



# Johnson County Library

## *Coming of Age Memoirs*

### **BIO Angelou, M.**

Angelou, Maya. **I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings**

The critically acclaimed poet recalls the anguish of her childhood in Arkansas and her adolescence in northern slums.

### **BIO Benjamin, D.**

Benjamin, David. **The Life and Times of the Last Kid Picked**

An evocative celebration of childhood offers the author's heartwarming and entertaining account of growing up during the 1950s in the small town of Tomah, Wisconsin.

### **BIO Bridge, A.**

Bridge, Andrew. **Hope's Boy**

A boy with a schizophrenic mother is placed in the foster-care system, but he beats the odds through high academic achievement.

### **BIO Bryson, B.**

Bryson, Bill. **The Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid**

A vivid, nostalgic and utterly hilarious memoir of growing up in the middle of the United States in the middle of the last century.

### **BIO Burroughs, A.**

Burroughs, Augusten. **Running with Scissors**

The author describes the bizarre years after his adoption by his mother's psychiatrist, during which he witnessed such misadventures as a fake suicide attempt and front-lawn sleepovers.

### **BIO Conway, J.**

Conway, Jill Ker. **The Road from Coorain**

A woman describes growing up on an Australian ranch, coping with her father's death and her mother's depression, her intellectual awakening at the university, and her path to becoming the first woman president of Smith College.

### **BIO Fisher, A.**

Fisher, Antwone Quenton. **Finding Fish**

Born in prison to a single mother and raised as a ward of Cleveland's foster care system, the author relates how he resisted the lure of drugs and crime to build a successful life for himself.

**BIO Flynn, L.**

Flynn, Laura. **Swallow the Ocean**

Traces the author's coming of age under the shadow of her mother's paranoid schizophrenia.

**BIO Frank, A.**

Frank, Anne. **Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl**

A young girl's journal records her family's struggles during two years of hiding from the Nazis in war-torn Holland.

**BIO Grogan, J.**

Grogan, John. **The Longest Trip Home**

The author's account of growing up in a devout Catholic family, his struggle to conform to parental expectations, and what it means to break away and to find one's way home again.

**BIO Gulley, P.**

Gulley, Philip. **I Love You, Miss Huddleston, and Other Inappropriate Longings of My Indiana Childhood**

A Quaker pastor recounts his awkward adolescence and unwavering crush on his sixth-grade teacher, a fixation for which he fruitlessly struggled to avoid getting promoted to junior high.

**BIO Hickam, H.**

Hickam, Homer H. **Rocket Boys**

The author traces his boyhood enthusiasm for rockets that eventually led to a career at NASA, describing how he built model rockets in the family garage in West Virginia.

**BIO Karr, M.**

Karr, Mary. **The Liar's Club**

The poet describes her early life in Port Arthur, Texas, surrounded by alcoholism, financial difficulties, and a family in denial.

**BIO Kimmel, H.**

Kimmel, Haven. **A Girl Named Zippy: Growing Up Small in Mooreland, Indiana**

This entertaining memoir chronicles growing up in a small town in America's heartland, offering colorful portraits of her family and her vivid encounters with the baffling complexities of the adult world, romance, and small-town life during the 1960s and 1970s.

**BIO McCourt, F.**

McCourt, Frank. **Angela's Ashes**

In this luminous, Pulitzer Prize winning memoir McCourt recounts his childhood in Depression-era Brooklyn as the child of Irish immigrants who decide to return to worse poverty in Ireland when his infant sister dies.

**BIO Moehringer, J.**

**Moehringer, J. R. *The Tender Bar***

The author describes growing up with a single mother and how he received valuable life lessons and friendship from an assortment of characters who provided him with a kind of fatherhood by committee at the neighborhood bar.

**BIO Obama, B.**

Obama, Barack. ***Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance***

In this lyrical, unsentimental, and compelling memoir, President Obama, the son of a black African father and a white American mother searches for a workable meaning to his life as a black American.

**BIO Santiago, E.**

Santiago, Esmeralda. ***Almost a Woman***

Follows the author from the Brooklyn barrios to Harvard as she overcomes an overprotective mother, siblings who scoff at her attempts to learn "Eastern Standard English," and her search for cultural identity.

**BIO Stringer, L.**

Stringer, Lee. ***Sleepaway School: Stories from a Boy's Life***

Chronicles the author's turbulent childhood as he struggles with anger and rejection after being placed in foster care and then sent for three years to a sleepaway school for at-risk children.

**BIO Wolff, M.**

Wolff, Mishna. ***I'm Down***

Traces the author's experiences of growing up with a white father who believed himself to be African-American, describing her struggles with his embodiment of black stereotypes and the ways in which his efforts to indoctrinate his daughter into black culture caused her to be rejected by her black and white peers.

**BIO Wolff, T.**

Wolff, Tobias. ***This Boy's Life***

The author chronicles the tumultuous events of his early life, discussing his parents' divorce, the nomadic wanderings with his mother, and the strange and eventful process of growing up.

**GRAPHIC FICTION B.**

B., David. ***Epileptic***

Visually recounts the story of the author's childhood in the 1960s and 1970s as his family experiments with acupuncture, spiritualism, and macrobiotic diets in search of a cure for his brother's epilepsy.

**GRAPHIC FICTION Bechdel**

Bechdel, Alison. ***Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic***

Bechdel, a lesbian, charts her fraught relationship with her closeted homosexual father in a work of amazing subtlety and power, written with controlled force and enlivened with humor, rich literary allusion, and heartbreaking detail.

**GRAPHIC FICTION Satrapi**

Satrapi, Marjane. **Persepolis**

The great-granddaughter of Iran's last emperor and the daughter of ardent Marxists describes growing up in Tehran in a country plagued by political upheaval and vast contradictions between public and private life.

**GRAPHIC FICTION Thompson**

Thompson, Craig. **Blankets**

Chronicles the sibling rivalry of two brothers growing up in the isolated country, the budding romance of two coming-of-age lovers, and the emotional conflict engendered by the author's fundamentalist upbringing.

**306.874 Howey**

Howey, Noelle. **Dress Codes: Of Three Girlhoods—My Mother's, My Father's, and Mine**

The daughter of a father with transgender issues discusses her struggles to win his love despite his brusqueness, her relationships with her tomboy mother and conservative grandmother, and how she reacted after learning at fourteen that her father liked to wear women's clothing.

**362.82 Walls**

Walls, Jeannette. **The Glass Castle**

The child of an alcoholic father and an eccentric artist mother discusses her family's nomadic upbringing, during which she and her siblings fended for themselves while their parents outmaneuvered bill collectors and the authorities.

**977.761 Kalish**

Kalish, Mildred Armstrong. **Little Heathens: Hard Times and High Spirits on an Iowa Farm During the Great Depression**

A schoolteacher describes growing up on an Iowa farm during the Great Depression, a time of endless work, resourcefulness, no tolerance for idleness or waste, family, and kinship.

**YA BIO Crutcher, C.**

Crutcher, Chris. **King of the Mild Frontier: An Ill-Advised Autobiography**

Honest, hilarious, and absolutely unforgettable, the award-winning author chronicles his often complicated journey to adulthood that involves many disasters.

**J BIO Dahl, R.**

Dahl, Roald. **Boy: Tales of Childhood**

Presents humorous anecdotes from the author's childhood which includes summer vacations in Norway and an English boarding school.

*Can't locate your choice on the shelf? Please ask library staff to place a hold for you. BC 10/2006; updated 7/2010*

[www.jocolibrary.org/findagoodbook](http://www.jocolibrary.org/findagoodbook)