

# JENNIFER FINNEY BOYLAN

b. June 22, 1958

## AUTHOR & TRANSGENDER ACTIVIST

*“The more we feel compelled to keep explaining ourselves, the less like others we become.”*

**She is an author and transgender activist most famous for her best-selling memoir.**

Jennifer Finney Boylan is a transgender author and activist, celebrated for her best-selling memoir, her commentaries in *The New York Times* and her public advocacy.

Born male in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, Boylan attended The Haverford School, a suburban Philadelphia all-boys preparatory school. She graduated in 1976 and received her bachelor's degree from Wesleyan University and her master's degree in English from Johns Hopkins University.

In 1988 Boylan began teaching at Colby College in Maine. She was named Professor of the Year in 2000. Boylan left Colby in 2014 to accept a professorship in English at Barnard College of Columbia University, where she was named the inaugural Anna Quindlen Writer in Residence.

Although Boylan dreamed of being a girl and secretly dressed in women's clothing after college, she did not come out as trans until her 40s. She feared marginalization, losing her family and even losing her life. As a man, Boylan married in 1988, but after 10 years, could no longer continue the façade. Boylan tearfully told her wife, Deirdre, and began to transition. The couple remained married.

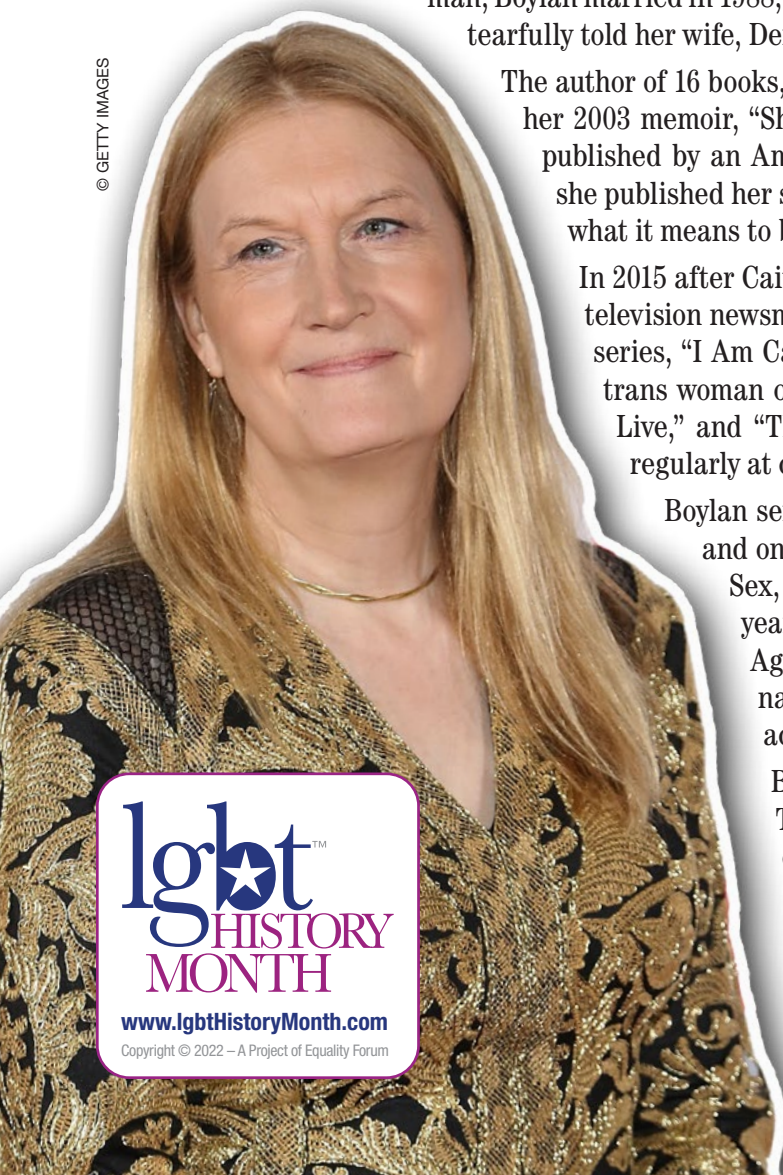
The author of 16 books, including novels and short stories, Boylan is most famous for her 2003 memoir, *“She's Not There: A Life in Two Genders.”* It was the first book published by an American transgender author to become a best seller. In 2020 she published her second memoir, *“Good Boy: My Life in 7 Dogs,”* which explores what it means to be a woman with a boyhood.

In 2015 after Caitlyn Jenner came out as transgender, Boylan appeared on the television newsmagazine *“20/20”* and became a regular on Jenner's reality TV series, *“I Am Cait.”* Boylan has discussed her experiences and activism as a trans woman on programs such as *“The Oprah Winfrey Show,”* *“Larry King Live,”* and *“The Today Show,”* and on National Public Radio. She speaks regularly at colleges and universities, including Harvard and Yale.

Boylan serves on the policy advisory board of Gender Rights Maryland and on the board of trustees of the Kinsey Institute for Research on Sex, Gender, and Reproduction. Previously, she served for seven years on the Board of Directors of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD). In 2020 *Queerty* magazine named her one of 50 heroes “leading the nation toward equality, acceptance and dignity for all people.”

Boylan and Deirdre have been married for more than 30 years. They have two children. Boylan's latest novel, *“Mad Honey,”* co-written with the *New York Times* best-selling author Jodi Picoult, was released in October 2022.

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