

# KATE BORNSTEIN

b. March 15, 1948

## TRANSGENDER ACTIVIST & AUTHOR

**Bornstein's  
groundbreaking  
books challenge  
preconceptions about  
gender binaries.**

*“Do whatever it takes to make your life more worth living, just don’t be mean.”*

Kate (née Albert) Bornstein is an internationally renowned American transgender performer, author, theorist and activist. Her acting portfolio comprises performance art, theater, television and film. Her award-winning books have been translated into five languages and are studied in schools and universities worldwide.

Born in Neptune City, New Jersey, into a conservative middle-class Jewish family, Bornstein attended Brown University and became the first person to graduate with a degree in theater arts. Although Bornstein transitioned to female and underwent sex reassignment surgery in 1986, she now identifies as nonbinary and is attracted to women.

In Bornstein's early career, she wrote art reviews for San Francisco's LGBT newspaper, The Bay Area Reporter. She subsequently became a prolific performer, creating one-person shows, performance art and theater productions. In 1989, at the age of 41, she created “Hidden: A Gender,” a theater production exploring the parallels between her own life and the life of Herculine Barbin, an intersex person.

Bornstein's groundbreaking books challenge preconceptions about gender binaries and help advance understanding of LGBT issues. Her 2009 book, “Hello, Cruel World: 101 Alternatives to Suicide for Teens, Freaks and Other Outlaws,” received a Stonewall Children's and Young Adult Literature Award. Her 2013 book, “My New Gender Workbook: A Step-by-Step Guide to Achieving World Peace Through Gender Anarchy and Sex Positivity,” won a 2014 Rainbow Project Book List award from the American Library Association. In 2015 Lambda Literary presented her with its Pioneer Award.

Bornstein appeared as a regular cast member on “I Am Cait,” the E! reality television program featuring Caitlyn Jenner, and has provided commentary on news-and-opinion programs, such as MSNBC's Melissa Harris-Perry show. She is the subject of the acclaimed 2014 documentary “Kate Bornstein Is a Queer and Pleasant Danger,” produced by Sam Feder. The Advocate magazine named it one of the best LGBT documentaries of the year, and it received the James Aronson Award for Social Justice Journalism.

Bornstein appeared the 2017 film “Saturday Church,” and in 2018 she made her Broadway debut in “Straight White Men.”

A dedicated activist, Bornstein travels extensively giving lectures and workshops at colleges and other venues. She recently started personal gender-identity counseling she calls Heart to Heart Coaching With Kate. The New York City Council has twice honored her for outstanding citizenship for her advocacy for marginalized and suicide-prone youth.

Bornstein lives in Manhattan with her partner, Barbara Carrellas, an artist and sex educator.



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