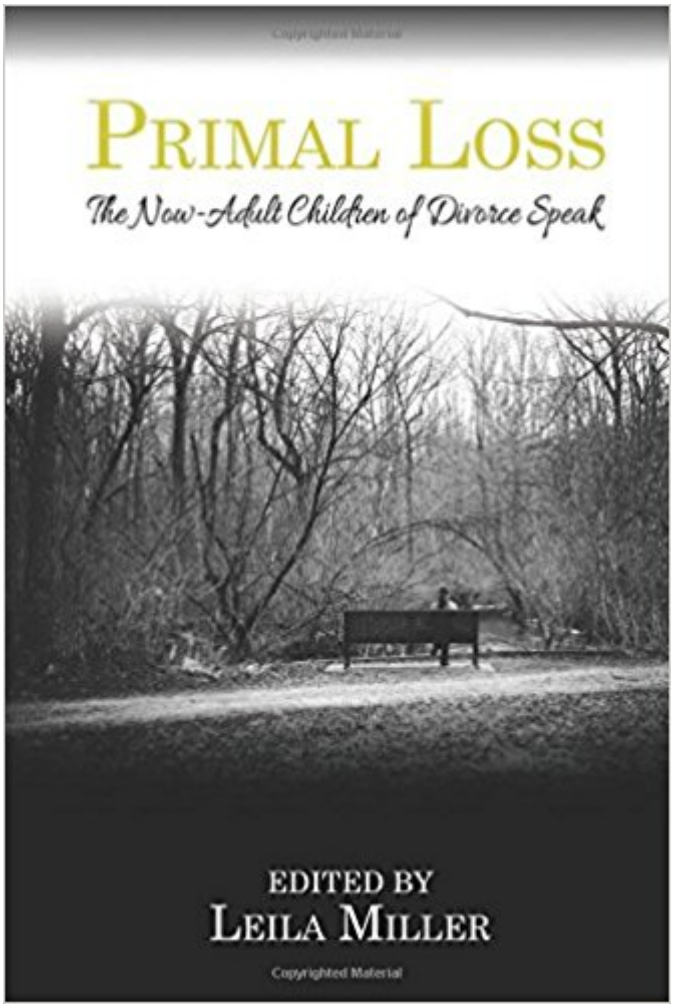
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Primal Loss: The Now-Adult Children Of Divorce Speak



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Synopsis

Seventy now-adult children of divorce give their candid and often heart-wrenching answers to eight questions (arranged in eight chapters, by question), including: What were the main effects of your parents' divorce on your life? What do you say to those who claim that "children are resilient" and "children are happy when their parents are happy"? What would you like to tell your parents then and now? What do you want adults in our culture to know about divorce? What role has your faith played in your healing? Their simple and poignant responses are difficult to read and yet not without hope. Most of the contributors--women and men, young and old, single and married--have never spoken of the pain and consequences of their parents' divorce until now. They have often never been asked, and they believe that no one really wants to know. Despite vastly different circumstances and details, the similarities in their testimonies are striking; as the reader will discover, the death of a child's family impacts the human heart in universal ways.

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Customer Reviews

Primal Loss records for us the actual pain of those most wounded by divorce--children. This makes it countercultural in the best of ways. Some suffering today is not allowed to be called suffering. It is not politically correct to say that children suffer greatly from the divorce of their parents. This book needed to be written, and it needs to be read. It will help children of divorce know that they are not wrong in feeling this awful loss, which, once named and brought to Christ and His Cross, can find healing and even be redemptive. It will help allÃ Â who bear wounds caused by broken marriages, including divorcÃƒÂ©es themselves, not only to see in truth what has happened, but also to seek the One whose mercy is greater than our sins and whose Cross is our only hope. -- Bishop Thomas

