

Growing Up An American Muslim Army Brat

The experience of growing up as an American Muslim Army brat is unique, diverse, and full of challenges. From constantly moving across different states and countries to navigating the complexities of being a Muslim in a predominantly non-Muslim environment, this upbringing presents an intriguing perspective. In this article, we explore the fascinating journey of a young American Muslim who acquires a multicultural identity influenced by both their religious beliefs and military upbringing.

Imagine being raised in a world where "home" keeps changing. Where the familiar sights and sounds consistently shift, as you travel from one military base to another. This is the reality for those born into an Army family. For an American Muslim growing up in such an environment, however, the journey becomes even more intricate.

As an Army brat, you grow up knowing that change is constant. Your family's life revolves around deployments, relocations, and adjustments. Each move brings new friends, schools, and communities. Your home is not tied to a particular location, but rather to the unity of your family, the connection to the military lifestyle, and the diversity of experiences encountered along the way.



Growing Up an American Muslim Army Brat

by Mary J. Williams(Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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Multicultural Identity

One of the most notable experiences of being an American Muslim Army brat is the development of a multicultural identity. With each move, you find yourself exposed to a variety of cultures, traditions, and customs, both within the military community and the outside world. This exposure broadens your horizons and allows you to embrace diversity from an early age.

The intersection of military life and Islam provides a unique lens through which individuals perceive the world around them. The values ingrained in the military, such as loyalty, respect, and discipline, intersect with the principles of Islam, fostering a strong sense of responsibility, integrity, and devotion. This amalgamation shapes the character of an American Muslim Army brat, empowering them to bridge gaps between cultures and foster understanding among diverse communities.

Navigating Identity and Faith

While military life exposes American Muslim Army brats to an array of cultures, it also poses challenges when it comes to their identity and faith. Being a Muslim in a predominantly non-Muslim environment can be both isolating and empowering, as you learn to balance your religious beliefs while adapting to the customs of your surroundings.

Attending public schools, where Muslim students may be a minority, can lead to the development of a strong sense of self. The experience of explaining Islamic

practices, such as fasting during Ramadan or praying five times a day, fosters resilience and encourages interfaith dialogues. Through these interactions, American Muslim Army brats become ambassadors of their faith, educating their peers about Islam and dispelling misconceptions.

Family and Community Support

Throughout the unique journey of an American Muslim Army brat, family and community support play a crucial role. The sense of camaraderie within military communities fosters an environment of understanding and acceptance. Living amidst individuals from diverse backgrounds teaches them the value of unity and forces them to find strength in their differences.

The support from their family, particularly their parents, is a guiding light. The bond developed among military families is unparalleled, as they all navigate the challenges of adaptation together. Shared experiences and understanding within the family provide the necessary foundation for an American Muslim Army brat to face any obstacles encountered along the way.

Overcoming Stereotypes

Unfortunately, stereotypes and prejudices persist in societies worldwide. American Muslim Army brats, just like any other Muslims, may face misconceptions about their faith and upbringing. However, it is through their experiences and unique perspective that stereotypes are shattered.

By genuinely connecting with people from different walks of life, American Muslim Army brats break down barriers, dispelling preconceived notions and fostering mutual understanding. They challenge stereotypes through their accomplishments, excellence, and contribution to their communities.

The Future Ahead

Despite the challenges and struggles faced, an American Muslim Army brat grows up with a wealth of knowledge, an open mind, and a unique perspective on the world. Their experiences shape them into individuals who value diversity, challenge the status quo, and are committed to serving their communities.

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the contributions of American Muslim Army brats become crucial in various fields, including diplomacy, international relations, cultural exchange, security, and education. They represent a bridge that connects different cultures, fostering dialogue and understanding.

Growing up as an American Muslim Army brat offers a fascinating journey of adaptation, cultural exploration, and identity formation. Through constant relocations, exposure to diverse cultures, and the challenges of being a minority, these individuals build resilience, empathy, and a deep understanding of the world.

The experiences of American Muslim Army brats should be celebrated, as they embody the true essence of multiculturalism, unity, and faith. Their unique perspective paves the way for a more inclusive society, encouraging dialogue and eradicating prejudices. As they continue to navigate their way through life, the contributions of American Muslim Army brats will undoubtedly shape a better future for all.



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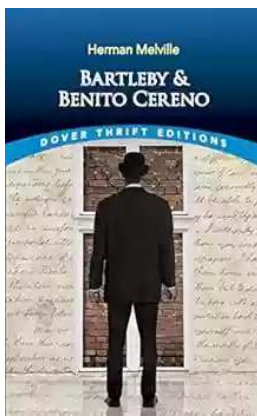
“Go back to your country! You do not belong here in the United States because you’re a terrorist!” Harsh statements like these have been echoed towards Julde (Jul-DAY), a former United States Army brat, but these statements transpired after Julde began wearing the hijab in 2014. Just like many other American families, Julde’s family suffered the aftermaths of the 9/11 attack, especially because her dad joined a continual war for six-months out of every year. Many people do not view Muslims as equally threatened by the 9/11 attacks provided that the “War on Terror” is illustrated as a war against the entire Muslim faith; however, this is not true because during the late 1990s Julde joined other Muslim military families on base to pray, eat Iftar dinner, and attend Jumma services.

The women in Julde’s family openly wore their hijab, but, soon, they slowly detach from wearing their hijab, to later become untraditional Muslim women. And it appeared at that moment, being Muslim at heart was good enough. Julde acquired some of her basic knowledge of Islam through military spouses who taught her to read in Arabic, explained various narratives of the Quran, and offered her valuable words of advice.

Fitting in as a child was difficult being that Julde evidently did not celebrate Christmas, Kwanza, Easter, nor other prevalent holidays at school. After classmates questioned Julde’s participation in holiday celebrations, they grasp an unexpected discovery that she is Muslim. This often led Julde to feel lonely as a U.S. Army Brat; as if Military brats do not have enough obstacles to face like

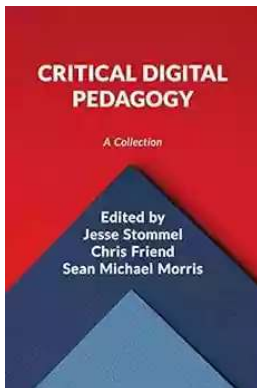
continually changing their neighborhood, public schools and friends every few years.

Now as an adult, Julde Ball wears her hijab to complete her Islamic faith and she undergoes a difference in how people treat her. Despite being cursed out, pushed, kicked, or ignored, Julde maintains wearing her hijab. The United States is Julde's country and as well as many other American Muslims who look like her. Julde wishes that her story can bring about future change for American Muslims.



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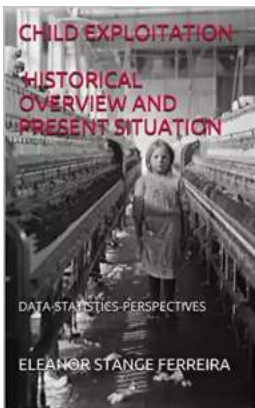
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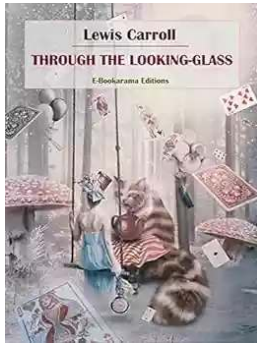
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