

HANDOUT

Further Reading Recommendations

WHATEVER GETS YOU THROUGH: TWELVE SURVIVORS ON LIFE AFTER SEXUAL ASSAULT

by Jen Sookfong Lee

The #MeToo movement has sparked a new survivor-centered media cycle, but they don't often go past the stories of accusations, counter-arguments and arrests. *Whatever Gets You Through* completes the narrative.

The cycle of healing after sexual violence isn't clean-cut. In this collection, 12 survivors open up about their own journeys to healing and share their own coping mechanisms—from wrestling to knitting. Emotional pain and resilience are both the threads that connect them.”

I NEVER CALLED IT RAPE: THE MS. REPORT ON RECOGNIZING, FIGHTING AND SURVIVING DATE AND ACQUAINTANCE RAPE

By Robin Warshaw

I Never Called It Rape made an important clarification about sexual violence when it was released in 1988. The groundbreaking text, based on a nationwide study commissioned by Ms., countered the common narrative that rapists were strangers, and that self-defense tactics alone could stop sexual assault.

With this powerful declaration, *I Never Called It Rape* changed the public conversation on rape culture—defining acquaintance rape and outlining tools for women and advocates hoping to combat violence.

This year, a new edition—complete with a new preface by Gloria Steinem herself—returns to bookstores. In light of the avalanche of assault allegations coming to light decades after it was first published, we have more to learn from it than ever.

SHOUT: THE TRUE STORY OF A SURVIVOR WHO REFUSED TO BE SILENCED

By Laurie Halse Anderson

Laurie Halse Anderson's 1999 best-selling YA novel (and later movie) *Speak* told the story of Melinda, a high school rape victim who abruptly stopped talking after her attack. The book, which earned praise and garnered controversy, also inspired decades of #MeToo moments. Readers who met Anderson during speaking engagements would often share their own stories with her; in libraries and schools across the country, she was blown away by the admissions shared with her through whispers, by way of passed notes or via email and social media.

Speak has a sister in *SHOUT*, Anderson's free-verse book telling her own story of sexual assault as a teen and her journey to healing that quickly becomes a compelling call-to-arms. Inside, Anderson releases her rage—against the patriarchy, against rape culture, against toxic

masculinity, against the cycle of trauma and against 20 years of silence.

“I lost my voice for a very long time after I was raped,” Anderson says. “I lost myself, too. SHOUT is a poetry tapestry that shares the darkness of my silent years and shows how writing helped me speak up. SHOUT is a declaration of war against rape culture and a celebration of survival.”

THE ANATOMY OF SILENCE: TWENTY-SIX STORIES ABOUT ALL THE SHIT THAT GETS IN THE WAY OF SPEAKING ABOUT SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Edited by Cyra Perry Dougherty

We’ve all heard the question: Why didn’t they speak up sooner? The Anatomy of Silence provides a wealth of responses. The 26 stories in this collection from survivors explain what it means to stay silent—and show the complexity and ignorance inherent in the tiresome query that leaves little room for advancing the movement against violence.

Misogyny and rape culture were deeply ingrained into Melissa Dickey’s Southern childhood. Steven Strafford was (almost) silenced by someone far more powerful and well-respected than he was. Ashley Easter faced down a congregation when it became clear that their desire to protect the reputation of their religion superseded the urgency of supporting survivors in its community. This harrowing collection of stories shows just how institutionalized the silence of survivors has been, and the sheer strength it takes to finally get loud.

BEAUTIFUL JUSTICE: RECLAIMING MY WORTH AFTER HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SEXUAL ABUSE

By Brooke Axtell

Brooke Axtell’s experience with sex trafficking is one nobody deserves to know intimately. But Axtell’s book goes beyond her own story, exploring—and demanding—real justice for survivors that goes beyond judges and juries and toward an “integration of inner healing and cultural healing.” Axtell’s own story, and the lessons she’s learned along the way, form the backdrop for an important and powerful guide for survivors and advocates seeking to actualize that vision.

RAPE: FROM LUCRETIA TO #METOO

By Mithu Sanyal

Some books are built for an echo-chamber, affirming the conventional wisdom that already exists on a topic and acting simply as winks to the scholars of its field that came before.

Rape isn’t that kind of book. Picking up where Susan Brownmiller’s *Against Our Will* left off, author Mithu Sanyal grapples with and provides the context behind almost every prevalent opinion and trope that exists on the subject of rape in its pages—tackling tricky topics like gender, race and sexuality with finesse, research and hard facts.

Sanyal does an excellent job answering a deceptively-complex question: What is the truth about rape?