J. Olmsted, Diocese of Phoenix"For I hate divorce, says the Lord" (Malachi 2:16). In Primal Loss, adult children explain theÃ Â life-long impact of learning that horrific concept that "love stops" because their parents divorced. These voices must not be snuffed out by the political correctness that has silenced the suffering brought on by actions that are deemed sinful by the Church. "Open thy mouth for the dumb, and for the causes of all the children that pass" (Proverbs 31:8 Douay-Rheims). - Monica Breaux, PhD, MSW, Catholic speaker and therapist, 2010 Catholic Social Worker of the Year, creator of Wholly Men and Women programsWe all need to listen to the voices in Primal Loss because their pain is significant and motivating. Those in marriages will be inspired to elevate their relationships and inoculate against divorce; those who have suffered should take comfort that they are not alone, and that hope and peace can return.--Diane Medved, Ph.D., psychologist and author of Don't Divorce: Powerful Arguments For Saving and Revitalizing Your Marriage.Reading Primal Loss is akin to watching footage of the Hindenburg disaster. Its message is so rivetingly compelling that it's impossible to tear your gaze away, even though it documents a profound tragedy. Regardless of your current views on divorce, this book will impact you deeply."-- Patrick Madrid, radio host, author of many books, including Life Lessons: Fifty Things I Learned in My First Fifty YearsPrimal Loss is shock treatment for anyone rationalizing the effect of a broken home on a child. Leila Miller presents the raw words of adult children of divorce, exposing the myth that "the children are all right." Every pastor and counselor should read this book! -- Leila Marie Lawler, co-author of The Little Oratory: A Beginner's Guide to Praying in the Home

Leila Miller is the author ofÃ Â Raising Chaste Catholic Men: Practical Advice, Mom to Mom. She blogs at Little Catholic Bubble and is a contributor toÃ Â Catholic Answers Magazine Online. Leila and her husband have eight children and several grandchildren. She and her family live in Phoenix.

Wow, a devastating read that would be almost impossible to finish if it were not for the encouraging and strong affirmations at the end telling of marriage successes and some wisdom for the journey. Though the stories were told by adults, the child in them clearly shouted out with such pain and sense of loss and betrayal. A must-read for anyone getting married or having a tough time in their marriage.

I’m well past forty so my parents’ divorce was decades ago. The pain and brokenness haven’t gone away despite my seeking counseling. Now that I feel understood I want to work towards forgiveness.I’m 2/3 of the way done with this book and it is like I’m reading about my own

experiences over and over and OVER again! Brutal but honest reading, it is. Finally, to feel vindicated. Amazing.I would HIGHLY recommend that mental health professionals and those seeking therapy BOTH read this book. If you've been through a confusing and traumatizing event like a parents' divorce then you won't have the words to tell your therapist. This book will help YOU so THEY can help you.Cheers, JEN

This column by Msgr. Charles Pope is a superb description of the contents and the necessity that the concerns of children be taken into account. I think every priest should own a copy. I have purchased two to give to my priests.Subscribe via RSS FeedConnect on FacebookFollow Me on TwitterConnect on PinterestConnect on Google PlusConnect on FlickrConnect on YouTubeCommunity in MissionThe Carnage of DivorceMsgr. Charles Pope ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â¢ June 28, 2017 ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â¢ 10 Comments94divorceAlmost two decades ago, as a younger priest, I remember trying to save a marriage. Sadly, by the second counseling session I concluded that the couple really had no intention of trying to save the marriage. Rather, they were looking to me to assuage their guilt and to console them by telling them they were really ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“doing the right thing,ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• that God wanted them to be happy and would not mind if they divorced. I could do no such thing.At a critical moment the couple said, in effect, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“We are really doing this for the sake of the children. We donÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t want them to suffer with all of our bickering.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• To which I replied, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Then stop the bickering!ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• As they looked at me incredulously, I went on to urge them to get whatever help they needed to work through their differences. I insisted that God hates divorce and that divorce is not good for children; reconciliation is what they want and need.Realizing that they were not going to get the approval and consolation they sought, the couple ended the session and did not return. They finalized their divorce. Their three children went on to be subject to things far worse than bickering: being carted around to different households on weekends, meeting DadÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s new girlfriend, accepting a stepdad, always secretly wishing that Mom and Dad would love each other again.I thought of that story (and others like it) as I was reading this book, published in May: Primal Loss: The Now Adult Children of Divorce Speak, by Leila Miller. It should be required reading for anyone who thinks that divorce is ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“good thingÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• for their childrenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •or even for them.Consider the following passage from the book, in which a woman writes of suffering through her parentÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s divorce during her youth:My grandparentsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ generation had to deal with a lot ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â • war, undiagnosed PTSD, and alcoholismÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •but they had a noble

