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# Boy Erased Memoir

## Garrard Conley

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Review | Boy Erased: A Memoir by Garrard Conley  
BOY ERASED BY GARRARD CONLEY // 60 SECOND  
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*Boy Erased*  
*Memoir*  
*Garrard*  
*Conley*

*OMB No.*  
*1228419063550*  
*edited by*

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**MAYO ROCCO**

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**One of These Things**  
**First** Random House  
"A page  
turner...heart-stopping  
and engaging...focused,

justified, and without a  
trace of self-pity. Shot  
through with  
poignancy." —New  
York Times Book  
Review Over a decade  
after its first  
publication, *Jesus Land*  
remains deeply  
resonant with readers.

Now with a new preface by the author, this New York Times bestselling memoir is a gripping tale of rage and redemption, hope and humor, morality and malice—and most of all, the truth: that being a good person takes more than just going to church. Julia and her adopted brother, David, are sixteen years old. Julia is white. David is black. It is the mid-1980s and their family has just moved to rural Indiana, a landscape of cottonwood trees, trailer parks, and an all-encompassing racism. At home are a distant mother—more involved with her church's missionaries than her own children—and a violent father. In this riveting and heartrending memoir Julia Scheeres

takes us from the Midwest to a place beyond imagining. Surrounded by natural beauty, Escuela Caribe—a religious reform school in the Dominican Republic—is characterized by a disciplinary regime that extracts repentance from its students by any means necessary. Julia and David strive to make it through these ordeals and their tale is relayed here with startling immediacy, extreme candor, and wry humor.

### **Ancestor Trouble**

Simon and Schuster "Debut novel about a wealthy man who has reached a crossroads after a lifetime of repression and denial, sending him--and his family--into a slow spiral towards a total breakdown"--

*Amateur* Scribner

"A sexual abuse survivor unapologetically confesses the intimate workings of the Catholic seminary, celibacy and priesthood during an era of sexual scandal and exposes how priests are "formed" to perpetuate a cycle of abuse where truth is relative, chastity is a myth, and powerful men will stop at nothing to silence those who speak the truth"--

*A Reckoning and a*

*Reconciliation* Penguin  
 "An intelligent, moving read" (Pages) and "a testament to women's friendship and to Ann Hood's talent" (Hilma Wolitzer). After the loss of her only child, Mary Baxter finds herself unable to read or write, the activities that used

to be her primary source of comfort. She reluctantly joins a knitting circle as a way to fill her lonely days—not knowing it will change her life. As they teach Mary new knitting techniques, the women in the circle also reveal their own secrets of loss, love, and hope. With time, Mary is finally able to tell her own story of grief, and in so doing finds the spark of life again.

*Boy Erased* SCB

Distributors

Longlisted for the National Book Award in Fiction • A Finalist for the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction • A Finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Fiction • A Finalist for the James Taite Black Prize for Fiction • A Finalist the Center for Fiction First

Novel Prize • A Finalist for the Green  
Carnation Prize • A  
New York Times Book  
Review Editors' Choice  
• A Los Angeles Times  
Bestseller Named One  
of the Best Books of  
the Year by More Than  
Fifty Publications,  
Including: The New  
Yorker, The Paris  
Review, The New York  
Times (selected by  
Dwight Garner), GQ,  
The Washington Post,  
Esquire, NPR, Slate,  
Vulture, the San  
Francisco Chronicle,  
The Guardian (London),  
The Telegraph  
(London), The Evening  
Standard (London), The  
Philadelphia Inquirer,  
The Miami Herald, The  
Millions, BuzzFeed, The  
New Republic (Best  
Debuts of the Year),  
Kirkus Reviews, and  
Publishers Weekly (One  
of the Ten Best Books  
of the Year) "Garth

