are so many great voices in this book. I particularly appreciate how many African-American, Latinx, Asian-American and Native people were interviewed for this book. I think my favorite part was this: "For years and years we've been put under the magnifying glass while white doctors and psychiatrists have written volumes of books about us, and we haven't got to say a word about it. Our voices have been silenced long enough. It's about damned time that somebody let us tell our truths." There are many really great lines like that. It's really clear that this book was written with passion, and with love for the community. I think it elevates the community in new ways, and it sparks fresh thoughts about the treatment of trans/nonbinary people.

This book was not only thoroughly engaging, but educational as well. It's an accessible depiction of the true realities of trans people's lives. Unlike the highly doctored and white-washed depictions we often see in the media, this book doesn't give a sensationalist view. It's really unapologetic in showing trans people's lives exactly as they are. You can get lost in this book for hours and not get bored, which is a rarity in the realm of nonfiction. Highly recommend.

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