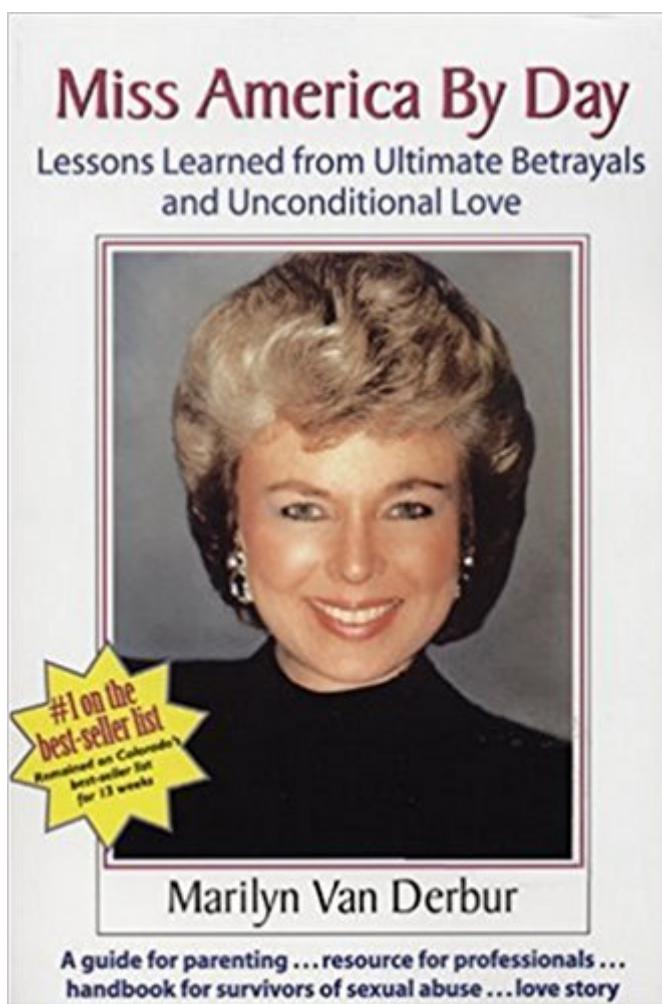


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# Miss America By Day: Lessons Learned From Ultimate Betrayals And Unconditional Love



## **Synopsis**

Marilyn Van Derbur shares her courageous search for healing from incest. In this long-awaited book, Marilyn, a former Miss America, tells the story of how she was sexually violated by her father from age five to age 18. She was 53 years old before she was able to speak the words in public: "I am an incest survivor." Van Derbur describes in detail what specific "work" she did on her successful journey from victim to survivor. Using her story as the scaffolding, she shares knowledge and insights she has gained after talking personally with adult survivors in the 225 cities in which she has spoken. Van Derbur also gives the hope that a richly satisfying and long lasting marriage is possible if healing is passionately pursued.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"Seldom as a judge have I wanted to read the entire book.. I devoured every word of this riveting story&#x85; -- Judge, Writer's Digest competition, 2005"Your book has touched me to my core, blown me away, impressed me deeply.I have purchased multiple copies... -- Jane Fonda January 2005

Anyone who knew Marilyn Van Derbur as a child and young adult believed she had it all -- a loving family, a beautiful home, an active social life. But beneath the surface, Van Derbur was a troubled young woman who lived through horrific panic attacks and excruciating physical pain every day of her adult life. Starting when she was just a child of five, she was sexually abused by her father until she turned 18. Van Derbur uses the term "incested," eschewing the more vanilla terms of

