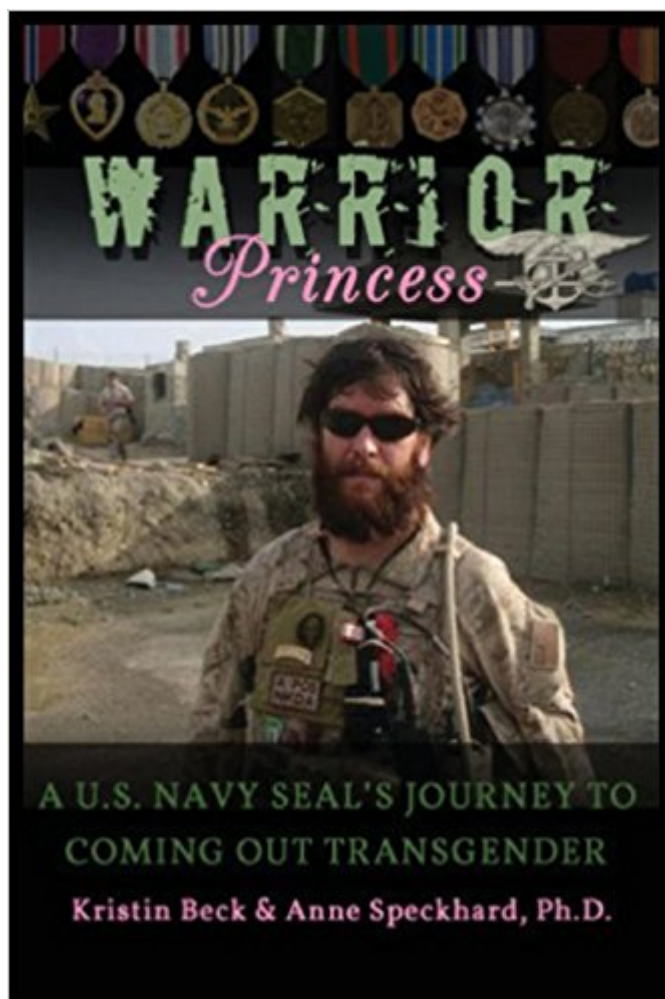


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# Warrior Princess: A U.S. Navy Seal's Journey To Coming Out Transgender



## Synopsis

Chris Beck played high school football. He bought a motorcycle, much to his mother's dismay, at age 17. He grew up to become a U.S. Navy SEAL, serving our country for twenty years on thirteen deployments, including seven combat deployments, and ultimately earned a Purple Heart and the Bronze Star. To everyone who saw him, he was a hero. A warrior. A man. But underneath his burly beard, Chris had a secret, one that had been buried deep inside his heart since he was a little boy—one as hidden as the panty hose in the back of his drawer. He was transgender, and the woman inside needed to get out. This is the journey of a girl in a man's body and her road to self-actualization as a woman amidst the PTSD of war, family rejection and our society's strict gender rules and perceptions. It is about a fight to be free inside one's own body, a fight that requires the strength of a Warrior Princess. Kristin's story of boy to woman explores the tangled emotions of the transgender experience and opens up a new dialogue about being male or female: Is gender merely between your legs or is it something much bigger?

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Speckhard and Beck have teamed up to give us one of the smartest and most important books of the year. Warrior Princess is the story of Kristin Beck, formerly Chris, a decorated Navy SEAL and American patriot who faced a lifelong struggle to come to terms with her gender identity.... Beck is a natural protagonist...strong, hardworking, and deeply patriotic. Every reader can relate to her ... Warrior Princess is a raw, honest, and surprisingly relatable read." OutServe Magazine "Warrior Princess is a profile of courage, both physical and personal. It shatters one's

