PDF | Becoming Nicole: The Transformation of an American Family

by Amy Ellis Nutt
NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • The inspiring true story of a transgender girl, her identical twin brother, and an ordinary American family’s extraordinary journey to understand, nurture, and celebrate the uniqueness in us all, from the Pulitzer Prize-winning science reporter for The Washington Post

Named One of the Ten Best Books of the Year by People One of the Best Books of the Year by The New York Times Book Review and Men’s Journal • A Stonewall Honor Book in Nonfiction • Finalist for the Lambda Literary Award for Transgender Nonfiction

When Wayne and Kelly Maines adopted identical twin boys, they thought their lives were complete. But it wasn’t long before they noticed a marked difference between Jonas and his brother, Wyatt. Jonas preferred sports and trucks and many of the things little boys were “supposed” to like; but Wyatt liked princess dolls and dress-up and playing Little Mermaid. By the time the twins were toddlers, confusion over Wyatt’s insistence that he was female began to tear the family apart. In the years that followed, the Maineses came to question their long-held views on gender and identity, to accept and embrace Wyatt’s transition to Nicole, and to undergo an emotionally wrenching transformation of their own that would change all their lives forever.

Becoming Nicole chronicles a journey that could have destroyed a family but instead brought it closer together. It’s the story of a mother whose instincts told her that her child needed love and acceptance, not ostracism and disapproval; of a Republican, Air Force veteran father who overcame his deepest fears to become a vocal advocate for trans rights; of a loving brother who bravely stuck up for his twin sister; and of a town forced to confront its
prejudices, a school compelled to rewrite its rules, and a courageous community of transgender activists determined to make their voices heard. Ultimately, *Becoming Nicole* is the story of an extraordinary girl who fought for the right to be herself.

Granted wide-ranging access to personal diaries, home videos, clinical journals, legal documents, medical records, and the Maineses themselves, Amy Ellis Nutt spent almost four years reporting this immersive account of an American family confronting an issue that is at the center of today’s cultural debate. *Becoming Nicole* will resonate with anyone who’s ever raised a child, felt at odds with society’s conventions and norms, or had to embrace life when it plays out unexpectedly. It’s a story of standing up for your beliefs and yourself—and it will inspire all of us to do the same.

**Amazon.com Review**

*An Amazon Best Book of October 2015:* “Why IS it such a big deal to everyone what somebody has in their pants?”

Excellent question, posed by an unusually astute transgender girl, the subject of Amy Ellis Nutt’s emotional and illuminating *Becoming Nicole*. It’s also a little ironic, since Nicole’s story makes a bit of a deal of it, but in a much different way than other stories we’ve been hearing lately, from celebrities like Caitlyn Jenner and television shows like *Transparent*. Nicole, her twin brother Jonas, mom Kelly, and dad Wayne, are your typical middle class American family. They live next door to you--are shuttling from work, to Cub Scouts, to softball practice.... They’re also coming to terms with the fact that one of their own has Gender Dysphoria, a medical condition whereby a person does not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. And so Wayne and Kelly Maines discover that they don’t have two sons at all, but a son and a daughter. This is a particularly hard pill for Republican, Air Force veteran, Wayne, to swallow, and his journey from denial to accepting and championing his daughter, is one of the more powerful and moving side narratives in a book chock full of them. That is why I really struggled to write this review, because *Becoming Nicole* is an important book that imparts important lessons, and the ones that resonate most have nothing to do with what’s in anyone’s pants: Be true to yourself, live an authentic life, exercise compassion. –Erin Kodicek

**Product Description**

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