Greenwell's *What  
Belongs to You*  
appeared in early  
2016, and is a short  
first novel by a young  
writer; still, it was not  
easily surpassed by  
anything that appeared  
later in the year....It is  
not just first novelists  
who will be envious of  
Greenwell's  
achievement."—James  
Wood, *The New Yorker*  
On an unseasonably  
warm autumn day, an  
American teacher  
enters a public  
bathroom beneath  
Sofia's National Palace  
of Culture. There he  
meets Mitko, a  
charismatic young  
hustler, and pays him  
for sex. He returns to  
Mitko again and again  
over the next few  
months, drawn by  
hunger and loneliness  
and risk, and finds  
himself ensnared in a  
relationship in which

lust leads to mutual predation, and tenderness can transform into violence. As he struggles to reconcile his longing with the anguish it creates, he's forced to grapple with his own fraught history, the world of his southern childhood where to be queer was to be a pariah. There are unnerving similarities between his past and the foreign country he finds himself in, a country whose geography and griefs he discovers as he learns more of Mitko's own narrative, his private history of illness, exploitation, and want. *What Belongs to You* is a stunning debut novel of desire and its consequences. With lyric intensity and startling eroticism,

Garth Greenwell has created an indelible story about the ways in which our pasts and cultures, our scars and shames can shape who we are and determine how we love. A conversation between Garth Greenwell and Hanya Yanagihara is included inside the e-book edition.

*A Memoir* One World  
Some of North Carolina's finest fiction and nonfiction writers come together in *Every True Pleasure*, including David Sedaris, Kelly Link, Allan Gurganus, Randall Kenan, and more. Within the volume—featuring writers who identify as gay, trans, bisexual, and straight—are stories and essays that view the full spectrum of contemporary life through an LGBTQ lens.

These writers, all native or connected to North Carolina, show the multifaceted challenges and joys of LGBTQ life, including young love and gay panic, the minefield of religion, military service, having children with a surrogate, family rejection, finding one's true gender, finding sex, and finding love. One of the only anthologies of its kind, *Every True Pleasure* speaks with insight and compassion about living LGBTQ in North Carolina and beyond. Contributors include Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Brian Blanchfield, Belle Boggs, Emily Chavez, Garrard Conley, John Pierre Craig, Diane Daniel, Allan Gurganus, Minrose Gwin, Aaron Gwyn, Wayne Johns, Randall Kenan, Kelly

Link, Zelda Lockhart, Toni Newman, Michael Parker, Penelope Robbins, David Sedaris, Eric Tran, and Alyssa Wong.

*The Knitting Circle: A Novel* Little, Brown

A funny, transporting, surprising, and poignant novel that was one of the highest-selling debuts of recent years in Korea, *Love in the Big City* tells the story of a young gay man searching for happiness in the lonely city of Seoul. *Love in the Big City* is the English-language debut of Sang Young Park, one of Korea's most exciting young writers. A runaway bestseller, the novel hit the top five lists of all the major bookstores, went into twenty-six printings, and was praised for its unique literary voice and

perspective. It is now poised to capture a worldwide readership. Young is a cynical yet fun-loving Korean student who pinballs from home to class to the beds of recent Tinder matches. He and Jaehee, his female best friend and roommate, frequent nearby bars where they push away their anxieties about their love lives, families, and money with rounds of soju and ice-cold Marlboro Reds that they keep in their freezer. Yet over time, even Jaehee leaves Young to settle down, leaving him alone to care for his ailing mother and to find companionship in his relationships with a series of men, including one whose handsomeness is matched by his

coldness, and another who might end up being the great love of his life. A brilliantly written novel that takes us into the glittering nighttime of Seoul and the bleary-eyed morning after with both humor and emotion, *Love in the Big City* is a wry portrait of millennial loneliness as well as the abundant joys of queer life.

Boy Erased Flatiron Books

The New York Times bestselling memoir about identity, love and understanding. Now a major motion picture starring Nicole Kidman, Russell Crowe, and Lucas Hedges, directed by Joel Edgerton. "Every sentence of the story will stir your soul" (*O Magazine*). The son of a Baptist pastor and



deeply embedded in church life in small town Arkansas, as a young man Garrard Conley was terrified and conflicted about his sexuality. When Garrard was a nineteen-year-old college student, he was outed to his parents, and was forced to make a life-changing decision: either agree to attend a church-supported conversion therapy program that promised to "cure" him of homosexuality; or risk losing family, friends, and the God he had prayed to every day of his life. Through an institutionalized Twelve-Step Program heavy on Bible study, he was supposed to emerge heterosexual, ex-gay, cleansed of impure urges and stronger in his faith in God for his brush with

sin. Instead, even when faced with a harrowing and brutal journey, Garrard found the strength and understanding to break out in search of his true self and forgiveness. By confronting his buried past and the burden of a life lived in shadow, Garrard traces the complex relationships among family, faith, and community. At times heart-breaking, at times triumphant, *Boy Erased* is a testament to love that survives despite all odds.

