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For Immediate Release
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From an award-winning journalist comes a vivid and moving portrait of trans and nonbinary teenagers across the country, following their daily triumphs, struggles, and all that encompasses growing up trans in America today

“*American Teenager* is an incredibly important, humane account of the joys and struggles of so many youth currently under attack in our country. I pray this book will one day be seen as a historical work that sheds light in a dark world and that Lang’s message of love and acceptance becomes the story we carry forward into the future.”

—GARRARD CONLEY, author of *Boy Erased: A Memoir*

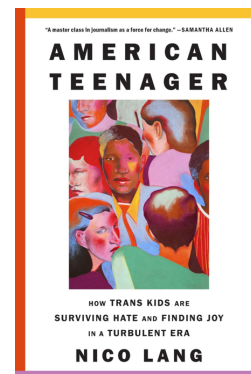
“Lang weaves this broad bleak terrain with warm insights and a clear immediacy of message. Expansive and compassionate.”

—GABE DUNN, *New York Times* bestselling coauthor of *I Hate Everyone But You*

AMERICAN TEENAGER
How Trans Kids Are Surviving Hate and Finding Joy in a Turbulent Era

by Nico Lang

On sale: October 8, 2024



Media coverage tends to sensationalize the fight over how trans kids should be allowed to live, but what *is* incredibly rare are the voices of the people at the heart of this debate: transgender and gender nonconforming kids themselves. For their groundbreaking new book, journalist Nico Lang spent a year traveling the country to document the lives of transgender, nonbinary, and genderfluid teens and their families. Drawing on hundreds of hours of on-the-ground interviews with them and the people in their communities, ***American Teenager: How Trans Kids Are Surviving Hate and Finding Joy in a Turbulent Era* (Abrams Press; October 8, 2024; U.S. \$30.00; Hardcover)** paints a vivid portrait of what it’s actually like to grow up trans today.

From the tip of Florida’s conservative panhandle to vibrant queer communities in California, and from Texas churches to mosques in Illinois, ***American Teenager*** gives readers a window into the lives of Wyatt, Rhydian, Mykah, Clint, Ruby, Augie, Jack, and Kylie, eight teens who, despite what some lawmakers might want us to believe, are truly just kids looking for a brighter future.

“An evocative and authentic story of the love and resilience of transgender teens and their families. Lang’s storytelling is intimate and illuminating, walking a tightrope between the complex narratives of trauma and joy, without ever leaning too heavily into one and discounting the importance of the other. Simultaneously heart-wrenching and heart-warming, *American Teenager* is an absolute must-read.”

—RODRIGO HENG-LEHTINEN, executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality

(Continued)

“With tremendous empathy and the kind of precision that only comes with a years-long commitment to truth-telling, Nico Lang amplifies the dreams, fears, and resistance of transgender teens in the United States at the current moment. Lang proves how rich the discourse is when trans youth take their rightful place at the center of their narratives.”

—**RAQUEL WILLIS, activist, and author of *The Risk It Takes to Bloom: On Life and Liberation***

“As a transgender woman who transitioned during childhood, *American Teenager* resonates deeply with me. With heartfelt empathy, Nico Lang uncovers the human stories overshadowed by political rhetoric, showcasing the struggles and resilience of transgender youth amid adversity while simultaneously amplifying their voices, which are all too often silenced. In a society where ignorance and bigotry seek to vilify the most vulnerable among us, Lang’s sincere portrayal pulls back the curtain to unveil remarkable youth who simply want to be kids . . . Lang sheds light on their heartwarming journeys, intense challenges, life-changing moments, and the true meaning of unconditional love.”

—**JAZZ JENNINGS, author of *Being Jazz: My Life as a (Transgender) Teen***

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Nico Lang (they/them) is a nonbinary award-winning journalist with over a decade of experience covering the transgender community’s fight for equality. Their work has appeared in major publications, including *Rolling Stone*, *Esquire*, *The New York Times*, *Vox*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Salon*, *Harper’s Bazaar*, *Time*, *The Washington Post*, and the *Los Angeles Times*. Lang is the creator of Queer News Daily and previously served as the deputy editor for *Out* magazine, the news editor for *Them*, the LGBTQ+ correspondent for *VICE*, and the editor and cofounder of the literary journal *In Our Words*. Their industry-leading

contributions to queer media have resulted in a GLAAD Media Award, 10 awards from the National Association of LGBTQ Journalists (NLGJA), and three awards from the Los Angeles Press Club, including the 2023 Online Journalist of the Year. Lang is also the first-ever recipient of the Visibility Award from the Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund (TLDEF), an honor created to recognize their impactful contributions to reporting on the lives of LGBTQ+ people.

