

Miss America by Day *by* Marilyn Van Derbur



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Author: Marilyn Van Derbur

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About the Book In this long-awaited book, Marilyn Van Derbur, a former Miss America, tells the story of how she was sexually violated by her prominent, millionaire father from age 5 to age 18. She was 53 years old before she was able to speak the words in public, "I am an incest survivor." She opened the door for tens of thousands of sexual abuse survivors to also speak the words, many for the first time, within their own families and communities.

Marilyn describes, in detail, what specific "work" she did on her journey from victim to survivor. After learning of a woman's rape, Marilyn heard a close friend say, "It was a bad 20 minutes." In the hope that rape and sexual abuse will no longer be as easily dismissed or minimized, Marilyn writes for the first time about what her father did to her and what the impact has been on her adult life.

Using her story as the scaffolding, she shares knowledge and insights she has gained through speaking personally with adult survivors across the country. Marilyn has been in personal contact with more survivors than anyone in America. She has personally answered over 8,000 letters and spoken in 225 cities. Survivors line up for two to three hours to tell her their stories.

Marilyn's major motivation in writing the book came as a result of hearing these words, literally thousands of times: "When I was 7 and my brother was 13" Only the ages changed.

The most frequently reported age when sexual abuse begins is between 5 and 6 years old and common offenders are older brothers and teenage baby-sitters (both male and female). 14-year-olds comprise the largest number of sex offenders of any age group.

With her extensive research on the long-term impact of trauma and her belief that prevention is the best weapon for keeping our children safe, Marilyn urges parents to talk with children, as young as five, and provides suggested guidelines for important conversations that will, hopefully, evolve into continuous dialogues.

Knowing that vulnerable children are targets, she gives unique ways of building children's self esteem.

Read how she responds to: "This happened decades ago." "How could you forget?" "Are there really false memories?" "Can just fondling cause as much trauma as rape?" "Did you forgive?" "How did you develop a satisfying sexual relationship?" The major theme that ties the book together is how her marriage continued to thrive during her darkest years of recovery.



Reviews of the [Miss America by Day](#) by Marilyn Van Derbur

Bluecliff

One of the best memoirs of child abuse (molestation in this case) and PTSD I've ever read. She only mentions PTSD at the very end, but if you have PTSD, you know she's got it pretty much from the beginning of the book. This is an absolutely riveting read. She gives you a link to hop over the details of the molestation if it might trigger you, which is so thoughtful.

I loved reading about all the things she did to heal. I identified with so much, particularly the incredible pain her body felt from being held in rigid constriction all of her life, the insomnia and the GI issues. I might try Rolfing now, since it worked for her and is apparently more gentle than what they did in the 70's - or at least her Rolf-er is.

Her periods of "paralysis" were fascinating. I experienced something like that, too, but not to the extent she did.

She is such a beautiful person and tells exactly what she did to heal to the extent she has. Phenomenal story.

Ygglune

This is a heart wrenching, accurate portrayal of what life was like for abuse victims and for women in the mid 20th century. It was often appalling, but the tenacity with which Marilyn pursued her recovery was at once inspiring and helpful. My therapist recommended this book to me when I began therapy to deal with abuse and it was very helpful. I would recommend it to anyone wanting to understand the emotional turmoil that abuse victims deal with. It also made me very thankful for the therapy and therapist I have available to me now.

Akir

This is undoubtedly the best book I've read on recovery from childhood sexual abuse. With a careful warning so that readers are not dumped into triggering details (and link in the kindle version to bypass them if you aren't up to reading them), this book is the most helpful account I've read on the long term effects, and process of recovery. Most memoirs go into a lot of detail about the horror and have much less emphasis on what is required to heal. Marilyn has covered so many aspects of the healing process in this book.

While I did skim through parts devoted to the Miss America pageant that weren't of interest to me, overall I found the book compelling reading and I had trouble putting it down to do anything else. What an amazing, courageous woman. I cried so many times while reading, as I resonated with what she wrote.

Her story has helped me to see that I have to give up the hope that my mother will ever acknowledge what happened and grieve that, which I think has been an important milestone in my recovery. Marilyn has also helped me to finally understand shame, something I've never understood before. I finally get that no words will change it, no amount of what I tell myself; that the shame comes from having a deep, dark secret trapped inside me that has to be told; that the shame will end when the secret does and the little girl inside me learns that she is lovable, she is acceptable, it wasn't her fault through the reaction when her deepest secrets are revealed...

This is an incredibly inspiring memoir. Talk about taking lemons and making lemonade. I salute Marilyn for all that she is doing in raising awareness, helping each one of us lift the veils of shame, making it clear that we have to do the work and that it's worth it. There are not words to describe how much help Marilyn must have been for survivors around the world who have been fortunate enough to hear her message, read her book.

Tejora

This is one of the best books on childhood sexual abuse I have ever read. I thought the book would just be the story of the recovery of Marilyn Van Derbur from her abuse, but I was pleasantly surprised to find that Mrs. Alter is a well respected nationally known advocate for children who have been abused. The author has clearly done her research on this subject, and quotes well known experts in this field. She also shares extremely personal stories to describe her abuse and recovery. The chapter on how to protect your child from predators who are coaches, scout leaders, and priests is a must read for call parents,

Related PDF to [Miss America by Day](#) by Marilyn Van Derbur

1. [My Sister Marilyn: Memoir of Marilyn Monroe by Berniece Baker Miracle, Mona Rae Miracle](#)
2. [The Woman Inside: A Resource Guide Designed to Lead Women from Incest Victim to Survivor by Patty Derosier Barnes](#)
3. [REPAIR For Teens: A Program for Recovery from Incest & Childhood Sexual Abuse by Michal Splho, Sharon Wallace, Marjorie McKinnon](#)
4. [Adult Survivors of Sexual Abuse: Treatment Innovations by Mic Hunter](#)
5. [Gifts from the Child Within: Self-Discovery and Self-Recovery Through Re-Creation Therapy, 2nd Edition by Barbara Sinor](#)
6. [Rape Incest Child Sexual Abuse \(Garland Library of Sociology\) by Gilmartin, Pat Gilmartin](#)
- 7.

[What Would You Do If...? -Prepk 10 \(Bodyrights : A Duso Approach to Preventing Sexual Abuse of Children Series\) by Marilyn Kele](#)

8.

[Woman-to-Woman Sexual Violence: Does She Call It Rape? \(Northeastern Series on Gender, Crime, and Law\) by Lori B. Girshick](#)

9.

[Wolf Whistle \(ANZ\) TPB Todd Marilyn by Marilyn Todd](#)

10.

[The Survivor's Guide to Sex: How to Have an Empowered Sex Life After Child Sexual Abuse by Staci Haines](#)