**How I Fired the Shame Committee**

W. W. Norton & Company

*Boy Erased: A Memoir of Identity, Faith, and Family* by Garrard Conley  
Conversation Starters After nine days in an ex-gay

therapy program, Garrard Conley knew he could not be part of it anymore. He was suicidal as he left the program. The counselors impressed on the gay participants of their sinfulness and their need to be fixed. His mother admits later on that it was a mistake to make him attend the conversion program. He grew up with Missionary Baptist parents who believed deeply in the Christian faith, but being gay was a sin and was not considered acceptable. The book exposes the intolerance that exists today when people confront the issue of gay identity and sexuality. It is also a story about love, identity, and understanding. One of the top nonfiction books of 2016, the

memoir *Boy Erased* is now a movie written and directed by Joel Edgerton with Nicole Kidman, Russel Crowe, and Lucas Hedges in the lead role. The book was a nominee for the Lambda Literary Award. *A Brief Look Inside: EVERY GOOD BOOK CONTAINS A WORLD FAR DEEPER* than the surface of its pages. The characters and their world come alive, and the characters and its world still live on. *Conversation Starters* is peppered with questions designed to bring us beneath the surface of the page and invite us into the world that lives on. These questions can be used to.. *Create Hours of Conversation:* • Foster a deeper understanding of the book • Promote an

atmosphere of discussion for groups • Assist in the study of the book, either individually or corporately • Explore unseen realms of the book as never seen before  
Penguin  
A National Book Foundation "5 Under 35" Honoree "An enchanting, sparkling book about the many meanings of sisterhood." —Kristin Iversen, Refinery29  
Claire Luchette's debut, *Agatha of Little Neon*, is a novel about yearning and sisterhood, figuring out how you fit in (or don't), and the unexpected friends who help you find your truest self Agatha has lived every day of the last nine years with her sisters: they work together, laugh

together, pray together. Their world is contained within the little house they share. The four of them are devoted to Mother Roberta and to their quiet, purposeful life. But when the parish goes broke, the sisters are forced to move. They land in Woonsocket, a former mill town now dotted with wind turbines. They take over the care of a halfway house, where they live alongside their charges, such as the jawless Tim Gary and the headstrong Lawnmower Jill. Agatha is forced to venture out into the world alone to teach math at a local all-girls high school, where for the first time in years she has to reckon all on her own with what she sees and feels. Who will she be if

she isn't with her sisters? These women, the church, have been her home. Or has she just been hiding?

Disarming, delightfully deadpan, and full of searching, Claire Luchette's *Agatha of Little Neon* offers a view into the lives of women and the choices they make.

*Frannie and Tru* Open Road Media

John Smid was a well known national leader and spokesperson with the message of "Freedom from homosexuality through Jesus Christ." Within these pages he describes the journey that he embarked upon after he said "God, Surprise Me!" A provocative and personal journal of how John "exited" the ex-gay world and began the process of

integration into an authentic life.

## EX'D OUT

Vintage

At turns heartbreaking and wise, tender and wry, *Bobcat and Other Stories* establishes Rebecca Lee as one of the most powerful and original voices in contemporary fiction. A university student on her summer abroad is offered the unusual task of arranging a friend's marriage. Secret infidelities and one guest's dubious bobcat-related injury propel a Manhattan dinner party to its unexpected conclusion. Students at an elite architecture retreat seek the wisdom of their revered mentor but end up learning more about themselves and one another than about

their shared craft. In these acutely observed and scaldingly honest stories Lee gives us characters who are complex and flawed, cracking open their fragile beliefs and exposing the paradoxes that lie within their romantic and intellectual pursuits. Whether they're in the countryside of the American Midwest, on a dusty prairie road in Saskatchewan, or among the skyscrapers and voluptuous hills of Hong Kong, the terrain is never as difficult to navigate as their own histories and desires. *Jesus Land* Simon & Schuster

