

When I Knew



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Synopsis

When I Knew is a collection of smart, hilarious, and often poignant stories about that revelation for all gay men and women: when they first knew. In this gorgeously illustrated, cleverly designed, and colorful book, acclaimed fashion and celebrity photographer Robert Trachtenberg brings humor and style to the EUREKA! moments of more than eighty contributors, including B. D. Wong, Arthur Laurents, Simon Doonan, Stephen Fry, Marc Shaiman, Michael Musto, and more. Also mixed in are tales about when parents knew and when everyone else knew, as well as laugh-out-loud coming-out stories. Readers will fall in love with these anecdotes, from the seven-year-old who looked under the television set to sneak a peek under Tarzan's loincloth, to the inquisitive grandmother who asked her grandson, "You don't like a girl to get married? You prefer a boy?", to the courageous field trip participant who passed up the universal favorite burger-and-fry combo in favor of the fruit plate with cottage cheese. Filled with original art by New Yorker illustrator Tom Bachtell, historical images, and personal photographs from the contributors, When I Knew is a vibrant and witty celebration of that sometimes glorious, sometimes painful, but always captivating moment when everything suddenly makes sense.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Many of us can remember our first kiss, our first day of school, even our first memories. But what about the instant you knew you were gay? In a sleek softbound coffee table book titled When I Knew, Robert Trachtenberg has assembled a brilliant collection of anecdotes and short tales

surrounding this very topic. From actor B.D. Wong to stage and screen composer Mark Shaiman (Hairspray), and from comics to agents and producers, dozens of contributors offer their very personal tales, resulting in both a laugh-out-loud and insightful work. While nearly all of the contributors here are in the entertainment and media industries, the stories are poignant and spare, and are accompanied by the masterful and complimentary original artwork of New Yorker illustrator Tom Bachtell. Readers will recognize names such as Billy Porter, Chip Kidd, Stephen Fry, Marga Gomez, Michael Shulman, Steve Kmetko, and Lypsynka alias John Epperson. The tales that these and others contribute offer up a naked vulnerability that includes freedom, fear, and revelation. Exposed is a certain liberation—either by intent or accident—that is comedic and quietly profound, as if the point of this book was to induce a trip down the memory lane of self-discovery, a bittersweet time in each of our histories that exposed our naivete, our awkwardness, and our determination to be ourselves, sometimes despite ourselves. Also included are stories about when parents knew, when everyone else knew, and a few coming out stories.

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