



Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence - From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror

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ery: The Aftermath of Violence - From Domestic Abuse

By Judith Lewis Herman

Trauma And Recovery Judith Herman

When Trauma and Recovery was first published in 1992, it was hailed as a groundbreaking work. In the intervening years, Herman's volume has changed the way we think about and treat traumatic events and trauma victims.

Trauma And Recovery Pdf

In a new afterword, Herman chronicles the incredible response the book has elicited and explains how the issues surrounding the topic have shifted within the clinical community and the culture at large. Trauma and Recovery brings a new level of understanding to a set of problems usually considered individually. Herman draws on her own cutting-edge research in domestic violence as well as on the vast literature of combat veterans and victims of political terror, to show the parallels between private terrors such as rape and public traumas such as terrorism. The book puts individual experience in a broader political frame, arguing that psychological trauma can be understood only in a social context.

Trauma And Recovery Summary

Meticulously documented and frequently using the victims' own words as well as those from classic literary works and prison diaries, Trauma and Recovery is a powerful work that will continue to profoundly impact our thinking.

i just taught this for the first time. for some reason, this time around the book had a tremendously disruptive impact on me. it was, simply put, like going through a trauma experience. the last part, about the three stages of recovery, gave me palpable relief, as if i were going through recovery myself as i read the book with the class.

reading it with a group made a huge difference. at least some of the students experienced some level of traumatization. it was important to debrief at the end. s i just taught this for the first time. for some reason, this time around the book had a tremendously disruptive impact on me. it was, simply put, like going through a trauma experience. the last part, about the three stages of recovery, gave me palpable relief, as if i were going through recovery myself as i read the book with the class.

reading it with a group made a huge difference. at least some of the students experienced some level of traumatization. it was important to debrief at the end. some felt compelled to share stories. all reported discussing the book outside of class. the level of attentiveness during discussion was so high you could tell who had done the reading and who hadn't.

this book is not about a generically traumatizing world; it's about regularly misdiagnosed mental pain. the number of mental health professionals who are willing to journey with a patient to the roots of trauma is minimal. the number of those who have the competence, training, and wisdom to do so safely and successfully is so tiny, if you find one it's a miracle. most mental health professionals will misdiagnose post-traumatic syndromes. most mental health professionals will slap demeaning and belittling diagnoses on you and declare you sick for life and doomed to a lifetime of maintenance-drug use. most won't even feel the need to talk to you. it's amazing the way trauma imposes its stealth on the world of healers. the refusal to recognize it and deal with it is as persistent in healers as it is in sufferers.

a student was brave enough -- and healed enough -- to discuss a traumatic experience of their own in class. gently, we asked questions. gently, we helped them see how they were reproducing in their narrative the telltale symptoms of the traumatized person ("it was nothing;" "people have it much worse;" "i am ashamed of my reaction;" "i am trying not to give in to weakness and fear"). it was pretty intense, and i hope healing, for all of us. the student's openness helped us see that they are okay. one can experience trauma and be okay. after reading the horrors depicted in this book -- what a relief.

there are mental health professionals who know how to deal with trauma and if you have a traumatized past you should look for them. at the very least, you should look for a survivor group (the internet will

do in a pinch). trauma doesn't heal in isolation. trauma is a dramatic break in relationship (with the world, with others, with the self, with god) and can only heal in relationship.

there are aspects in which this book is dated. its feminism is a bit black and white, and ignores the myriad ways in which gender-related trauma cross-pollinates across gender boundaries (such as they are; they constantly reshape themselves anyway). men get beaten, threatened, and raped too. women go to war. violent men are often themselves trauma victims. the low-level traumatization in which all women are steeped qua women has a low-level traumatic correspondent in guys. if 1 in x women will be raped in their lifetimes, 1 in x guys will be raping a woman in their lifetimes. as JH demonstrates when she talks of war, the perpetration of violence leaves the perpetrator scarred. yet, she does not extend this observation to civilian life. this is a mistake. we try to understand and forgive the horrors soldiers perpetrate under orders on the battlefield (whatever that is; that specific spacial designation no longer exists), but we are loath to understand the pressures that push men to take their rage out on women, children, other men, and, increasingly, strange bystanders in our civilian communities.