ABOUT THE BOOK

American Teenager

How Trans Kids Are Surviving Hate and Finding Joy in a Turbulent Era

by Nico Lang

Abrams Press / October 8, 2024

U.S. \$30.00 / CAN \$38.00

Hardcover with jacket / 272 pages / 6 x 9"

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Also available as an e-book



ABRAMS

Founded in 1949, ABRAMS was the first company in the United States to specialize in publishing art and illustrated books. The company continues to publish critically acclaimed and bestselling works in the areas of art, photography, cooking, craft, comics, interior and garden design, entertainment, fashion, and popular culture as well as narrative non-fiction and new works of fiction for adults; children’s books ranging from middle grade to young adult fiction to picture books to board books. ABRAMS creates and distributes brilliantly designed books with the highest production values under the following imprints:

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Additional Praise for *American Teenager*:

“A master class in journalism as a force for change. Nico Lang cuts through the political ping-pong over transgender rights to surface the human stories that too often go ignored. Lang’s lucid and clear-eyed account of their lives offers an essential corrective, reminding us that there’s nothing more American than the freedom to be yourself.”

—**SAMANTHA ALLEN, author of *Real Queer America***

“In their powerful new book, *American Teenager*, Nico Lang shares the very raw, very real experiences of trans youth and their families at a moment in time when so much and so many things are conspiring against them. In doing so, Lang reminds us all of our shared humanity—and most especially, our capacity to find joy even in the hardest of times. I am grateful for this excellent reporting, which will absolutely help soften hearts, change minds, and create a lasting difference.” —**BRIAN K. BOND, CEO, PFLAG National**

“With humor and compassion, Lang shows trans teenagers as they really are: kids trying their best, day by day, to grow into their truest selves and fullest potential. The various chapters are by turns deep, silly, introspective, sweet, and smart, just like teens themselves.” —**MAIA KOBABE, author of *Gender Queer: A Memoir***

“*American Teenager* is an incredibly important, humane account of the joys and struggles of so many youth currently under attack in our country. I pray this book will one day be seen as a historical work that sheds light in a dark world and that Lang’s message of love and acceptance becomes the story we carry forward into the future.”

—**GARRARD CONLEY, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Boy Erased: A Memoir***

“Nico Lang’s *American Teenager* is an urgently necessary book, bringing the voices of trans teens (and their families) to the forefront of a conversation that has been about them and around them, but which has all too often ignored their actual words and experiences. By allowing trans teens to tell their stories themselves, with all the messiness and complications that come with being teenagers, Lang has given them—and by extension, all of us—a great gift.”

—**HUGH RYAN, award-winning author of *When Brooklyn Was Queer***

“Nico Lang’s *American Teenager* provides a heartwarming and honest look into the real lives of young trans people and their loved ones as they navigate growing up in the US today. . . . What pervades all their stories however is the simple reality that these young people are growing up amid a terrifying rise of anti-trans bigotry—where new laws and policies create real barriers to their abilities to thrive. *American Teenager* provides an intimate window into the stories that the anti-trans hate machine doesn’t want you to hear: the real experiences of trans kids and their families.”

—**IMARA JONES, CEO, TransLash Media**

“*American Teenager* provides a beautiful—often uplifting, occasionally heart-wrenching—window into the lives of contemporary trans kids and their families as they navigate their teen years amid ever-increasing anti-trans legislation and prejudice. Tune out the politicians and pundits, and pick up this book if you actually want to learn more about trans kids.”

—**JULIA SERANO, author of *Whipping Girl: A Transsexual Woman on Sexism and the Scapegoating of Femininity***

“*American Teenager* speaks profound truths about the modern experiences of trans youth and their journeys toward becoming their true selves. Lang has crafted a vivid portrait of the environments and challenges that trans teenagers navigate daily. Helping readers understand that these kids just want to be kids. They long for the simple pleasures of youth—friendship, acceptance, and the freedom to explore their identities without fear or judgment. I hope everyone picks up *American Teenager* to gain a better understanding of these young lives, beyond the hate and prejudice that too often cloud public perception. This book is not just a collection of stories; it is a call to recognize and celebrate the humanity in all of us.”

—**MAXWELL POTH, photographer, and author of *Young Queer America***



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Dear Reader,

Nico Lang's *American Teenager* was the rare book I knew I wanted to publish from the moment I finished reading—it was thought-provoking and engaging, but also the sort of book I believe can spark real and lasting change.

