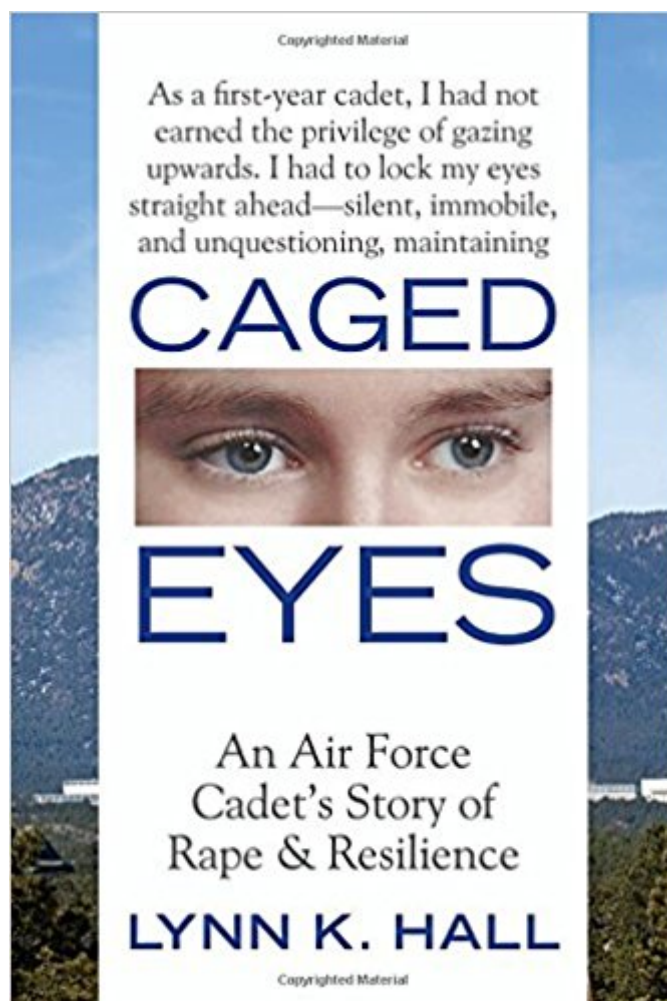


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# Caged Eyes: An Air Force Cadet's Story Of Rape And Resilience



## Synopsis

An insider's account of misogyny and rape in the US military and her extraordinary path to recovery and activism  
Desperate to realize her childhood dream of being an astronaut, Lynn K. Hall was an enthusiastic young cadet. For Hall, the military offered an escape from her chaotic home—her erratic mother, absent biological father, and a man she called "Dad"—who sexually abused her. Resolute and committed to the Air Force Academy, Hall survived the ordeals of a first-year cadet: intense hazing from upperclassmen, grueling physical training, and demanding coursework. But she was dismissed from the Academy when, after being raped by an upperclassman and contracting herpes, she is diagnosed with meningitis and left with chronic and debilitating pain. Betrayed by the Academy and overcome with shame, Hall candidly recounts her loss of self, the dissociation from her body and the forfeiture of her individuality as a result of the military's demands and her perpetrator's abuse. Forced to leave the military and return to the civilian world, Hall turns to extreme sports to cope with and overcome PTSD and chronic pain. She, in turn, reclaims herself on the mountain trails of the Colorado Rockies. An intimate account of grappling with shame and a misogynistic culture that condones rape and blames victims, *Caged Eyes* is also a transformative story of how it's possible to help yourself and others in the aftermath of a profound injustice.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Hall opens a window onto sexual assault in general and the effect it has immediately and years,

even decades, afterward...Hall allows them to truly understand how victims internalize the worst accusations of the culture around them and the monumental effort needed to combat their own self-doubt...a deeper understanding of an important issue.ââ"Kirkus Reviews"âTold in compelling, honest prose, *Caged Eyes* is both an exposé of the horrifying misogyny and rape culture within the US military and a memoir of extraordinary resilience and triumph.ââ"Helen Benedict, author of *The Lonely Soldier* and *Sand Queen*âLynn Hall is a powerful writer who tells an epic story. She vividly captures what it means to be raped by a fellow cadetâ"someone she considered family. She brings to life in a deeply personal way the double betrayal. First she was assaulted by a friend, and then she was silenced by an institution she loved, one which proved sadly incapable of enacting true justice. Hall is an incredibly resilient human being and this is a spectacular book about finding one's voice and speaking out about injustice.ââ"Helen Thorpe, author of *Soldier Girls: The Battles of Three Women at Home and at War*âBrave, direct, and unflinching, Hall portrays, with compelling detail, the battle that women fight against sexual violence. Her story is heartbreaking, but also honest and inspiring. Her powerful voice makes this an absolutely necessary book, addressing a critically important issue.ââ"Sue William Silverman, author of *Because I Remember Terror, Father, I Remember You*âCaged Eyes is an incredible story of a young woman's odyssey. As Lynn Hall seeks to fulfill her dream to fly, she confronts unspeakable familial and health roadblocks due to sexual abuse first at home and later while a student in the Air Force Academy. Hall's story confronts us with a modern-day pilgrim's progress through the sometimes torturous path of growing up female in a man's world. Due to her resilience and the love of friends, this is ultimately a tale of resurrection and hope for women struggling for sexual equality.ââ"Peggy Sanday, author of *Fraternity Gang Rape: Sex, Brotherhood, and Privilege on Campus*âAs a vulnerable young woman, Lynn Hall encountered a succession of men, and then a prestigious institution, that not only abused her but tried to coerce her into silence. But they did not succeed. This beautiful and inspiring memoir represents the triumph of her voiceâand by extension that of countless other victims and survivorsâover the actions and inactions of perpetrators and bystanders who might have been able to inflict pain, but who could never hold a candle to her strength of character and moral integrity.ââ"Jackson Katz, Ph.D. co-founder of Mentors in Violence Prevention, the first system-wide gender violence prevention program in the U.S. military, and author of *The Macho Paradox: Why Some Men Hurt Women* and *How all Men Can Help*