A young woman journeys from Vietnam to New York and back, searching for a sense of stability, in "a poignant tale of

loneliness and love"(Booklist). As a child, isolated from the world in a secretive military encampment with her distant mother, she turns for affection to a sympathetic soldier and to the only other girl in the camp, forming two friendships that will shape the rest of her life. As a young adult in New York, cut off from her native country and haunted by the scars of her youth, she is still in search of a home. She falls in love with a married woman who is the image of her childhood friend, and follows strangers because they remind her of her soldier. When tragedy arises, she must return to Vietnam to confront the memories of her youth—and recover her

identity. An inspiring meditation on love, loss, and the presence of a past that never dies, this novel explores the ancient question: do we value the people in our lives because of who they are, or because of what we need them to be? "Haunting and harrowing."

—Foreword Reviews (starred review) "An engrossing tale of a Vietnamese woman without a country."

—International Examiner "Poignantly conjures the difficulties of reconciling the present with 'an ungraspable history'."

—The New Yorker  
The Story of a Transition Europa Editions

A candid self-portrait by the \*NSYNC pop group artist describes his childhood, career

experiences, Russian cosmonaut training, and more, in a revealing account that also discusses his homosexuality and initial efforts to hide his orientation in order to safeguard the band's success. Reprint.

Fairest Createspace Independent Pub  
 The New York Times bestselling memoir about identity, love and understanding. Now a major motion picture starring Nicole Kidman, Russell Crowe, and Lucas Hedges, directed by Joel Edgerton. "Every sentence of the story will stir your soul" (O Magazine). The son of a Baptist pastor and deeply embedded in church life in small town Arkansas, as a young man Garrard Conley was terrified and conflicted about

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**Boy Erased** Algonquin Books

\*\*Named One of Book Riot’s BEST QUEER BOOKS OF 2017\*\*

“Packed with story and drama ... If Tennessee Williams’s ‘Suddenly Last Summer’ could be transposed to the 21st-century South, where queer liberation co-exists alongside the stubborn remains of fire and brimstone, it might read something

like this juicy, moving hot mess of a novel.”  
 –Tim Murphy, The Washington Post  
 A searing debut novel centering around a gay-to-straight conversion camp in Mississippi and a man's reckoning with the trauma he faced there as a teen. Camp Levi, nestled in the Mississippi countryside, is designed to “cure” young teenage boys of their budding homosexuality. Will Dillard, a midwestern graduate student, spent a summer at the camp as a teenager, and has since tried to erase the experience from his mind. But when a fellow student alerts him that a slasher movie based on the camp is being released, he is forced to confront his troubled history and possible

culpability in the death of a fellow camper. As past and present are woven together, Will recounts his “rehabilitation,” eventually returning to the abandoned campgrounds to solve the mysteries of that pivotal summer, and to reclaim his story from those who have stolen it. With a masterful confluence of sensibility and place, *How to Survive a Summer* is a searing, unforgettable novel that introduces an exciting new literary voice. “Clear and moving, revealing White’s talent in evoking the complexities of the rural South.”  
 —Publishers Weekly

**A MEMOIR BY  
 GARRARD CONLEY:**



## CONVERSATION STARTERS

Grove Press

“A ravishingly strange and gorgeous book about a dog that’s really about life and everything there is...astonishing.”

—Helen Macdonald, New York Times-bestselling author of *H Is for Hawk* In 1990, poet Eileen Myles chose Rosie from a litter of pit bulls on the street, and their connection instantly became central to the writer’s life and work. During the course of their sixteen years together, Myles was madly devoted to the dog’s well-being, especially in her final days. Starting from the emptiness following Rosie’s death, *Afterglow* launches a heartfelt and fabulist

investigation into the true nature of the bond between pet and pet owner. Through this lens, we witness Myles’s experiences with intimacy and spirituality, celebrity and politics, alcoholism and recovery, fathers and family history, as well as the fantastical myths we spin to get to the heart of grief.

