

Sugar ray leonard reveals abuse by coach in his book essay



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The former boxing champ Sugar Ray Leonard has revealed having been sexually abused by an Olympic coach when he was in his teens. The New York Times reported on Tuesday that Leonard had shared the story in the autobiography that was coming out, entitled “ The Big Fight: My Life In and Out of the Ring.” Although fans typically remember Leonard for his lightning-fast hands and sweet smile, the book has some shocking revelations to offer readers as early as page 36. After revealing some of his family background growing up, the 55-year-old former boxer went on to describe two occasions of being assaulted by the anonymous coach, the first being when he was 15 years old and competing in a Utica, N.

Y. tournament. The second incident happened a few years later, in a parked car in a deserted lot, at the time when the coach was discussing prospects for the 1976 Olympics with him. Leonard wrote that before he knew what was happening, the coach had unzipped his pants “ and put his hand, then mouth, on an area that has haunted me for life.” He shared that he did not scream nor look at the coach; he simply got out of the car and ran.

He described the assaulter as a “ prominent Olympic boxing coach” who was in his late 40s at the time. The winner of the gold medal at the Montreal Olympics light welterweight division, Leonard said that the ordeal had haunted him for years. He had reportedly made the decision to share the story in his book, hoping it would lead to his personal healing. He said that he felt he would never be free until he revealed the story, despite how much it still hurt. Writing with Michael Arkush, he had originally settled on a version of the story wherein the coach stopped prior to actual contact.

Leonard had felt that was already painful enough to share.

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But apparently, after watching the celebrity Todd Bridges share on Oprah about how he had been sexually abused when he was a kid, he realized he had to unveil the entire story. He also shared other parts of his life in the book, including his cocaine use, having fathered a child as a 17-year-old, and growing up in a home with domestic violence and alcohol abuse. The book will be published in June. Throughout his career of boxing, Leonard had garnered titles for five weight divisions, and was known as one of the greatest fighters in the sport. Leonard expressed his disinterest of commenting through his publisher, saying that publicity for the book will begin in June and he will likely comment then. The people who had been close to him during his title bouts were caught by surprise when they learned what the book contained.

Dave Jacobs, Leonard's first trainer when he was still an amateur, commented, " This is the first time I've heard of that," despite his having known Leonard since the boxer was a kid. " I feel sorry for him," he said, supposedly for having to bring the burden around with him.