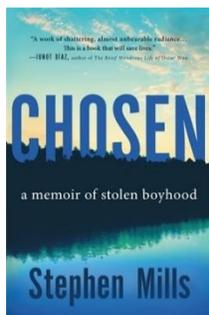




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One In Six Boys Experience Sexual Abuse: Child Rights Advocate Stephen Mills Speaks Out About His Own Trauma and the Repeated Sexual Assault Carried Out by the Director of Several Jewish Summer Camps

Stephen Mills’s unflinching and groundbreaking memoir, **CHOSEN: A Memoir of Stolen Boyhood** (Metropolitan Books; April 26, 2022; 978-1-2508-2321-2; \$28.99; 336 pp.), is about repeated childhood sexual abuse at a Jewish summer camp, its traumatic reverberations across his life, and his quest to bring his abuser to justice.

At thirteen years old, Stephen Mills is chosen for special attention by the director of his camp, a charismatic social worker intent on becoming his friend. Stephen, whose father died when he was four, places his trust in this authority figure, who first grooms and then molests him for two years.

Stephen tells no one, but the aftershocks rip through his adult life, as intense as his denial: self-loathing, drug abuse, petty crime, and horrific nightmares, all made worse by the discovery that his abuser is moving from camp to camp, state to state, molesting other boys. Only physical and mental collapse bring Stephen to confront the truth of his boyhood and begin the painful process of recovery—as well as a decades-long crusade to stop a serial predator, find justice, and hold to account those who failed the children in their care.

Astonishingly, the trauma of sexual abuse is shared by one out of every six men, yet few have spoken out. Unflinching and compulsively readable, **CHOSEN** eloquently speaks for those countless others and their families. It is a rare act of consummate courage and generosity—the indelible story of a man who faces his torment and his tormentor and, in the process, is made whole.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Stephen Mills is the coauthor with Roger Fouts of *Next of Kin: My Conversations with Chimpanzees*, a *Los Angeles Times* Best Book of the Year. He has advised and written for an array of public interest organizations in the fields of human rights, civil liberties, and the environment. Since 1983, he has worked with the Natural Resources Defense Council, building campaigns that have mobilized millions of people in support of environmental protection. Stephen is honored to serve as an Ambassador for CHILD USA, the leading nonprofit think tank fighting for the civil rights of children. He lives in California with his wife, Susan.

MORE ADVANCE PRAISE FOR *CHOSEN*

“An...unforgettable memoir of sexual abuse and its lifelong consequences...visceral, gripping...A vitally important book for fellow survivors—and anyone seeking justice for victims.”

—**Kirkus Reviews** (starred review)

“An unparalleled achievement, a work of shattering, almost unbearable radiance. I did not stop crying throughout. For Mills. For my young self. For all of us who have lived and continue to live in that pitiless abyss of childhood abuse. To read this courageous book is to be transformed utterly by Mills’s empathy, resilience, and grace. Mark my words: *Chosen* is destined to be a classic because this is a book that will save lives.”

—**Junot Díaz, author of *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao***

“Mills lays bare in this unflinching account the irrevocable impact of the sexual abuse he suffered as a teen . . . Mills’s ability to persevere . . . offers hope, and his raw vulnerability inspires. This is a searing testament to human resilience.”

—**Publishers Weekly** (starred review)

“In a lean, sharp telling that is as propulsive as it is painful, *Chosen* relates a devastating story of childhood sexual assault and one man’s Herculean reclamation of his adult life. Mills also illuminates the silent brotherhood of boys whose shame and pain remain unreached by our institutions and our conversations, even by the benevolent efforts of the #MeToo movement. There’s a very good chance that this constantly surprising, urgent book will save lives.”

—**Lacy Crawford, author of *Notes on a Silencing***

“A searing and singular account of how a young boy’s experience of abuse reverberates through his life until he finally confronts not only his abuser but also the powerful institutions that enabled him. *Chosen* is a masterfully written story of love and hate that is as tender as it is traumatic. I couldn’t put it down.”

—**Geraldine Brooks, author of *People of the Book***

“In this game-changing memoir, Stephen Mills draws the reader into a boy’s and then a man’s journey through the wilderness of trauma. Beautifully written and deeply moving, *Chosen* elevates the survivor story to an Odyssean trek to reclaim one’s soul.”

—**Marci Hamilton, CEO and founder, CHILD USA**

“Truly a remarkable book, not only for the life story that Mills shares, but for the power of its message. Too often the Jewish community promotes a belief in the “otherness” of domestic and sexual abuse—that it happens somewhere else. This beautiful, heartbreaking memoir is a reminder that no group is spared.”

—**Loribeth Weinstein, CEO Emerita, Jewish Women International**

“A breathtaking memoir. Mills is not simply a survivor of sexual abuse telling his story. He is a writer whose literary power shows on every page of this extraordinary book.”

—**Dr. Richard Gartner, author of *Betrayed as Boys***

“*Chosen* is not so much an abuse-memoir as a tale, masterfully told, of what it means to live in a human body with a human heart. Yes, there is brokenness here, but there is also extreme beauty, wisdom, and bravery on Mills’s crooked path toward healing and justice.”

—**Florence Williams, author of *Heartbreak: A Personal and Scientific Journey***