what lies behind school shootings and other civilian rampages? diagnosing and medicating mental pain away, clearly, is not working. we have to restructure our culture of psychic healing from the ground up. it has to be based on deep listening, deep investigation, and a genuine, long-term commitment to the well-being of the patient. too few graduate programs in psychology train therapists in the arts of deep listening and deep therapy. this is a crisis we can no longer afford to ignore. ...more

Trauma And Recovery Quotes

I first fanboy squealed on page 11, when Judith Lewis Herman created a connection between mental illness and feminism, two of my favorite topics. In the first third of Trauma and Recovery, Herman discusses the history of trauma and how trauma relates to many other concepts, such as politics and warfare. In contemporary society people insulate and isolate the topic of mental illness with alarming speed, so delving into its pervasiveness in all areas of life brought its magnitude back into focus. I first fanboy squealed on page 11, when Judith Lewis Herman created a connection between mental illness and feminism, two of my favorite topics. In the first third of Trauma and Recovery, Herman discusses the history of trauma and how trauma relates to many other concepts, such as politics and warfare. In contemporary society people insulate and isolate the topic of mental illness with alarming speed, so delving into its pervasiveness in all areas of life brought its magnitude back into focus. Depression, for example, is not just an illness that affects people because they might feel sad out of the blue: depression and its symptoms have a rich history and an unfortunate stake in several domains.

Herman also writes in-depth about trauma itself, which made me love Trauma and Recovery, even as it tore me apart. With fluid and poignant prose, she sets forth a tripartite recovery model: establishing a safe environment for the victim, unearthing the trauma and working through its emotional wounds, and moving forward to maintain a new post-trauma life that expands upon the experiences of the victim. As someone who has dealt with trauma and wants to one day work as a therapist, this book resonated with me more than any textbook or piece of nonfiction I've ever read. Herman explains concepts with confidence and clarity, and her guiding tone shows that she empathizes with victims and wishes to support them throughout the recovery process.

So many little things added to my affection for Herman's most well-known work. As an English and Psychology double major, I felt joy every time she used books written by authors like Woolf and O'Brien to provide examples for psychological ideas. She drives home the idea that mental health and politics remain connected because mental health intrinsically relates to oppressed people and the blows they suffer. Herman ends the book by commenting on the influential role of therapists: not only do they help victims regain control of their lives, but they also act as witnesses to victims' stories. They testify to the truth, and they fight for the clients they work it, no matter what the cost.

Overall, an inspiring and enlightening read. Trauma and Recovery was published quite awhile ago, which shows through its use of gender pronouns (men are also abused, and women serve in the armed forces as well) but the book still raises a wealth of information and understanding. It has revitalized my passion for psychology and the field of mental illness, and I'm certain I will revisit it in the future.

*review cross-posted on my blog, the quiet voice. ...more

I can't do this book justice with a review. Feminist, short, and packed with information about what PTSD is, how it comes about, and how to heal it. Applied philosophy resulting in the sort of "holy shit!"

moments that had me dragging friends out on long walks around lakes and organizing two-person slumber parties just so I'd have a chance to share some of these lessons learned. To adequately summarize this info, I'd basically need to copy the whole book here, so just go out and read it. This book is, how it comes about, and how to heal it. Applied philosophy resulting in the sort of "holy shit!" moments that had me dragging friends out on long walks around lakes and organizing two-person slumber parties just so I'd have a chance to share some of these lessons learned. To adequately summarize this info, I'd basically need to copy the whole book here, so just go out and read it. This book is hella old and revolutionized the diagnosis of "women's problems" (hysteria/borderline personality disorder) as world problems. Thank you Judith Herman, I recognize a debt of gratitude! This world is super fucked, and it's really important that we have some skillz to understand that and deal with how it manifests in our bodies!

See also *Aftershock: Confronting Trauma in a Violent World: A Guide for Activists and Their Allies* for a more practical manual. ...more

Trauma And Recovery Judith Herman Citation

update on this review: 15 Sept, 12017 HE, about 2 years or so after first read: at the bottom...