Lynn Hall is a memoirist, essayist, and activist in the movement to end sexual violence. She is also

a mountaineer who has summited each of Colorado's 14,000-foot-tall peaks and a runner who has completed a 100-mile ultramarathon. She lives in Boulder.

I'm not normally one to read memoirs but I'm glad I had the chance to read this powerful book. This one left me shaken. I found myself crying in many parts of it, my heart breaking for the situations that Lynn found herself in during her time at the Air Force Academy. Having resilience in the title is apt, because Lynn K. Hall has it in spades. I'm not sure I could have had the same strength that she did to overcome everything she went through. This is an important book and even more so in the times we find ourselves in where the conversation about women's rights, their bodies and the respect that women deserve are in the forefront of the news. It is stories like Lynn's that truly prove that we need a new dialogue. We need to stop the victim-shaming and teach our boys that rape is never, never ok. In my opinion, this memoir is a must read.

This is an emotionally intense memoir, as the title suggests. It's written clearly and directly...honestly it would make an amazing movie, which I can't believe I am writing in a review, because that seems like a dumb thing to say...but Hall captured the tension and drama so succinctly I could not put it down. I was halfway through this morning, and spent the entire day blowing off all my responsibilities because I just had to know what happened next. I read mostly memoir, and this was one of the most intense books I have read in a long time. But intense doesn't only refer to negative emotions, in this case the upward swoop of the arc was just as exhilarating as the depths of despair.

Lynn Hall's memoir is an important, well-written, and - above all - honest book. It's a tough read emotionally, and I'm so glad I read it! For those of us who feel sorry for ourselves over the most insignificant slight or who complain over the most minor physical ailments, we are given a glimpse into what actual hardship and actual pain feel like. And in the process we are shown what real courage, resilience, and strength are as well. And talk about strength! - Lynn Hall is an amazing person and a wonderful writer. Her book *Caged Eyes* made me feel anger, sadness, and most of all hope - both for change and for her continued success.

What an incredible book. This is a wonderfully useful book to read as a rape survivor and for anyone who loves someone who has been raped or wishes to understand rape culture. As a fellow memoirist entrenched in my own revelations of trauma, I know what a beast it is to bring the truth to

the surface. Lynn K. Hall has done this masterfully. That she was abused inside and outside of the military is atrocious and yet all too easy to see how it happens regularly. Thank, you, Lynn, for joining the ranks of survivors who expose the abusers and the systems in place that allow those abusers to thrive. May we all work together to take rape culture down.

This is one of the most powerful books I have read in a long time. It is not an easy read. Let me clarify: the writing is excellent and I read the entire book in a single weekend. But the subject matter is a challenging one, the sexual abuse that Hall suffered first as a teenager from trusted adult friends and then a rape that happened while she was a cadet in the Air Force Academy. This is a book about trusting yourself, being strong, fighting for your rights, and moving past trauma, even given the severe challenges Hall had (the physical repercussions of the rape continue even more than a decade after it occurred). I found myself tearing up at the end, as ultimately Hall fights to heal herself. This book angered me, saddened me, and ultimately uplifted me. Every feminist--no, every woman--should read this book. I hate to repeat myself but it's the best word for it: Powerful.

This is a fascinating, sometimes horrifying, ultimately inspiring memoir. Read it. (Some customers have said it's "hard to read." It's really not. The author's approach is not sensationalistic or morbid, so while some parts deal with her abuse, she is so honest and is so obviously empowered as a result of these experiences, it's more enlightening than terrifying. She was victimized but does not come off as a victim. That makes all the difference.)

The subject matter is intense, occasionally graphic, and never sugar coated but so was the author's experience as nearly every person and system that should have protected her or taken care of her failed (or worse). I am in awe of Lynn's sheer grit and determination that got her through her experiences, and continues to get her through daily headaches, the writing of this book, and 100 mile runs.

Despite my limited knowledge about the United States military, and the jargon used within that culture, Lynn Hall does a great job at creating an accessible memoir for all. Although a lot of the material she shares is often unpleasant, and sometimes downright uncomfortable to read, her story is written very fluidly and makes for a page-turner. I never once felt like Hall wrote her memoir in a self-pitying way; instead, her tone is matter-of-fact, yet easy-going. Reading this helped me learn a lot about one of America's most cherished entities, and the damaging culture that resides there. I

strongly encourage any and all to read this memoir, as it does an excellent job of covering a variety of uncomfortable topics that are often swept under the rug!

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