HEALING MY LIFE FROM INCEST TO JOY

By Donna Jenson

This is not a “getting healed” book, but rather an account of one person’s “healing journey.” Donna Jenson was a victim of incest who suffered sexual abuse throughout her childhood at the hands of her father—but through therapy, journaling, sharing her story in public and reaching out to loved ones in private, she continues to chart her own path to joy.

Jenson’s journey from self-loss to self-love will resonate not only with survivors, but any reader struggling to find their own way toward self-determination or through challenging family dynamics.

YES MEANS YES: VISIONS OF FEMALE SEXUAL POWER AND A WORLD WITHOUT RAPE

By Donna Jenson

Originally published in 2008, this book inspired a movement. Yes Means Yes flipped commonly understood ideas around consent on their heads—presenting an alternative to the notion that “no means no,” and that sex is a prize to be pursued instead of a consensual act between active participants.

This anthology posited that sex is a choice that women should make—and that it should be an empowering, rather than a passive, one. Yes Means Yes envisioned a world where women could exercise freedom over their desires. A decade later, its truth-telling and game-changing powers are stronger—and more relevant—than ever.

Additional Reading

BOOKS

- * **The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook** written by Davis, Eschelman, McKay, and Fanning
- * **The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion: Freeing Yourself from Destructive Thoughts and Emotions** written by C.K. Gremer
- * **Psychological Trauma and Adult Survivor** written by McCann and Pearlman
- * **Taking the Sense of Safety Beyond the Therapy Setting** written by M. B. Williams
- * **The Body Keeps Score** written by Dr. van der Kolk
- * **In an Unspoken Voice: How the Body Releases Trauma and Restores Goodness** written by Peter A. Levine

- * **Storycatcher: Making Sense of Our Lives Through the Power and Practice of Story** written by Christina Baldwin
- * **Storyworthy: Engage, Teach, Persuade, and Change Your Life through the Power of Storytelling** written by Matthew Dicks
- * **The Science of Storytelling: Why Stories Make us Human and How to Tell Them Better** written by Will Storr
- * **Step out of Your Story: Writing Exercises to Reframe and Transform Your Life** written by K Schneiderman
- * **Writing Ourselves Whole: Using the Power of Your Own Creativity to Recover and Heal from Sexual Trauma** written by Jen Cross
- * **The Year After Journal: Your Guide to Reclaiming Personal Power After Rape** written by Ashley Warner
- * **The Story You Need to Tell: Writing to Heal From Trauma, Illness or Loss** written by Sandra Marinella
- * **Life After Trauma: A Workbook for Healing** written by Dr. Rosenbloom and Dr. Williams
- * **Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within** written by Natalie Goldberg
- * **The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity** written by Julia Cameron

WEBSITES

- * **Gift from Within**, www.giftfromwithin.org, a website to help rekindle hope and restore dignity to trauma survivors.
- * **Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network**, www.rainn.org, a website to support sexual assault survivors and offers resources.
- * **The Moth: The Art and Craft of Storytelling**, www.themoth.org
- * **Storyteller Centralized Website**, www.storyteller.net
- * Online resources to help you write your own story - www.blurb.com/blog/10-story-writing-websites/
- * **Your Voice, Your Choice: A Survivor Media Guide**, Prince Edward Island Rape and Sexual Assault Centre <http://peirsac.org>
- * **Visions, Values, and Voice: A Communications Toolkit** www.opportunityagenda.org
- * **Storytelling for Social Change by Frameworks Institute** www.frameworksinstitute.org/storytelling.html
- * **Story Circles** <https://roadside.org/program/story-circles>
- * **Guide on Developing Your Own Public Narrative** - <https://roadside.org/porgram/story-circles>
- * **How to Build a Story Bank** - https://www.thegoodmancenter.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/free_range_2012_06.pdf

* **Story2 StoryBuilder** -storybuilder.story2.com/StoryBuilder - an interactive, online tool for building your story

SELF-PACED JOURNALS

* **Start Where You Are: A Journal for Self-Exploration** written by Meera Lee Patel

* **Made Out of Stars: A Journal for Self-Realization** written by Meera Lee Patel

ONLINE BOOKLETS

* **Sharing Your Story: How to Think through Your Options**, Boston Area Rape Crisis Center, www.barcc.org

* **Your Voice, Your Choice: A Survivor's Media Guide**, Victims Rights Law Center, www.victimrights.org

* **Speaking Out From Within: Speaking Publicly About Sexual Assault**, Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR), www.pcar.org

Some recommendations taken from: <https://msmagazine.com/2019/04/25/survivors-sounding-off-eight-books-shattering-silence-around-rape-culture/>