"molestation" or "abuse." As a student and young adult, Van Derbur was an overachiever with an unconscious need to stay very busy. She realizes now this was a coping mechanism to keep her two worlds separated—the "night child" who suffered at the hands of her father and the "day child" who was happy and outgoing. After being named valedictorian of her high school class, she went on to college. Persuaded to enter a local beauty pageant, she ultimately was crowned Miss America. Ignoring the sheer terror she felt at the prospect of speaking in front of others, Van Derbur went on to become a highly successful motivational speaker. She writes of her endless need to be respected by others, all the while believing that if others really knew who she was, they would hate her and look at her with disdain and disgust. The perfectly poised mask she showed the outside world was a far cry from the tortured, panic-stricken, anxious woman within. The shame she felt within was a constant in her life, reminding her that she was "unworthy." When a newspaper reporter learned of her story, Van Derbur's private shame became front-page news. Then she landed on the cover of People magazine. Soon incest survivors from around the country were reaching out to her, desperate to tell someone what had happened to them. It became instantly clear that her new role in life was to help others who had suffered incest and to help teach everyone how to make sure their children are safe from predators.

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 all parents,

Miss America By Day is easily the best book I have ever read about incest and sexual abuse, how severely damaging they are and how to recover from them. It was a very difficult book to put down and I can not imagine anyone who could read it without crying. When I thought about reviewing this book, I thought there would be at least 100 published reviews and some would have at least 100 positive comments. Sadly, it appears I may be one of a very few males, who have reviewed this book. This book deserves far more publicity than it apparently has received. Miss America by Day should be required reading for every counselor, teacher, nurse and Physician. This book should be in every library in America. I am trying to think of some additional ways to help publicize it, besides

recommending it on my blog. Send me your ideas. I was excited to learn it is available on Kindle, which should make it easier to find. Many other reviewers have discussed different aspects of the book in more detail, especially since I gave my copy to someone who had suffered similar abuse, in her childhood. There must be a God, since the replacement book I ordered was an autographed hardback, for only about \$20! I need to buy more copies to give out and always have one available and ready, when I learn of another victim. Sadly, when Marilyn's multiple physicians she consulted could not find any physical cause for her baffling paralysis, panic attacks, insomnia, chest pain, constipation, ulcers or nausea, she was referred to an ineffective Psychiatrist. Hypnotism and firewalking were also ineffective. Fortunately, she discontinued treatment with the Psychiatrist and continued her healing journey thru more effective paths, including survivor groups, confronting her parents, talking with her sisters, reaching out to others, acupuncture, rolfing, massage and spiritual counseling. Marilyn had repressed memory of the incest for years. Some of the repressed memory triggers she described, occurred as her daughter passed thru various stages of childhood. She also suffered Multiple Personality Disorder and met other sexual abuse sufferers, who developed Multiple Personality Disorder, to survive the abuse. This book is one of the most inspiring things I have ever read. This book is so incredible, I feel my words are inadequate to do it justice.

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.

I feel this is one of the most important books on child sex abuse that I have come across. I feel it is very comprehensive: covering the childhood and abuse, the repressed memories, the effects of the abuse on her adult life (physically and mentally), trying to get help during a time that most people wanted it covered up, her speaking out and helping others, and then general education about sex abuse and its effects. And maybe most importantly, how it is everywhere and right where you least expect it. It really covers everything! I found that I could not put this book down! I really connected to Marilyn and her story. So much so that I was so proud (really proud, like the feeling a mom has for her children-proud) of her when she started to speak out and help others, proud and inspired. This seems to be an area that provides so much healing for survivors. I also loved that Marilyn covered

the mind-body connection at the end, educating the reader on the real and extensive physical symptoms and manifestations of stress and trauma to the body. I think that was brilliant, and I hope it sparks an interest in other readers to read more about that (Marilyn references Christianne Northrup's book on this topic). Marilyn is an absolute gem, and her work has done so much to educate society on this topic. I am very inspired by her!

Marilyn deserves nothing but praise for writing this book. She is forthright about her own experience and empathetic toward other survivors. This book will make you think. There are so many more victims of sexual assault than we realize.

It came on time. The book was in excellent condition. The story was unbelievable with a message for all victims--there is always hope.

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