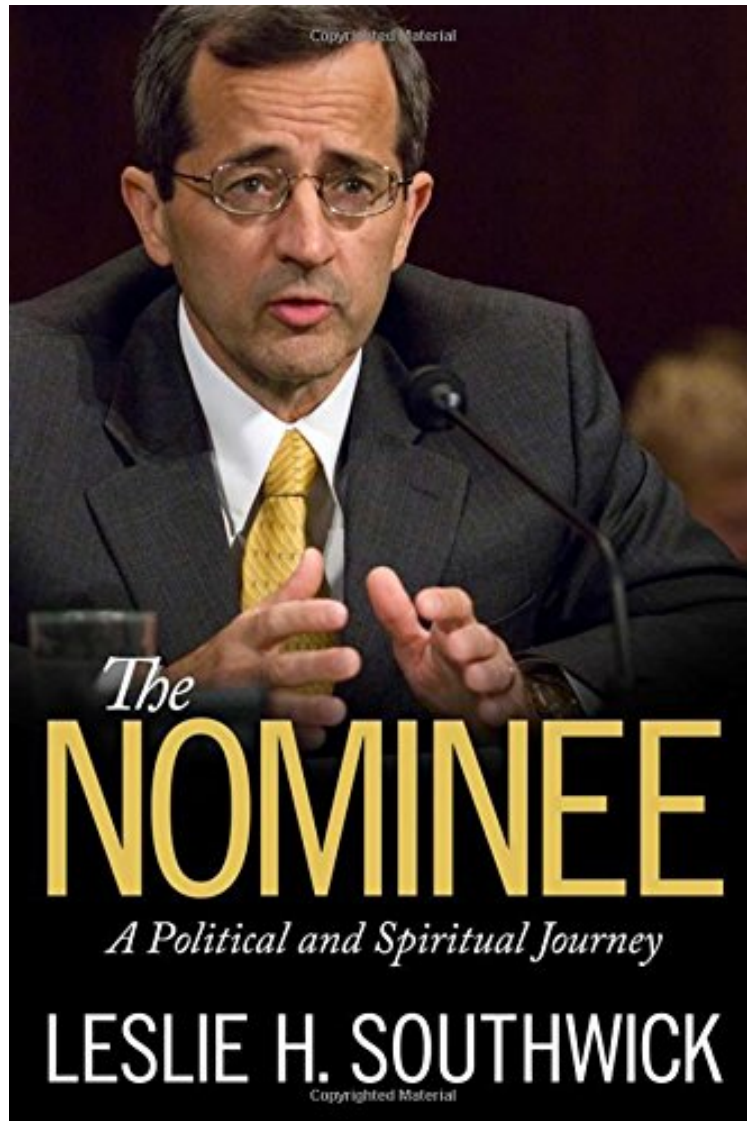


[Mobile ebook] The Nominee: A Political and Spiritual Journey (Willie Morris Books in Memoir and Biography)

The Nominee: A Political and Spiritual Journey (Willie Morris Books in Memoir and Biography)

Leslie H. Southwick

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Leslie H. Southwick : The Nominee: A Political and Spiritual Journey (Willie Morris Books in Memoir and Biography) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Nominee: A Political and Spiritual Journey (Willie Morris Books in Memoir and Biography):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I would recommend this book to anyone - especially students and

historians ...By eccoguyI would recommend this book to anyone - especially students and historians - who might have even a passing interest in the political process in the United States in the early 21st century. Though centered on the experiences of one individual navigating a complex and arcane web in pursuing his own personal ambitions to advance in just one branch of government service the judiciary-, the narrative provides insight as to how shrill and divisive accusations and misinterpretations can divert the goals of the process and dissuade motivated, talented, and decent people from serving. Southwicks balanced and insightful account will reflect unfavorably on those who attempted to twist divisiveness to some advantage, but also credits the thoughtful, rational, and courageous leadership that can rise above petty politics to do the right thing. It is a lesson of history. As a historian, Southwick correctly observes that this degree of confrontation and animosity during the process rarely occurred in the past. It is a lesson for our current troubled times. His nomination process is a microcosm of the abyss into which our politics have devolved, and, as such, is ultimately a tribute to Judge Southwick that he was so undaunted. He himself attributes this perseverance to his faith and family, but he humbly does not give himself enough credit for the triumph of his own decency, intelligence, understanding of the process, and his confidence in himself that lead to his ultimate triumph. While the elective political process obviously does not conform to the myth that the most highly qualified candidate rises above his peers to be selected for leadership on the basis of merit alone, most Americans do not understand this also applies to the judicial selection process as well. The reader will also come to understand that the judicial appointment process is more political than meritocracy. Indeed, intelligence and insight, performance and work ethic, capability, and merit are essential but not sufficient. Ambition, drive, goal attainment, and a certain amount of self-confidence and ego without arrogance is necessary to surmount any number of obstacles. While parts of the narrative may seem somewhat dry when it devolves into the details of Mississippi politics, (since the players will largely be unknown to the reader) Southwicks dry wit and humorous insights are jewels that draw the reader along. His humanity, warmth, compassion, and his story will convince the reader no matter what particular political persuasion that ultimately the right thing was done and the right man was chosen for this job. Long may he serve.