perceptions of what courage is and how it is shown. "Courage isn't just about physical bravery, it is also about personal bravery. Being transgender requires a type of bravery very few could show, even by those who have been in combat. Dr. Anne Speckhard does a marvelous job of taking us on a journey about being transgender in the military. "Warrior Princess" should be required reading by anyone supporting our troops, whether they support transgender issues or not." Col Carl Castro, U.S. Army (Ret.) Military service in combat is so deeply meaningful to those who experience it that you can feel the undercurrent of emotion in the stories they tell. Gender transition is like that, too; difficult to explain to those who haven't been there, but deeply meaningful to those who have. "This story trembles with the intensity of both experiences, and touches the best in humanity in both worlds, without ignoring the brutality that we must also acknowledge exists. A testament to bravery, Warrior Princess" reaches for the best in all of us." Jamison Green, Ph.D., author of "Becoming a Visible Man" "Wow! What an incredible story. In Warrior Princess, Anne Speckhard goes beyond today's news headlines about U.S. commanders grappling with sexual assault in the military and repealing Don't ask/Don't tell to convey the compelling story of Chris Beck's journey to becoming Kristin Beck. This is a book only Anne could write. She has such an ability to connect, make people feel safe, and tell their story. As the U.S. military steps up to adapt to changes in our society, this book is an important contribution to our national debate." Damon Wilson, Executive Vice President, The Atlantic Council Though Chris had a military career beyond what most experience, Kristin's journey "will be all too familiar" to the transgender people currently serving. "This is a book about courage, and one that should challenge our notions of what heroism looks like." Indra Lusero, J.D. Palm Center "There's no need for the military to be a one-size-fits-all world. This story will widen your perspective about the meaning of gender and how much it matters--or doesn't--for successful military service." Diane H. Mazur, author of "A More Perfect Military: How the Constitution Can Make Our Military Stronger"

Warrior Princess is an Books Bestseller, has ranked number one in various categories over time and was selected for "Top Reads: Best Military Books of 2013" as published in the "Army Times, Marine Corps Times, Air Force Times, Navy Times"

This is very thought provoking book that forces the reader to pause and think about what the definition of gender means, and how often we force incredible people into a box that fits our needs and our needs only. I was saddened to read this book, and can only imagine what and where Kristin would be today, if the world would have accepted her as she truly is when she was very young.

Kristin Beck is a true hero in the absolute sense of the word. The only complaint I have about this book is, that I felt it was rushed, and there is a lot more to be told, and I hope Kristin will share more of her story with us along her journey.

I first heard of this book through a link on Facebook, but thought to myself, oh it can't be everything they said, then I had to go searching. I read one review and knew I had to purchase it. The book itself was a wonderful read. I didn't find very many errors like someone else had mentioned in their review (I'm usually keen to those type of things). I found that the story of Kristin was very touching and makes me look back on my years of service and wondering what if. I myself am not Trans, but I did serve under DADT, so the hiding aspect I was able to connect with Kris on. This is a great way to express some understanding of how some Trans feel about how and when they should come out, and I hope it helps some our youth today. It pains me to hear of another suicide due to not being understood. Well we are here and we do understand. Thanks Kristin for sharing your story. I have another more "not so " friendly review on my blog as well as links to purchase the book from both and B&N. I hope I get to meet you one day.

I bought this book because of my extreme curiosity about the idea of a Navy SEAL being a transgender person, ie, a woman in a man's body. How could such a person make it in such a hypermasculine world. But Chris Beck, the author's name before he came out as transgender, not only made it, he excelled in it. He was a SEAL for twenty years and rose to the rank of Senior Chief Petty Officer, about as high as you can go in the Navy enlisted ranks. He was deployed many times into combat zones, more than most SEALs. He kept volunteering for deployment because it was a way of escaping from his unhappy family life. He rushed in where other did not, perhaps in the hope that death in combat would end all his gender issues and provide his family with a handsome death benefit. He confesses these self-destructive thoughts often in the book. But Chris somehow survives thirteen deployments, earning both the Bronze Star with Valor and the Purple Heart, and rising into the very select Naval SEALs Special Warfare Development Group (NSWDG). But his family life is shattered; his wife has taken their two sons and moved away. She can no longer abide his dressing as a woman, not to mention the lack of physical intimacy as he pulls away from her. His relation with his parents and siblings is equally strained; they cannot understand his gender issues. This book is divided into three parts, what Kristin calls her three lives: First Life, the Home Front 1945-1991; Second Life, the Navy SEALs 1991-2011; Third Life, the Warrior Princess Emerges 2011-Present.

