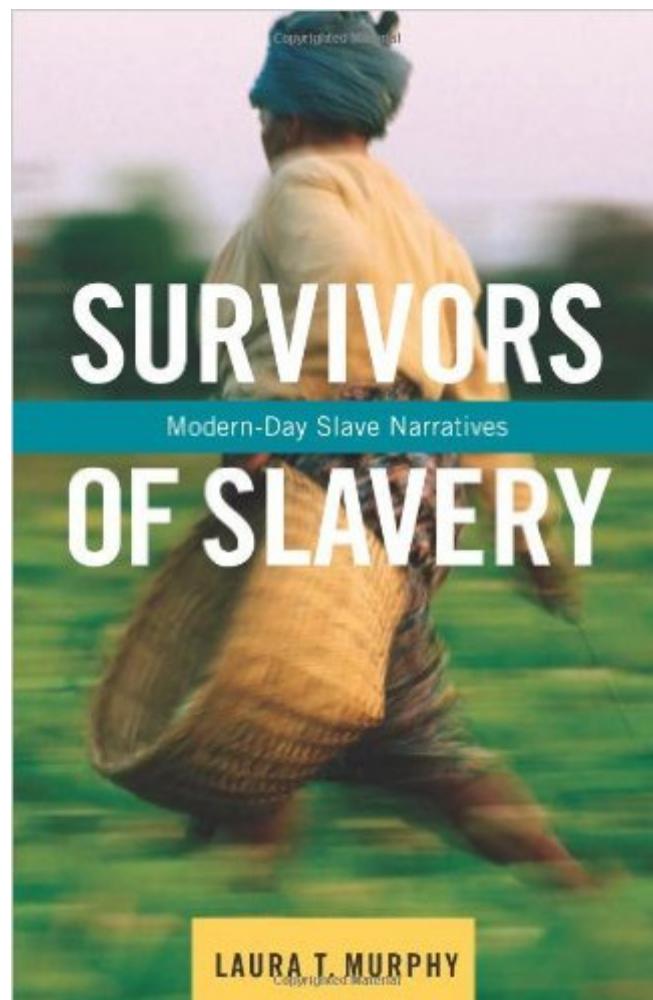


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# Survivors Of Slavery: Modern-Day Slave Narratives



## **Synopsis**

Slavery is not a crime confined to the far reaches of history. It is an injustice that continues to entrap twenty-seven million people across the globe. Laura Murphy offers close to forty survivor narratives from Cambodia, Ghana, Lebanon, Macedonia, Mexico, Russia, Thailand, Ukraine, and the United States, detailing the horrors of a system that forces people to work without pay and against their will, under the threat of violence, with little or no means of escape. Representing a variety of circumstances in diverse contexts, these survivors are the Frederick Douglasses, Sojourner Truths, and Olaudah Equianos of our time, testifying to the widespread existence of a human rights tragedy and the urgent need to address it. Through storytelling and firsthand testimony, this anthology shapes a twenty-first-century narrative that many believe died with the end of slavery in the Americas. Organized around such issues as the need for work, the punishment of defiance, and the move toward activism, the collection isolates the causes, mechanisms, and responses to slavery that allow the phenomenon to endure. Enhancing scholarship in women's studies, sociology, criminology, law, social work, and literary studies, the text establishes a common trajectory of vulnerability, enslavement, captivity, escape, and recovery, creating an invaluable resource for activists, scholars, legislators, and service providers.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

For me, itâ™s sadden to think that in the 21st century, that slavery of any form still existsâ |This book offers personal accounts from those who got caught up in the world of human trafficking, & for

the most part were able to free themselves from bondage. The thing I love about this book is that it doesn't just focus on sexual slavery, but all forms of involuntary servitude including forced labor which doesn't get as much attention as sexual slavery. Some of the former victims profiled here have since gotten involved in organizations which help formerly trafficked people. Although written mainly for scholars, this is also a great read for those who want to understand modern-day slavery from those who lived through it.