Moving from an imaginary talk show where Rosie is interviewed by Myles’s childhood puppet to a critical reenactment of the night Rosie mated with another pit bull, from lyrical transcriptions of their walks to Rosie’s enlightened narration from the afterlife, *Afterglow* illuminates all that it can mean when we dedicate our existence to a dog. “Myles gets at

something no other dog book I've read has gotten at quite this distinctly: The sense of wordless connection and spiritual expansion you feel when you love and are loved by a creature who's not human...raw and affecting." ?Maureen Corrigan, Fresh Air, NPR

### **LOVE AND RUIN IN THE SHADOWS OF HOLLYWOOD AND THE CLARK EMPIRE**

UNC Press Books  
A dark relationship evolves between a high schooler and her English teacher in this breathtakingly powerful memoir about a young woman who must learn to rewrite her own story. "Have you ever read Lolita?" So begins seventeen-year-old Alisson's metamorphosis from

student to lover and then victim. A lonely and vulnerable high school senior, Alisson finds solace only in her writing—and in a young, charismatic English teacher, Mr. North. Mr. North gives Alisson a copy of *Lolita* to read, telling her it is a beautiful story about love. The book soon becomes the backdrop to a connection that blooms from a simple crush into a forbidden romance. But as Mr. North's hold on her tightens, Alisson is forced to evaluate how much of their narrative is actually a disturbing fiction. In the wake of what becomes a deeply abusive relationship, Alisson is faced again and again with the story of her past, from rereading *Lolita* in college to working with teenage

girls to becoming a professor of creative writing. It is only with that distance and perspective that she understands the ultimate power language has had on her—and how to harness that power to tell her own true story. *Being Lolita* is a stunning coming-of-age memoir that shines a bright light on our shifting perceptions of consent, vulnerability, and power. This is the story of what happens when a young woman realizes her entire narrative must be rewritten—and then takes back the pen to rewrite it.

A Novel Farrar, Straus and Giroux

*The Glass Castle* meets *Educated* When Alice Greczyn's parents felt called by God to

exchange worldly employment for heavenly provision, they followed their faith into homelessness with five children and a cat in tow.

Homeschooled and avowed never to kiss a man until her wedding day, Alice had plans to escape the instability by becoming a missionary nurse—plans that were put on hold with the opening of an unexpected door: the opportunity to be an actress in Hollywood. What followed was a test of faith unlike any she had prepared for, an arranged betrothal she never saw coming, and a psychological shattering that forced her to learn how to survive without the only framework for life she had ever known. This unique coming-of-

age story takes place within a Christian subculture that teaches children to be martyrs and women to be silent. Revelatory, vulnerable, and offering catharsis for your own journey through faith and doubt, *Wayward* is a deeply intelligent memoir of soul-searching—and finding the courage to live in your own truth.

**A MEMOIR; WITH A NEW PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR**

Farrar, Straus and Giroux  
LAMBDA LITERARY AWARD FINALIST  
A transgender reporter's "powerful, profoundly moving" narrative tour through the surprisingly vibrant queer communities sprouting up in red states (New York Times

Book Review), offering a vision of a stronger, more humane America. Ten years ago, Samantha Allen was a suit-and-tie-wearing Mormon missionary. Now she's a GLAAD Award-winning journalist happily married to another woman. A lot in her life has changed, but what hasn't changed is her deep love of Red State America, and of queer people who stay in so-called "flyover country" rather than moving to the liberal coasts. In *Real Queer America*, Allen takes us on a cross-country road-trip stretching all the way from Provo, Utah to the Rio Grande Valley to the Bible Belt to the Deep South. Her motto for the trip: "Something gay every day." Making pit stops at drag shows, political

rallies, and hubs of queer life across the heartland, she introduces us to scores of extraordinary LGBT people working for change, from the first openly transgender mayor in Texas history to the manager of the only queer night club in Bloomington, Indiana, and many more.

Capturing profound cultural shifts underway in unexpected places and revealing a national network of chosen family fighting for a better world, *Real Queer America* is a treasure trove of uplifting stories and a much-needed source of hope and inspiration in these divided times.

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