idea: That you sacrificed your own happiness for your childrenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s well-being. You took on all the heartache so they didnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t have to. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â|My parentÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s generation inverted that. They decided it was better a child should have her world torn apart than that an adult should bear any suffering. Of course, they didnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t frame it that way. They wanted to believe that the child would suffer less, because children were just extensions of the mother, and the mother would theoretically be happier [p. 131].It is shocking logic, but widespread in our culture. Indeed, the whole conversation about marriage today is about adults and what makes them happy; children are something of an afterthought. Marriage is said to be about romance, being happy, and ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“finding a soulmate.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• But if one asks a couple about having children, a common response is, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Oh sure, that too. WeÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ll probably have a kid or two ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â| when weÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢re ready.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• Children are seen more as a way of accessorizing the marriage, as an ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“add-onÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• rather than the essential work of a marriage.Yet the biblical and traditional understanding of marriage has its entire structure made sensible by its central work: procreation and the subsequent raising of the children. That a man and a woman should enter a stable, lifelong union makes sense because that is what is necessary and best for children. Marriage is about children and has its very structure directed toward what is best for them. Physically, emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually, a child is best raised by a father and a mother who are stably present and who manifest the masculine and feminine genius of being human. To intentionally subject children to anything less or anything different does them an injustice.The divorce culture casts this aside and insists that marriage is about adults and what makes them happy. If there are children in the picture, donÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t worry, theyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ll adjust; kids are resilient. Or so the thinking goes.Leila Miller has done a wonderful service in showing that children are not so resilient after all. In fact, even long after attaining adulthood, these victims of their parentsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ divorces still suffer painful and lasting effects. Ms. Miller interviewed 70 adult children of divorce and let them speak for themselves.Many were surprised that anyone was interested or even cared about what they thought or had experienced. One of the more common experiences shared was a ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“weÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢re not going to talk about the divorceÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• mentality. Never mind the awkwardness of Mom and Dad marrying others. WeÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢re supposed to go along with the drastic changes and be delighted, happily accept new siblings, and call some man ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“DadÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• (or some woman ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“MomÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•) who really isnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t. We want to make sure that

no oneÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s feelings get hurt, so weÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢re all going to be nice and pleasant. The unspoken message in this is that the feelings of the children matter less and must be sacrificed so that othersÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •mainly adultsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •can be happy and ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“get on with their lives.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•Some who have read this book say, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Finally, someone understands.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• Or ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Wow, thatÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s just how I feel!ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• The powerful, articulate testimonies in it will help those who had to live through divorce to name and understand their own hurts and feelings, not merely so as to brood or to reopen old wounds, but to the bring them to the light and seek deeper healing.I cannot recommend this book enough. It is a healing for those who have suffered and, I pray, a strong medicine to prevent divorce. As Christians, letÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s remember that God designed marriage to be what is best for children. The truest happiness any father or mother can find will be the knowledge that they made the sacrifices necessary to be sure that their children were raised well and prepared for life here, and even more, for eternal life.Disclaimer: Not everyone who is divorced came to be so in the same way. Some tried hard to save their marriage but their spouse was unwilling. Others came to conversion later in life. Still others were physically endangered during the marriage. This essay is not to be construed as a general condemnation of all who are divorced. Rather, it is a heartfelt plea that amidst todayÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s divorce culture we count the full cost of divorce and that we remember that marriage is first and foremost about what is best for children.

I like Leila am not a child of divorce-I had no reason to read this except that I admire Leila and her writing. It is a heart-breaking but necessary book. I had no idea of the pain children of divorce go through in a lifetime-not just as children but as adults. It makes me want to take even more precious care of my own marriage. I wish this book would travel like wildfire throughout our country-I think it would make a huge difference in family life. On the morning I finished this book, I attended Mass and a couple was celebrating 68 (not a typo!) years of marriage. I couldn’t help but feel like crying-the juxtaposition of what I had just read vs. this couple who had dedicated their lives together "till death do us part".

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