So I guess I'm in Stage 3, now !!! :-)

Original review, circa. 2010:5

This book, for me, was a horrible read. Horribly accurate. Yet hopeful as well.

Horrible to see that I am not so different after all -I see myself in every comment she makes on adults who survived long-term trauma as children.

Horrible to see that my experience is not so different.

Yet hopeful to see that there are ways of solving the update on this review: 15 Sept, 12017 HE, about 2 years or so after first read: at the bottom...

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Horrible to see that my experience is not so different.

Yet hopeful to see that there are ways of solving the problem, living 'normally' -just that ignoring it is not one of those ways.

Most irritating.

Especially after burn-out has twice stopped me from working enough to distract myself from my distracting memories.

She mentions *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* in her 2015 epilogue, and that book seems to recommend both movement and writing -both of which helped me until I had to get back to sitting in a chair looking for a job all day long.

I seem to be stuck in Stage 2, and worst of all, I read over and over again that either in writing or in talking therapy, I must now stop "living in my head" and move back into my body. I have always found it

easier to forget to eat than to bother about my body. Work has always been a useful form of escape, until now. Ok, not so much -once I get to about the intermediate level of just about anything, it seems no longer to hold my interest, and I find myself assaulted by unwanted memories that refuse to go back into their Blankety-Blank-Blank!!! boxes.

Irritatingly enough, this is the first place I have seen such a thing predicted.

She even has the gall to predict and counter my 'unique' perspective on my right to choose when to die, and how. Apparently this too is normal for folks like me. Huh. So much for being misunderstood. I guess she has us pegged, finally, Thank the non-existent God!! Finally someone actually documents what we go through, and tells us it is a normal response to a hideous start in life. Ok, now, on to how to fix the problem: start with safety (years of martial arts did help some), get a good therapist, talk, write, and move your body. And remember that faking functionality will not work forever.

Peace,

Shira

27.10.12015 HE

... update, 15.9.12017 HE

I see what a difference a perceptive, attentive and flexible therapist can make: first of all, one does not have to sit and purposely relive the entire series of traumatic events, which in any case is impossible to do on a conscious level for dealing with childhood abuse, as there are just too many events.

Perceptiveness: What my newest therapist told me that made a difference was that there was no need to go back through all of those events, because I was already reliving my traumas every day, each time I am triggered: it remained, however, to follow those triggers back to the originating event(s) and deal with those.

Naturally, I tried to squirm out of it by skipping past whenever possible, and that is where the attentiveness comes in: she always redirects me where other therapists let or even encourage me to avoid sitting with that trigger, and following it back to the source event(s) to figure out what is happening to the child-me, and then

Flexibility: this therapist had to dispense with Affirmations, as I pointed out that they are very counter-productive for me. So instead, she had me develop an 'imagination' I had years ago of myself as several people, one very young (4 yr old), one about 15, another about 17, and another older, maybe 23 or so years old. She added a Parental figure, and told me to look for the frightened 4 year old, and find out where she was, and what she wanted, and then have my own Inner Parent explain to my wounded 4-year old that she/I would take care of it, and keep her/me safe.

After some time, this works. Now, I know that when fireworks/loud noises/shouting happens, it is not just me there and then, but my inner 4-yr old hiding while hearing my mom being beaten, and my adult-me can say 'I got this, you are safe.' and excuse myself to keep from being further triggered.

Finally, after months of work, and then being told that mourning the loss of childhood, protection by parents, etc, is in fact necessary, I began a long web search (which seems to confirm), and found this website as a nice To Do List to check off (because I like to know when I'm done!):

[http://outofthefog.website/toolbox-1/...](http://outofthefog.website/toolbox-1/)