President George W. Bush nominated Leslie H. Southwick in 2007 to the federal appeals court, Fifth Circuit, based in New Orleans. Initially, Southwick seemed a consensus nominee. Just days before his hearing, though, a progressive advocacy group distributed the results of research it had conducted on opinions of the state court on which he had served for twelve years. Two opinions Southwick had signed off on but not written became the center of the debate over the next five months. One dealt with a racial slur by a state worker, the other with a child custody battle between a father and a bisexual mother. Apparent bipartisan agreement for a quick confirmation turned into a long set of battles in the Judiciary Committee, on the floor of the Senate, and in the media. In early August, Senator Dianne Feinstein completely surprised her committee colleagues by supporting Southwick. Hers was the one Democratic vote needed to move the nomination to the full Senate. Then in late October, by a two-vote margin, he received the votes needed to end a filibuster. Confirmation followed. Southwick recounts the four years he spent at the Department of Justice, the twelve years on a state court, and his military service in Iraq while deployed with a Mississippi National Guard Brigade. During the nomination inferno Southwick maintained a diary of the many events, the conversations and emails, the joys and despairs, and quite often, the prayers and sense of peace his faith gave him. His memoir bears significant spiritual content. Throughout the struggle, Southwick learned that perspective and growth are important to all of us when making decisions, and he grew to accept his critics, regardless of outcome. In *The Nominee* there is no rancor, and instead the book expresses the understanding that the difficult road to success was the most helpful one for him, both as a man and as a judge.

"Southwick writes that his book is 'at its most basic level a plea for reconciliation among those who battle in judicial wars.' Those wars, however, are unlikely to abate so long as the two parties disagree, as they so sharply do, over the role of the courts and how judges should interpret and apply the law. This well-written and engaging tale of a nomination almost undone thus promises to have an ongoing audience, perhaps including someone as eager as the author once was to become a judicial nominee." Terry Eastland, executive editor, *The Weekly Standard* "Throughout the book, Southwick is witty without being overly clever. The mans warmth and geniality come through on the page. After Southwicks nomination clears committee and reaches the Senate floor, Arlen Specter explains Southwicks ultimate success with the committee by saying 'many people helped, but the key person was [Southwick himself] and how [he] came across to people. Nice.' In documenting his experiences as he has, Judge Leslie Southwick provides an informative history of the judicial nomination process, but he also humanizes a journey most of us will never take. No matter what you might have thought of the judges jurisprudence or political affiliations prior to reading the book, by the end of *The Nominee*, you want to confirm Leslie Southwick." --Tamara Tabo, *Above the Law* Judge Southwick survived a confirmation process that belied his excellent qualifications and experience. He has reflected credit on those who stood with him and supported his appointment to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. Senator Thad Cochran (R-Mississippi) This is a must-read for anyone concerned with judicial confirmation politics and the dysfunctional U.S. Senate. Judge Southwick offers a personal, richly detailed, balanced, and well-written account of his journey through

the confirmation maze. His book additionally offers insights into the judicial selection process, Mississippi politics, and Mississippi state judicial politics. This is a book that can be appreciated by any fair-minded person. Sheldon Goldman, Distinguished Professor of Political Science, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and author of *Picking Federal Judges: Lower Court Selection from Roosevelt through Reagan* Judge Leslie Southwicks memoir is a revealing look at Washington's endless and increasingly personal fights over judicial nominations something many senators, including myself, have worked to stop. I never expected the judge and I would agree on every issue, but that wasn't the point. After reviewing his record and getting to know him, I came to believe he was a well-qualified and experienced jurist who could faithfully apply the law. That was the point, and it was why I supported his nomination to the Fifth Circuit. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-California) *From the Inside Flap* A firsthand account of the murky, faith-straightening processes by which federal judges are confirmed About the Author Leslie H. Southwick, Jackson, Mississippi, is Circuit Judge for the United States Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit.