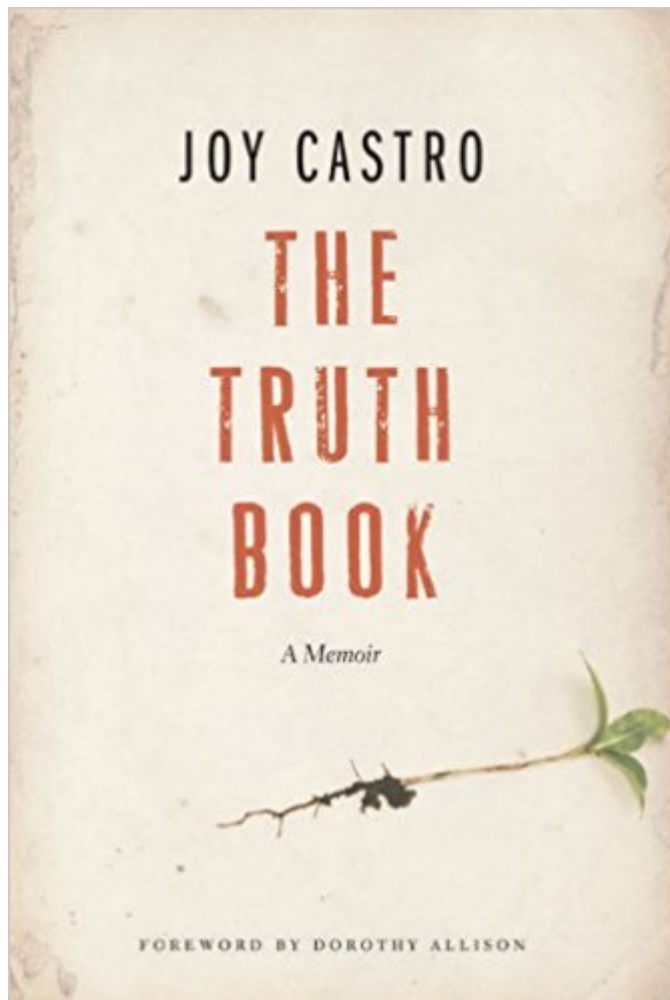


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The Truth Book: A Memoir



Synopsis

Adopted as a baby and raised by a devout Jehovah's Witness family, Joy Castro is constantly reminded to tell the truth no matter what the consequences. Nevertheless, Castro finds this tenet to be the most violated. Here, in her very own Truth Book, Castro bears witness to a childhood lost but a life regained. Castro's parents divorce after her father is excommunicated for smoking. She is twelve when her mother marries a "brother" in the church who, though exhibiting an impeccable public persona, is violent and controlling at home. For two years, Joy does not grow at all; in fact, she loses sixteen pounds in response to the physical, emotional, psychological, and sexual abuse she suffers at his hands. Her battered mother does nothing to protect her, nor does her church. She is sustained by humor, books, and her protective love for her younger brother until their daring escape. This courageous personal account looks freshly at the disturbing effects of religious hypocrisy and the resilience of the human spirit.

Book Information

Paperback: 248 pages

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Customer Reviews

"[Castro's] story is, more than merely engaging, downright embracing. The unfolding fates of Castro and her brother as they endure abuse at the hands of those entrusted with their care, even though we know they emerged whole and sane, prove utterly gripping."--Booklist (Booklist)

Joy Castro is an associate professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the

Department of English and the Institute for Ethnic Studies. She is the author of *Island of Bones* (Nebraska, 2012) and the novel *Hell or High Water*, a National Latino Book Club selection. Dorothy Allison is an award-winning poet, novelist, and essayist, and the author of *Bastard out of Carolina*.

I originally only read this book because I had to for a college course I am taking. I usually don't like to be "assigned" books to read but WOW - this was an amazing read. I had my doubts because I had never heard of the book before and there isn't much information about it/reviews for it online. Aside from the story itself being incredibly gripping and suspenseful, I enjoyed how it was written. Though confusing at first, Ms. Castro jumps back and forth between past and present events to tell her story in a way that ends up making the most sense in the end and it allows the reader to really reflect on her past and how it has shaped who she has become. Without giving away too much detail, her story is gut-wrenching at times so if you are easily triggered by stories of abuse (verbal, physical, sexual, etc.), suicide, eating disorders, etc. perhaps this book is not for you.

Joy Castro weaves a mesmerizing tale of a childhood fraught with abuse and dysfunction. Yet she does so with a creative structure, beginning at a point where we know she has survived before she delves into the muck of a mother not protecting her children from a menacing step-father and a well-meaning father who falls short in providing for them.. Castro's is a brave narrator, revealing the devices she used to protect herself while growing up and as well as acknowledging her inability to protect her younger brother. Many current memoirs appear exploitative, playing with the readers' emotions. This writer's direct and fierce narrative is more powerful by under-stating childhood environments that would have devastated less resilient souls. Read *The Truth Book* to better understand how to craft a heart-rending story.

A must read.

I read this book some time ago, but it's a book that has stayed with me. Not only is the story honest, gripping, and important, but the prose is beautiful.

This book was in my opinion a great read, I enjoyed it. It was sad and inspiring. It isn't about Jeh. witnesses, as a whole, it was how her family lived as Jeh. witnesses and the struggles her and her brother overcame. It is about hope and love.

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