Hope this helps others,

Shira ...more

Ah-ha, there it is. I've been looking for this book for about five years now. Not this book, I mean, but a book that frames a discussion of post trauma pathologies with feminist discourse without being . . . what's the word I'm looking for? Annoying. This book does that. It's fascinating, actually, starting in with the history of trauma's emergence into public consciousness in connection with successive political movements (secular humanism, postwar relief, feminism). Then on through symptomolog Ah-ha, there it is. I've been looking for this book for about five years now. Not this book, I mean, but a book that frames a discussion of post trauma pathologies with feminist discourse without being . . . what's the word I'm looking for? Annoying. This book does that. It's fascinating, actually, starting in with the history of trauma's emergence into public consciousness in connection with successive political movements (secular humanism, postwar relief, feminism). Then on through symptomology, case histories, and treatments. There are two central arguments. The one about trauma research and treatment as politically charged acts isn't particularly new to me, but it's one of those things that doesn't so much need repeating as shouting from the rooftops. And the argument that the complex post traumatic response to prolonged violence is pathologically distinct from classic single-trauma PTSD is also familiar, but nicely presented.

The whole thing is solid, deftly told, agonizing in places. And she talks about soldiers and battered women in ways that are illuminating, rather than pat or oppositional. This is one of those books about gender that spends all it's time talking about people, if you know what I mean. The only flaw isn't actually one â€” this was written in the mid-90's, so it's missing both a boatload of pharmacological and neurological data and insights on the most recent developments in the political aspects of trauma.

Highly recommended. ...more

Trauma And Recovery Judith

This was assigned reading in my first year of graduate school, and eight years later, I still refer to it. It's my professional bible. Judith Herman has written the quintessential book on trauma. She somehow has managed to convey all the complex elements of this phenomenon in less than 250 pages. She also (as far as I know) was one of the first to differentiate between single incident trauma and ongoing trauma. She writes in a style that is simple enough for anyone to read but does not sound simple. This was assigned reading in my first year of graduate school, and eight years later, I still refer to it. It's my professional bible. Judith Herman has written the quintessential book on trauma. She somehow has managed to convey all the complex elements of this phenomenon in less than 250 pages. She also (as far as I know) was one of the first to differentiate between single incident trauma and ongoing trauma. She writes in a style that is simple enough for anyone to read but does not sound simplistic. She illustrates her points with poignant examples drawn from diverse sources, from Elie Wiesel to Winston Smith. I love this book. ...more

I read this for work purposes and found it a helpful and thought-provoking resource, a book I'll likely want to refer to again in the future. First published in 1992, this was apparently a ground-breaking work, but while there's been plenty of research into trauma since then (if you can recommend a good follow-up to this one, please let me know!), it has stood the test of time so far. Certainly it rings true to my experience.

As you would expect from the title, the primary focus of the book is on I read this for work purposes and found it a helpful and thought-provoking resource, a book I'll likely want to refer to again in the future. First published in 1992, this was apparently a ground-breaking work, but while there's been plenty of research into trauma since then (if you can recommend a good follow-up to this one, please let me know!), it has stood the test of time so far. Certainly it rings true to my experience.

As you would expect from the title, the primary focus of the book is on describing the effects and symptoms of psychological trauma, and the stages of a successful recovery. It can at times be tough reading emotionally, even though it's not a book focused on case studies or anecdotes (indeed, my only quibble with the book is that I would've liked to see the specific cases, set off in short blockquotes, expanded and integrated more into the book). But the educated reader will find it accessible; this is an academic book, but of the best kind, written in clear and engaging language. It would make worthwhile reading not just for therapists and students, but also for trauma survivors, their loved ones, and other professionals. The author sees the big picture "only a small part of the book is geared specifically to therapists" and I found that very helpful in providing a framework for understanding things I have seen and heard from various people.

Another aspect of this book that bears mentioning, and which I appreciate, is Dr. Herman's unabashedly feminist perspective. The book addresses and draws on research from many sources of trauma, from combat to concentration camps, but the author's experience seems to be primarily

with survivors of sexual abuse in childhood, and it is the unfortunately more everyday sorts of trauma that the book comes back to. She makes no bones about the fact that recognizing trauma brought on by rape, domestic violence, or child sex abuse is political; admitting that these things happen, primarily to women and girls and in large numbers, and that those experiences matter, that it is serious, is political. And that affects everyone involved.