There is no shortage of media coverage sensationalizing the fight over how trans kids should be allowed to live, but what is incredibly rare in this conversation are the voices of those at the heart of this debate: transgender and gender non-conforming youth themselves. To write their groundbreaking book, award-winning journalist Nico Lang spent a year shadowing seven families of trans and gender non-confirming teens across the country. Drawing on hundreds of hours of interviews with young people, their families, and the members of their diverse communities, Lang paints a stunning portrait of what it means to be a trans kid in the US today.

As their identities and rights are hotly disputed, Lang provides an opportunity for trans teens to lend their perspectives. In reporting on the oft-challenging lives they lead, Lang also finds moments of joy, triumph, and the quotidian experiences that remind us that, transgender or otherwise, these are just kids on the precipice of adulthood, doing their best to forge a place in our ever-changing world. Yet, it's much easier to paint the transgender community as a boogeyman when six out of ten Americans reportedly don't know any transgender or gender non-conforming people and don't see the very real impact of living with near-constant discrimination. Our hope is that *American Teenager* will meaningfully shift perspectives and offer a window into the lives of the real people at the center of this ongoing debate.

I hope you'll be as invigorated and moved by this book as I was. Now, I leave you in Nico Lang's hands, and with the stories of these eight remarkable young people: Wyatt, Rhydian, Mykah, Ruby, Clint, Augie, Jack, and Kylie.

Best wishes,

ZACK KNOLL

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Praise from readers of *American Teenager*

“*American Teenager* is a celebration of the raw, real, terrifying, beautiful journey of gender expansive youth in today’s America. It is not only a joy to read, it is an honor. Reading about other families made me feel less alone. Ours is a complicated life, trying to shield our son, and let him be a teenager at the same time. *American Teenager* is a behind the scenes, all access pass to real life. It’s a peek behind the curtain for those that wish to gain perspective.”

—**Amanda, Parent of Trans Teen**

“It is almost impossible to stop thinking about these kiddos and families involved. I cried tears of joy, tears of sorrow, tears of dismay, but mainly tears of hope. *American Teenager* is powerful, a laborious love, and should be required reading for those that doubt the validity of our children and families.”

—**Chelsa, Parent of Trans Teen**

“I saw myself, and our family’s story, in so many of the stories. I learned things about my own children through reading the other stories, and found so many relatable aspects that let me know we are not alone. I’m so excited for this book to be out in the world and to be able to share it with so many folks I know. The world needs this book.”

—**Danielle, Parent of Trans Teen**

“The ending of this book is perfect, and it made me cry. I am still crying. Thank you so much for writing this labor of love. This book is very much needed, and I’m so thankful to see something like this centering trans kids and their voices. It has given me a lot of hope.”

—**Dev, Trans Activist**



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“This book is full of honest and palpable storytelling that welcomed me into these families and fixed me a plate, saying, ‘Why don’t you sit down and stay awhile? There’s plenty to share.’ It was a pleasure to read this compelling page-turner about the heroes in our own homes.”

—**Farah, Trans Ally**

“I was prepared for strong emotions; I wasn’t prepared for one of those emotions to be hope. Thank you for presenting these kids and their families as the complex, multilayered, sometimes unlikable, sometimes awe-inspiring people that they are. Too many people flinch from reality and that means we have a glossy too-fake veneer in our image of humanity; your willingness to tell the truth of kids you’re advocating for is refreshing. You did our stories justice.”

—**Khai, Trans Writer and Activist**

“I spent the first half of my life entrenched in evangelical, rhetorical, supremacist judgment. I’ve spent the second half in jaw-dropped wonder at the courage, self-knowledge, and creativity of the queer people I know who choose to live fully in the image of any god I’d want to honor. *American Teenager*, in the raw and real truth of teenagers, captures this gritty hope, frustrated becoming, and full-hearted belief that maybe, just maybe, the kids are alright.”

—**Natalie, Parent and LGBTQ+ Advocate**

“As a queer woman who lived similar experiences growing up in a conservative military home in the Midwest: Wow. Thank you to those who shared their stories. We are more than statistics. Behind each and every one of those numbers, there is a real person. Someone who has vulnerably shared their pains and joys in this book. Thank you.”

—**Sheena, LGBTQ+ Advocate**



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“Nico’s work lets us quietly in, reliving all the most tender and tempestuous moments of teenage self-discovery, in the backdrop of an existential crisis created by those who deem themselves worthy of parenting another’s child. Nonetheless, this book is a pleasure to read. Always self-effacing, Nico’s work gives voice to those we need to hear from most: our nation’s children.”