The First Life begins before Chris is born because it narrates certain events that he feels were instrumental in his gender identity. These include the fact that his grandfather, a WW II veteran, suffered from unhealed emotional wounds of his own, which resulted in his alcoholism. While drunk one night, his grandfather accidentally set the house on fire. His son Luther, 13 years old, rescued most of the family, but was unable to save his youngest sister. Luther blamed himself for his sister's death and suffered lifelong emotional problems because of this. Luther became Chris's father. He pushed Chris to be perfect, to make no mistakes, and he punished the boy fiercely when Chris came up short. On the other hand, Luther was kind and gentle to his daughters, perhaps trying to make up for his failure to save his sister. Anyway, this is how Chris explains what he sees as his father's grossly unfair treatment of him. Chris comes to envy his sisters and wishes that he were a girl like them. The Second Life emerges out of the first one. Trying to please his father, Chris pushes himself to become a stellar football player and athlete. This drive to succeed in a masculine environment eventually leads him to become a Navy SEAL. Hoping to suppress his inner longing to be a woman, he pushes himself hard to excel in a hypermasculine environment. But this cannot last forever. In the Third Life, Chris relates his coming out as a woman, Kristin. Of all the choices he made over the years, this was clearly for him the most necessary, but also the most risky. What could be riskier than being a Navy SEAL in combat? Well, for one, being a Navy SEAL and coming out as a woman. Fortunately, she had some help along the way. She met her co-author, Anne Speckhard, in January 2013, and Anne provided much support and encouragement, including helping Kristin write this book. Since this book was still just an idea as recently as January 2013, and now, in June 2013, I have the book in my hand, we can deduce that it was a rushed job. And, unfortunately, it looks and reads like a rushed job. You do not have to be an English major to spot the many errors: missing words, repeated words, poorly chosen words, bad punctuation, misspellings, wrong verb forms. It is hard to say which author wrote which parts, but I am guessing that Kristin was responsible for all of the first two parts and, perhaps, a good bit of part three, and that Anne contributed the last chapter and maybe a bit more. If that's true, then Kristin wrote most of the book, which makes me wonder why she chose to narrate it in the third person as if she was talking about someone else, not herself. I am not sure why there would have been such a rush to publication. If it was the publisher's choice, then they did Beck no favors. They could at least have assigned the book a competent copyeditor who could have cleaned up the text before publishing and avoided these embarrassingly obvious mistakes. Or it may have been Beck's choice. At the end of her book, she does seem intent on getting this story out. But then she did herself no favors. Who wants their first book to be full of these ugly verbal

blemishes!

Kristin, first let me say that the 5-star rating is solely for your story, the courage it took to present it to the world, and for your unmatched commitment to serving this country as a skilled, professional operator within the NAVSPECWAR community. But, as others have pointed out, your editor / writer did you no justice in terms of conveying your story in a clear, well written, well organized manner. As a member of 'The Teams', you're well aware of the grueling, lengthy, and sometimes downright redundant nature of those occasional "sit and wait" Spec-Ops missions. While I'm not a SEAL, trying to read this book was likely just as torturous. The story you tell is fascinating, and I applaud you for sharing it in the face of certain scrutiny and critical backlash. Unfortunately, the poor writing and editing within these pages overshadows the purpose and spirit of the book...I found myself having to revisit sentence after sentence in order to process the misspelled words, sentence fragments, absent punctuation, and the like. Probably not as irritating as getting "wet and sandy" during BUD/s, but.... pretty dang close. Grammatical cannibalism aside, thank you for your service ... Should you continue to tell your story through the written word, please encourage your current "editor / publisher" to "ring out".

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