At any rate, this is an excellent book, very informative and thorough. Reading it gave me a better understanding of people I work with and made me think about areas where I might do better. Now, off to apply this knowledge without overstepping and pretending to be a therapist (which I definitely am not!). ...more

Trauma And Recovery Judith Herman Free Pdf

It is easy to see why Judith Herman's visionary book *Trauma and Recovery* is considered a classic in the field of psychology. In her work, Herman describes the conditions that create posttraumatic stress and then details a path of recovery. She explores the many manifestations of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder within the human mind, body and spirit then identifies the interwoven and overlapping stages of trauma recovery with clarity and purpose. Most notably, Herman describes the difficulty of telling the truth of suffering and the complementary difficulty of hearing the truth and helping those in pain to tell their stories. She understands that human beings naturally recoil from pain of any kind and cautiously emphasizes the importance of community in healing traumatic grief.

In the second half of this book, the author suggests that recovery typically follows a process during which the survivor attains safety, goes through a period of remembrance and mourning, and reconnects with himself or herself and the world around him or her. Herman continuously emphasizes that these stages are not fixed and predictable, but rather individual in nature, significantly influenced by one's environment, and can occur simultaneously. She also reasons that since the effect of the trauma is to disempower and disconnect the victims from others, healing from the effects of the trauma means that the victim becomes empowered and is able to form new, healthy attachments. In considering the role of community in the recovery process, Herman suggests that group psychotherapy can provide survivors with a needed sense of commonality. She is, however, very careful to point out that survivor group composition and focus be based largely on the client's present stage of recovery. I found this warning difficult to fully accept as I wondered "if recovery is so multi-faceted and its stages are so intermingled, who could determine just where a person is in their recovery? And wouldn't the benefit of belonging to a community of others with similar experiences outweigh the psychological risk of being re-traumatized by a person in an earlier stage of recovery? I still don't have an answer for this one but overall, Judith Herman's work presents fresh new ideas about trauma, survival, and healing with a bold and fearless voice. This book is an intelligent resource for people who work with trauma survivors though some chapters may be too academic to be used as a self-help tool.

...more

Excellent. If you just read one book on the rise of the psychoanalytic world view, just read this one. The first chapter is a devastating critique of how Freud, understandably, abandoned the women that taught him the talking cure, and invented the Oedipus complex to explain away their disturbing stories of sexual abuse. Herman also explains how 1950s American women, freed from domestic drudgery to

have time to discuss and question some of their abusive experiences, and then the returning Vietnam Veterans with their desperate need to process their gruesome experiences together drew out from American society what we now think of as psychotherapy and counselling. Of course Freud's groundwork was essential. ...more

Trauma And Recovery Center

Don't let the rating lead you to believe that this book is not essential and extremely helpful reading on trauma and the challenges it poses to individuals in healing. The reasons I did not rate it higher was the pathologizing use of diagnostic categories, an emphasis on the healing relationship that tended to the therapist 4x more than the survivor (16 pages to 4 respectively, but arguably because of the intended audience and the expertise of the author), and the distorting separation of the stages of recovery. I suspect that, like the stages of grief, or any other psychological/emotional/spiritual process, these stages overlap and spiral and are not distinct. Although I don't remember reading her saying so, perhaps she meant the emphasis shifts among the main tasks in the progression she describes.

The text does not stray as far from dominant narratives about the nature of those traumatized as I would personally prefer, but it provides a fabulous resource to those who wish to understand the nature of trauma and to glimpse possibilities of what healing may look like. In a time when still many would claim that those who have experienced trauma are irrevocably damaged and seek to separate them off from "sane" society, this text stands in defiance to that view and testifies to the terrible widespread nature of trauma, the courage and determination of survivors and the commitment of therapists in seeking to provide help and hope. ...more

Toto nie je Å• isto psychologickÅ• kniha, pretoÅ• sa v nej hovorÅ• aj o historickÅ½ch a politickÅ½ch aspektoch jednak traumy, a za druhÅ© jej skÅ• mania a lieÅ• enia. Ako Å• ene, ktorÅ• tieÅ¼ traumy zaÅ¼ila, sa mi tieÅ¼ pÅ• i, Å•e moju skÅ•senosÅ¥ porovnjÅ¼va autorka so skÅ•senosÅ¥ou Å¼udÅ•, ktorÅ• zaÅ¼ili krutosti vojny. MÅ¼m tak dojem, Å•e moja trauma bola naozaj takÅ• zniÅ• uÅ°ca, akÅ© sÅ° zniÅ• uÅ°ce jej nÅ¼sledky.