Laura T. Murphy's "Survivors of Slavery" is a powerful and moving collection of personal stories told by survivors of human trafficking. Often times, we see articles about human trafficking, but many of us don't realize the severity and horrors of human trafficking. Murphy offers background information and analysis on various problems surrounding human trafficking, and provides first person narratives/interviews told by survivors from both sex and labor trafficking. As a student who has spent some time reading articles and novels surrounding human trafficking, it was a completely different approach to learning about the various atrocities that these survivors had to overcome. My favorite part of this novel was the discussion at the end on how we, as readers, can become abolitionists to fight against human trafficking as I found myself uneasy realizing that everyday, thousands of victims go through similar treatment as the narratives in this book. Overall, this collection of narratives is a very informative and saddening truth about the horrible crime of Human Trafficking.

In this collection of stories, Laura Murphy explores the experiences that survivors of human trafficking have had during their time in imprisonment. Murphy describes the details of each survivor's story in a way that really draws the reader into how the mindset of somebody who is forced into these situations works. Each story unveils a different facet of the crime of human trafficking and allows the reader to really see the complexity of the crime and the barriers that victims must overcome to become survivors. Because these stories are based on real experiences, the real human faces of this hidden crime are really brought to life and allows readers to see them as people that are not much different from themselves rather than just statistics. What could have made these stories stronger is the inclusion of photographs of the places where these victims lived or of the victims themselves throughout the book. Images can often make a much stronger impact than pure words, but I do realize that privacy and security most likely were in issue in publishing these accounts.

Although most people understand the negative impact of slavery, current historians and researchers may struggle to honor the voices of victims and survivors of modern-day slavery. However, Murphy both highlights and celebrates the voices of the most significant stakeholder in contemporary anti-slavery movements: the survivors. By presenting the narratives of modern-day survivors that highlights their experiences and stories of survival, it reveals the reality of slavery beyond the scope of a history textbook. The stories are raw and elicit strong emotional responses, bringing the human element back into the picture and galvanize the reader to take action. The book explores the social context where slaves resist challenges of freedom because of systems of oppression, religious prejudice, or social hierarchies to share their story. In the words of Murphy, “the voices in this book have risen above that shame or, just as likely, have spoken even as it has tormented them.” The chapters highlight human trafficking in a variety of context from domestic work to the sex trade, as well as the transition from survivor to activist. Ultimately, although these stories poignantly capture the experience of slavery for some people, but Murphy reminds the reader that this novel only captures scratch the surface of a wider spectrum of experiences that vary depending on the culture, time, and place. This book effectively informs the reader about human trafficking with a fresh perspective and victim-centered approach. Even though it’s not always comfortable to read, it’s always a tool to push the reader to be radical and forceful in the pursuit of creating a society that’s free from slavery by channeling the bravery of those who shared their own stories.

Laura Murphy’s *Survivors of Slavery* is a tough, but essential read for those who are involved in anti-trafficking work or who simply want to learn more about the phenomenon of human trafficking. This book is comprised of various personal accounts of trafficking, predominantly from survivors, but also including a few valuable interviews with traffickers. Through these accounts, readers can see how trafficking plays out at the level of the individual, from the factors that put a victim in a trafficking situation to the complex psychology of enslavement. These accounts shed light on the complexity of trafficking and help illustrate how truly difficult it can be to fully escape the world of modern day slavery. Though there are many books, films, and presentations that include survivor narratives about trafficking, Murphy approaches the survivor narrative from a uniquely sensitive perspective, acknowledging that such stories are often used to reinforce stereotypes of victimhood. As a result, she makes a deliberate effort to present these survivor narratives in as real and unedited a form as possible, allowing the lived experience and true voices of survivors to take center stage. Though these accounts can be heartbreakingly difficult to read, all of us who work against trafficking benefit from listening to those who have survived it.

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