



## A4: Transgender Parenting Case Study

**Type of Exercise:** classroom/workshop discussion

**Level:** advanced

**Length of time:** 30 minutes

**Resources needed:** Optional handout of case

**Instructions:** Share the following news story. Students are likely to have heard about this family in the media coverage of it and likely have strong opinions.

**Case:** Thomas Beatie: The Pregnant Man. From *The Advocate*, July 3, 2008 (Also see [news of second pregnancy](#))

Portland, OR: The transgender man who made worldwide headlines dubbed as "The Pregnant Man," Thomas Beatie just became a father to the baby girl he carried, according to ABC News. A source told ABC News the birth was natural, despite earlier reports Beatie had gone in for a scheduled C-section.

The baby was born at a hospital in Bend, Oregon. Beatie, a female to male trans man, formerly named Tracy Lagondino, told *The Advocate* this March that he became pregnant and carried the child since his wife Nancy, who'd had a hysterectomy, could no longer have children. A firestorm of media followed *The Advocate's* breaking news about the then six-month pregnant Beatie, including Beatie and his wife making a highly-publicized appearance on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*.

In a letter to *The Advocate* that ran in late March, Beatie wrote, "I am transgender, legally male, and legally married to Nancy. Unlike those in same-sex marriages, domestic partnerships, or civil unions, Nancy and I are afforded the more than 1,100 federal rights of marriage. Sterilization is not a requirement for sex reassignment, so I decided to have chest reconstruction and testosterone therapy but kept my reproductive rights. Wanting to have a biological child is neither a male nor female desire, but a human desire."

Beatie, who has broken down barriers and perceptions about transgender people, as well as sparked outrage among conservatives, also told *The Advocate*, "Our situation sparks legal, political, and social unknowns. We have only begun experiencing opposition from people who are upset by our situation. Doctors have discriminated against us, turning us away due to their religious beliefs. Health care professionals have refused to call me by a male pronoun or recognize Nancy as my wife. Receptionists have laughed at us. Friends and family have been unsupportive; most of Nancy's family



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doesn't even know I'm transgender." But despite the discrimination he, Nancy and her two daughters from a previous relationship have faced, Beatie ultimately wrote, "How does it feel to be a pregnant man? Incredible."

**Suggested Discussion Questions:**

- What does this case say about our definitions of mother and father?
- Does parenting need to be gendered?
- If Thomas Beatie had received prenatal care or delivered the baby in your agency or unit, how do you think other staff members might have reacted? How would you have felt?



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