DÅ´ leÅ¼itÅ© posolstvo, ktorÅ© si z knihy odnÅ¼am, je akÅ© dÅ´ leÅ¼itÅ© je potrestanie vinnÅ-kov a vinnÅ-Å• ok a zÅ¼roveÅ^ potvrdenie Toto nie je Å• isto psychologickÅ• kniha, pretoÅ• sa v nej hovorÅ• aj o historickÅ½ch a politickÅ½ch aspektoch jednak traumy, a za druhÅ© jej skÅ• mania a lieÅ• enia. Ako Å• ene, ktorÅ• tieÅ¼ traumy zaÅ¼ila, sa mi tieÅ¼ pÅ• i, Å•e moju skÅ•senosÅ¥ porovnjÅ¼va autorka so skÅ•senosÅ¥ou Å¼udÅ•, ktorÅ• zaÅ¼ili krutosti vojny. MÅ¼m tak dojem, Å•e moja trauma bola naozaj takÅ• zniÅ• uÅ°ca, akÅ© sÅ° zniÅ• uÅ°ce jej nÅ¼sledky.

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Kniha zÅ¼roveÅ^ poskytuje nÅ¼vod, ako traumy lieÅ• iÅ¥, a to vcelku podrobnÅ½, takÅ•e je urÅ• ite

Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence - From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror

uÅ¼itoÄ• nÃ; aj pre psychoterapeutky a psychoterapeutov. ...more

Trauma And Recovery Review

This book was a challenging read. I had so many thoughts and reactions to it. After reading the first few pages, I immediately wanted there to be a connection made to the history of enslaving Africans in America. I found myself constantly webbing that narrative into this text. I was disappointed at the end of the text because I realized that the only thought given to chattel slavery and its lasting impact was a reference to police brutality in California. Chattel slavery was the most traumatizing human experience inflicted in the world to date, and the most horrific event to occur on American soil. To speak of the history of violence, trauma and recovery and completely dismiss that experience is shameful, hypocritical and intentional. ...more

I read this a LONG time ago during the 90's when my therapist gave it to me. She was the best therapist ever- I probably suffered from I love my therapist can she please be my mommy syndrome with her. She always gave me excellent material to read and mull over. This was one of those books and I forgot the title of this. I only just now was able to find it after inputting a ton of random searches on google looking for it. I'm so glad because I want to do a re reading of this! I will also give the I read this a LONG time ago during the 90's when my therapist gave it to me. She was the best therapist ever- I probably suffered from I love my therapist can she please be my mommy syndrome with her. She always gave me excellent material to read and mull over. This was one of those books and I forgot the title of this. I only just now was able to find it after inputting a ton of random searches on google looking for it. I'm so glad because I want to do a re reading of this! I will also give these to all of my bff's who also happen to be as dysfunctional as I am..

...more

Dr. Herman opens the door to trauma and its causes in easy to understand, non-medical language. From child abuse to rape to combat trauma, she discusses each type of trauma in turn, points out the differences between them, and goes into depth about the types of treatment that lead to recovery. ...more

Beginning in the early years of psychiatry when women who were abused were called hysterics. Until the mid and late sixties, psychiatrists didn't have the vocabulary to lead patients to talk about childhood abuse and familial rape. Now, as women have spoken out about their abuse, medicine has faced the problem and developed treatment programs specifically for survivors of child abuse and rape.

Herman opens the door to recovery through a series of steps that follow a pattern but which have to be tuned for each type of trauma. War trauma victims cannot be in the same group as incest victims, yet the techniques are similar in helping the patient open locked doors.

For any person who has suffered either short- or long- term trauma, the book can be painful, while at the same time enlightening. A brilliant and accessible approach to trauma, its costs, and the benefits of recovery. ...more