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Rape Victim Inspires Poetry and State Laws

Victim of brutal rape works to help others heal emotionally, physically and financially

PONTIAC, Ill. – ***The Cape*** ([published by AuthorHouse](#)) is a collection of poetry by Michelle Eppel about her experience as a victim of rape as well as love, death, spirituality and abuse and her efforts to find peace of mind and justice. Now a voice for victims across the United States, Eppel works on a state-by-state basis to pass legislation to aid victims of rape.

“As a result of being brutally raped twenty-five years ago, I suffer from post traumatic stress disorder, loss of hearing and other illnesses,” Eppel explains. “But rape also made me a victim of poverty due to the cost of the treatment and medications that I have needed over the years because of the rape. I now serve as a voice for victims across the U.S. and am working to pass legislation nationwide to aid victims of rape with the means to pay for their medical needs.”

Eppel has testified twice and collected 536 petitions to help pass a new state law in Illinois in which perpetrators pay automatic restitution for the lifetime care of their victims’ medical treatment, counseling and prescription needs. The new law, found in Bill 701 of the State of Illinois’ House (visit www.ilga.gov, Public Act #94-0397), went into affect January 1, 2006. Eppel has taken her cause nationwide and now works to pass the law on a state-by-state basis.

Dedicated to all victims of rape and molestation, ***The Cape*** contains Eppel’s heartfelt—and often nakedly honest—emotions as illustrated in the title poem:

*Upon my face there is no trace
I wear what no man can see
An invisible cape that never sets me free...*

*His cruel voice ordered me with his commands
His ragged skin unbearable as were his callous hands
His arms strong as steel embedded me in cement
His infested body invaded mine without my consent...*

“***The Cape*** is about me and how I felt after my rape,” writes Eppel. “I have never been the same since. It is my hope to inspire self-healing for other women as well as to aid in passing the laws necessary to aid women in this process.”

About the Author: Michelle Eppel is 49 years old and stands up as a voice for victims of rape, molestation and abuse. She has two children and five grandchildren.

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