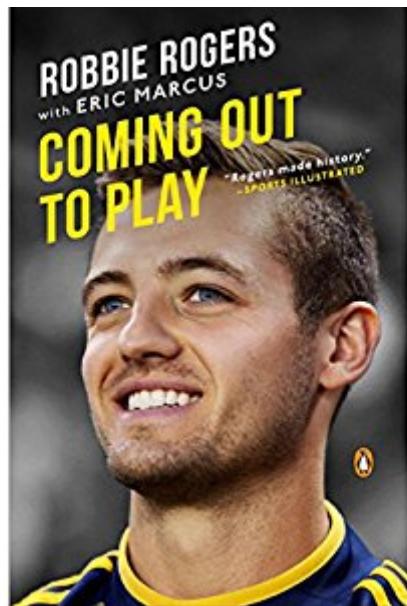


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# Coming Out To Play



## **Synopsis**

Robbie Rogers knows better than most that keeping secrets can crush you. But for much of his life Robbie lived in paralyzing fear that sharing his big secret would cost him the love of his family and his career as a professional soccer player. So he never told anyone what was destroying his soul, both on and off the field. While the world around Robbie was changing with breathtaking speed, he knew that for a gay man playing a professional team sport it might as well be 1958. He could be a professional soccer player. Or he could be an out gay man. He couldn't do both. Then last year, at the age of 25, and after nearly stepping away from a brilliant career - one that included an NCAA Championship, winning the MLS Cup, and competing in the Olympics - he chose to tell the truth. But instead of facing the rejection he feared, he was embraced - by his family, by his teammates, and his fans. In Coming Out to Play, Robbie takes listeners on his incredible journey: from terrified teenager to a trailblazing out and proud professional soccer player for the L.A. Galaxy. He has embraced his new identity as a role model and champion for those still struggling with the secrets that keep them from living their dreams.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

I really enjoyed this book. Literally could not-stop reading once I started -- I finished the book in one sitting. I like everyone else had seen the interviews on TV when Robbie came out. It was very interesting to get the details about how hiding a part of himself affected Robbie's life (and that of his family). It made me realize the importance of public/sports figures coming out -- so that others,

especially kids, can see representations of themselves (role models) out in the real world! Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed the book and found it "uplifting".

This short book was a real pleasure to read. Robbie Rogers comes across as a really nice guy who suffered incredibly as a child and young man, only to finally find peace and happiness in his twenties. His was an especially difficult situation for a boy dealing with the realization that he is gay. He had the double wammy of growing up in a hyper-Catholic family and simultaneously pursuing a hyper-macho sport like soccer at the highest levels. It's no wonder that so much of his youth was spent in closeted misery. Straight readers may be surprised to discover that he (like most gay kids) realized his sexual orientation early on, without experiencing any same-sex activity. While he experimented with opposite sex intimacy, as a misguided attempt to prove to himself that he was not gay, it was not until after he came out in his twenties that he had any gay sexual experiences. But the more important message of this book is that suppressing one's natural sexual orientation is incredibly damaging to the psyche, and that it is far healthier to embrace one's true sexual identity earlier, rather than later. Fortunately, Robbie discovered this before it was too late. I would hope that this book and its message get to any closeted young persons struggling in repressive environments, because it will enlighten them about the truth of their situations and (hopefully) induce them to find ways out. I suppose it is asking too much, but I would wish that all those religious zealots, who think that there is any current relevance to the sexual dictates of a religious community that lived (and ceased to exist) two millenia ago, would read this book and come to a modern understanding of human sexuality in general and same-sex attraction in specific.

As a book, this is an interesting read because it's not written like a story being told, instead Robbie Rogers is telling you about his life. There are dates and important milestones, but Rogers tells you his thoughts and feelings as they happened in a way that's easily relatable even though I've never played professional soccer or had to come out. His family members will also tell you about their feelings in parts instead of just letting Rogers relate it. So while a little awkward at first, those outside perspectives wind up adding so much more to his experience. As a story, it will hurt your heart as no child should ever have to feel the way Rogers spent most of his life feeling. But he makes it something that even people who've never had such a secret to hide will be able to feel how he felt. He reveals more about himself as a person than a gay athlete's story. The way he tells his story, shows a man who is sensitive, determined, and stronger than he ever thought he could be. It's a brave exposing of himself.

Robbie Rogers' story is heart breaking as he tried to turn straight as he did not want to be gay. His story can be very helpful to many who are almost crushed under the load of fear that everyone would hate him and he would lose those most important in his life - his family. Today there are many young people who are experiencing the same hurt that this would happen to them. One person lost as they crumble under the fear they face constantly can get some great guidance by reading what Robbie was and what he became and is now a happy complete young man. Being an outstanding soccer player, he knows how difficult it was and is when one is a gifted sport personality makes it more difficult. Robbie makes it and others can as well. We all need to learn to be supportive, accepting and loving for our GLBT humans.

This biography is amazing. Robbie Rogers has described in great detail his emotional journey. He is an introspective and deep guy, and in this book he shares with us very intimate details, such as the emails with which he came out to his family. (And of course there are also many details of his soccer career.) Additionally, Robbie's autobiography is a powerful reminder that there are still many parts of society in the US and Europe where it is extremely difficult for an LGBT person to be himself. Robbie clearly explains the psychological mechanism of fear of being ostracized that can grip LGBT persons who grow up since childhood in environments without LGBT role models (even when, in other parts of society, LGBT identity is accepted).

I'm a gay man. I stayed in the closet until i was 26 years old. And there the similarities stop. I'm neither religious or a top athlete. But i relive the stomachaches I myself experienced when I was in the closet lying, hating myself. I think this book motivates me to do more. Helping others. And also you understand how close he was to ending his own life. It's a dangerous path keeping a secret like that for many years, it could have easily ended differently. He is strong, and strong willed. And I am so happy for him. He is my kind of hero.

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