—**Stefanie, Parent and Trans Ally**

“American Teenager is such an important work for both current times and historically. I hope that many people unfamiliar with transgender people and their families will read this and see the love, hope, and courage they have. I hope it will bring about compassion and understanding. And I hope that this compassion will lead to a day when trans people will be accepted as they should, that being trans would be a non-issue, and that people will read this book and be horrified at all that trans people and their affirming families had to go through and amazed at the strength of the people written about in this book.”

—**Tiffney, Parent of Trans Teen**

A New Book About Transgender Teenagers Seeks to Uplift Their Stories (Exclusive)

In their new book ‘American Teenager,’ journalist Nico Lang documents the lives of transgender, nonbinary and genderfluid teenagers across the U.S.

By [Carly Tagen-Dye](#)

Published on March 25, 2024 10:00AM EDT



AMERICAN TEENAGER



HOW TRANS KIDS ARE
SURVIVING HATE AND FINDING JOY
IN A TURBULENT ERA

NICO LANG

Nico Lang and the cover of 'American Teenager'. PHOTO:

CHRISTIAN ROGERS; ELI MOCK/PACE TAYLOR

A new book about transgender teenagers aims to share their stories in their own voices.

Award-winning journalist Nico Lang has shared the cover of their new book, [American Teenager](#), exclusively with PEOPLE. The book, which details the lived experiences of transgender, nonbinary and genderfluid youth across the U.S., is forthcoming this fall from Abrams Books.

“American Teenager was the book that I needed to see in the world: One that privileges the complexities of joy and gives a platform to those who desperately need it during a dark, difficult time,” Lang tells PEOPLE.

Lang, the founder of [Queer News Daily](#), has covered LGBTQ+ issues as a journalist for years. Throughout their career as a reporter, Lang has worked with the families of transgender youth, and wanted to document their stories, especially with the rise of anti-LGBTQ+ legislation across the United States.

“This year alone, more than 500 bills seeking to take away [basic protections for LGBTQ+ people](#) have been introduced across the U.S., and trans youth have been made the scapegoat of a far-right campaign to chip away at equality,” Lang says. “Amid that ongoing crusade, my goal was to give trans teens the opportunity, for once, to drive the conversation about their lives.”

Lang spent a year traveling across the country to document the daily lives of the book’s subjects and their families. The author went to a variety of places on that journey, from conservative areas of Florida to LGBTQ+ communities in California, per the book’s description, seeking to uplift the young voices that often go unheard.

“As the national debate over trans youth continues—seemingly without end—too few people have bothered to ask these kids for their opinions, whether about their gender, their right to participate in public life or even what they think about anything at all,” Lang says.

While Lang was initially interested in the teenagers’ thoughts on LGBTQ+ and trans-rights issues, other topics proved to be just as important.

“Some of my favorite conversations documented in this book concerned not the fragile state of LGBTQ+ rights but topics ranging from the work of Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard and whether the actor [Michael Cera](#) is cute,” Lang says.

Lang hopes the book provides a place for transgender teenagers to be who they are.

“What so many people who wish to wipe out the very existence of trans youth forget is that they aren’t boogeymen or political talking points,” the author says. “They are just kids, trying to figure out who they’re taking to prom this year and finish their homework in time to hang out with their friends. They’re still figuring it all out, and in *American Teenager*, I wanted to create a space where that’s not only permitted but celebrated.”

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American Teenager will be published on Oct. 8 and is now available for pre-order.



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photo credit: CHRISTIAN ROGERS

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Cover Art by Pace Taylor

"A master class in journalism as a force for change." —SAMANTHA ALLEN

AMERICAN TEENAGER



HOW TRANS KIDS ARE
SURVIVING HATE AND FINDING JOY
IN A TURBULENT ERA

NICO LANG

Pace Taylor (b. 1992) is an artist emotionally preoccupied with intimacy and who we choose to build it with. Their work is often quiet, very queer, and persistently vulnerable. They received their BFA in Digital Arts from the University of Oregon (2015) and have since shown their work internationally, including at Nationale (Portland, OR), Double V Gallery (Paris, FR), and La Loma Projects (Los Angeles, CA). They have participated in the Ford Family Foundation's Golden Spot Residency at Caldera, Tropical Contemporary's Transformation Residency, Centrum's Emerging Artist Residency, and received an Individual Artist Fellowship from the Oregon Arts Commission in 2022. Most recently, they were awarded the Don Bachardy Fellowship by The Christopher Isherwood Foundation to study at the Royal Drawing School of London. They live in Portland, OR.