

GERALDINE

ANDREA THOMPSON

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YEAR LEVEL: Y10–Y12

ABOUT THE BOOK

The story of a woman who changes the world that wants to change her. Geraldine is born with an adventurer's heart. Whether it's escaping from boarding school in Rhodesia, or buying hormones from the local speed dealer in Weston-super-Mare, Geraldine is open to all the world has to offer – even if the world doesn't quite know what to make of her.

Arriving in Australia as an adolescent, Geraldine finds solace and self-discovery through music. As she grows into a woman, she not only inspires others but also learns to be accepted for who she truly is.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andrea Thompson is a music journalist, artist manager and promoter. Born in the north of England in the Swinging Sixties, Andrea has worked through a range of jobs including trades assistant in the north-west of Western Australia, factory worker, teacher and public servant, but her one constant is writing. Whenever the world makes her doubt herself, Andrea writes her way through the uncertainty. *Geraldine* began as a memoir. When Andrea discovered by accident that every other gender-diverse person in the world was also writing a memoir, she switched her focus and began writing for a central character who taught her the value and peace of the ordinary, and to never give up the fight.

THEMES

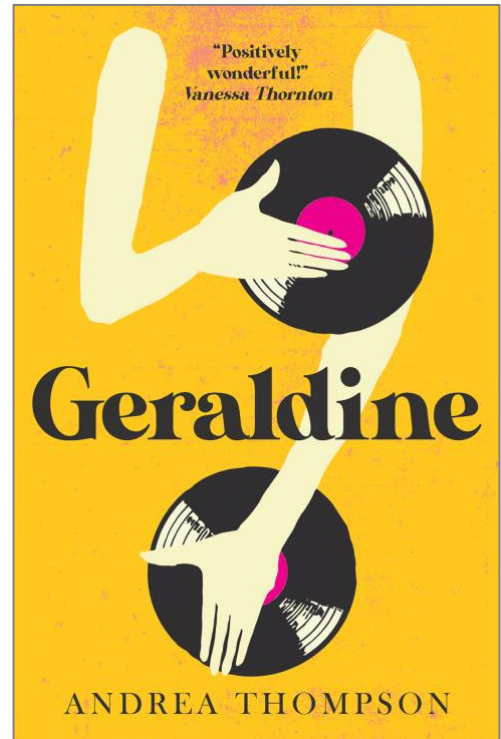
- Diversity
- Gender and sexuality
- LGBTQIA+
- Multiculturalism
- Music / The Arts

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

- Y10–12 English
- Y10–12 Humanities and social sciences

USEFUL WEBSITES

- Author's Instagram: [instagram.com/andreathompsonauthor](https://www.instagram.com/andreathompsonauthor)
- Author's Facebook: [facebook.com/andreathompsonauthor](https://www.facebook.com/andreathompsonauthor)



CLASSROOM IDEAS

Discussion questions

1. The cover of the book features a colourful illustration implying a naked woman is covering parts of her body with records. What impression does the cover give you of the themes and tone of the book?
2. As a young child, Geraldine becomes ill with diphtheria and is saved by a strange, furry animal named Bob. Bob revisits her later in life at key moments. What do you think this animal is? Is it death, a protector or an omen?
3. Young Geraldine is wise beyond her years with a love of learning, in contrast to her uncurious family. How has Andrea Thompson created Geraldine as a character that many readers will recognise themselves in?
4. Create a Sturmer family tree diagram, describing the relationship between Geraldine and each family member.
5. Describe how Geraldine's relationship to music grows and changes over the course of the book.
6. As a teenager, Geraldine buys a women's shirt and a jacket at the markets for the Jam show. How does this seemingly small act reflect her journey toward affirming her gender?
7. Geraldine wrote the advertisement for her brother's band, The Desk, using her affirmed name: **'For bookings call Geraldine 416255'** (p. 156). Harry then notices and asks, **'Do I call you our Geraldine from now on then, our kid?'** (p. 157) How does Harry's acceptance and their relationship contribute to Geraldine's personal growth?
8. Geraldine's family moves internationally with little to no notice. In Chapter 53, Geraldine remarks that her idea of home had evolved into something more complex. How does this instability impact Geraldine and the connections she makes with others, including her partners Lucas, Nomes and Steph?
9. In the final lines of the novel, Geraldine remarks, **'We can just be a pair of ordinary women the rest of our lives'** (p. 344). What does ordinary mean for her?
10. *Geraldine* and the author's acknowledgements feature key legislation and rights history for trans and gender diverse. Create a timeline of these dates. This could be done digitally using programs like Padlet or Canva.
11. *Geraldine* features references and cameos of key figures of the British and Australian music scene in the 70s, 80s and 90s. Research some of these figures further.



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