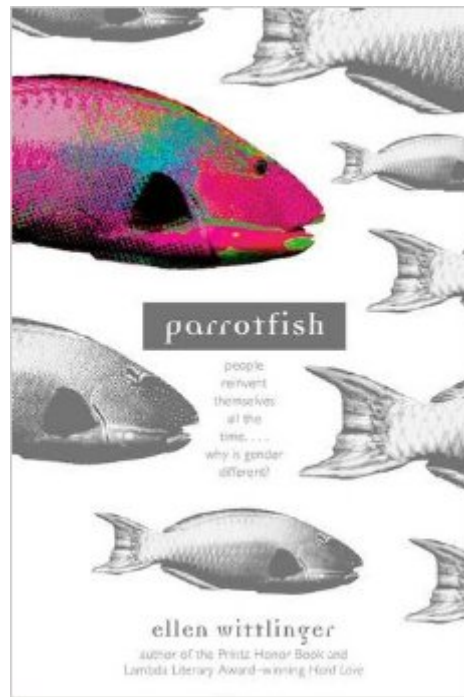


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# Parrotfish



## Synopsis

The groundbreaking novel from critically acclaimed author Ellen Wittlinger that tells the story of a transgender teen's search for identity and acceptance has now been updated to include current terminology and an updated list of resources. Angela Katz-McNair never felt quite right as a girl. So she cuts her hair short, purchases some men's clothes and chose a new name: Grady. While coming out as transgender feels right to Grady, he isn't prepared for the reactions of his friends and family. Why can't they accept that Grady is just being himself? Grady's life is miserable until he finds friends in unexpected places—the school geek, Sebastian, who tells Grady that there is a precedent for transgenders in the natural world, and Kita, a senior, who might just be Grady's first love. In a voice tinged with humor and sadness, Ellen Wittlinger explores Grady's struggles—universal struggles any teen can relate to.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 790 (What's this?)

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers; Reissue edition (October 6, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1481468103

ISBN-13: 978-1481468107

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.8 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars— See all reviews (37 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #267,161 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #53 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Peer Pressure #92 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Peer Pressure #243 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Gay & Lesbian

Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Back in the 1980s and part of the 1990s, it was rare to find a gay or lesbian-related YA book with a happy ending. The real lives of gay and lesbian teenagers tended to be pretty depressing, at least until they could leave home and move to a more gay-friendly area. The YA genre took a while to start writing about transgender (and bisexual, for that matter) teenagers, but by the time they did,

America had become a place more accepting of GLBT people. Perfect? No, not by a long shot. But in an age where high schools have gay-straight alliances, newspapers write articles about kids coming out of the closet in middle school, TV shows feature teenage and adult GLBT characters, gay celebrity weddings merit the same huge gossip magazine writeups as straight celebrity weddings, another famous person seems to come out of the closet every month or so, and very few Americans can say they don't know anyone who is openly gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, is it really that difficult to imagine that at least one teenage FTM kid living in Massachusetts could transition without utter rejection from his family or threats of violence? I disagree that there's anything unrealistically happy about this book. Grady faces his share of problems, including social ostracization, bullies, family conflicts, and falling for another boy's girlfriend. I also don't think, as some reviewers have said, that there's anything particularly feminine-sounding about Grady's inner monologue. While "Luna" by Julie Anne Peters was also a good book, if I were a transgender teenager I would find "Parrotfish" much more uplifting and reassuring - a sign that maybe I could find a happy life within my existing one.

Angela Katz-McNair isn't your typical teenage girl. She is, in fact, a boy. Sure, she may have the body parts that science uses to dictate her gender, but, in this case at least, science has gotten it all wrong. Shortly before Christmas, Angela announces to her family that she's decided to act on the issue of being a boy trapped in the body of a girl. Her name is now Grady. She's cut her hair short and she's wearing boy's clothes. Grady is determined to make the change permanent, and as complete as he possibly can. He starts by announcing his decisions to his family, which is met with assorted reactions. His dad seems to take the news in stride; after all, Grady was always a tomboy who did "guy stuff" with him anyway. His sister, Laura, is sure that Grady is out to ruin her life, and her high school experience. His younger brother, Charlie, doesn't care all that much, as long as the news doesn't affect his video game playing. And his mother, well, his mother isn't at all sure what to think, how to act, or what to do. Since Grady is determined, he doesn't just turn into a transgendered person at home. He makes his intentions known at school, too, and you can probably guess what some of the consequences are. Friends are no longer friends; indifferent acquaintances become outright enemies. But there are also bright moments in Grady's new life: he makes a new best friend, Sebastian, who introduces him to the scientific wonder of the parrotfish, an ocean fish who can, and does, change gender. He also finds allies in Russ and Kita, a powerhouse high school super-couple who raise new questions in Grady's mind when he starts falling for Kita himself. PARROTFISH is a wonderful, emotional novel dealing with the issues of identity and

transgenderism.

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