

Laughter Calls Me: A young woman's search for truth leads to a courageous battle to save her children.

By Catherine Brown
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The Northwest Book Reviewer Cynthia Washington

Catherine Brown, a pseudonym for a Northwest author, tells the true story of an all-too-common family tragedy -- sexual abuse by a parent granted visitation rights. Catherine recounts these events realistically but not graphically.

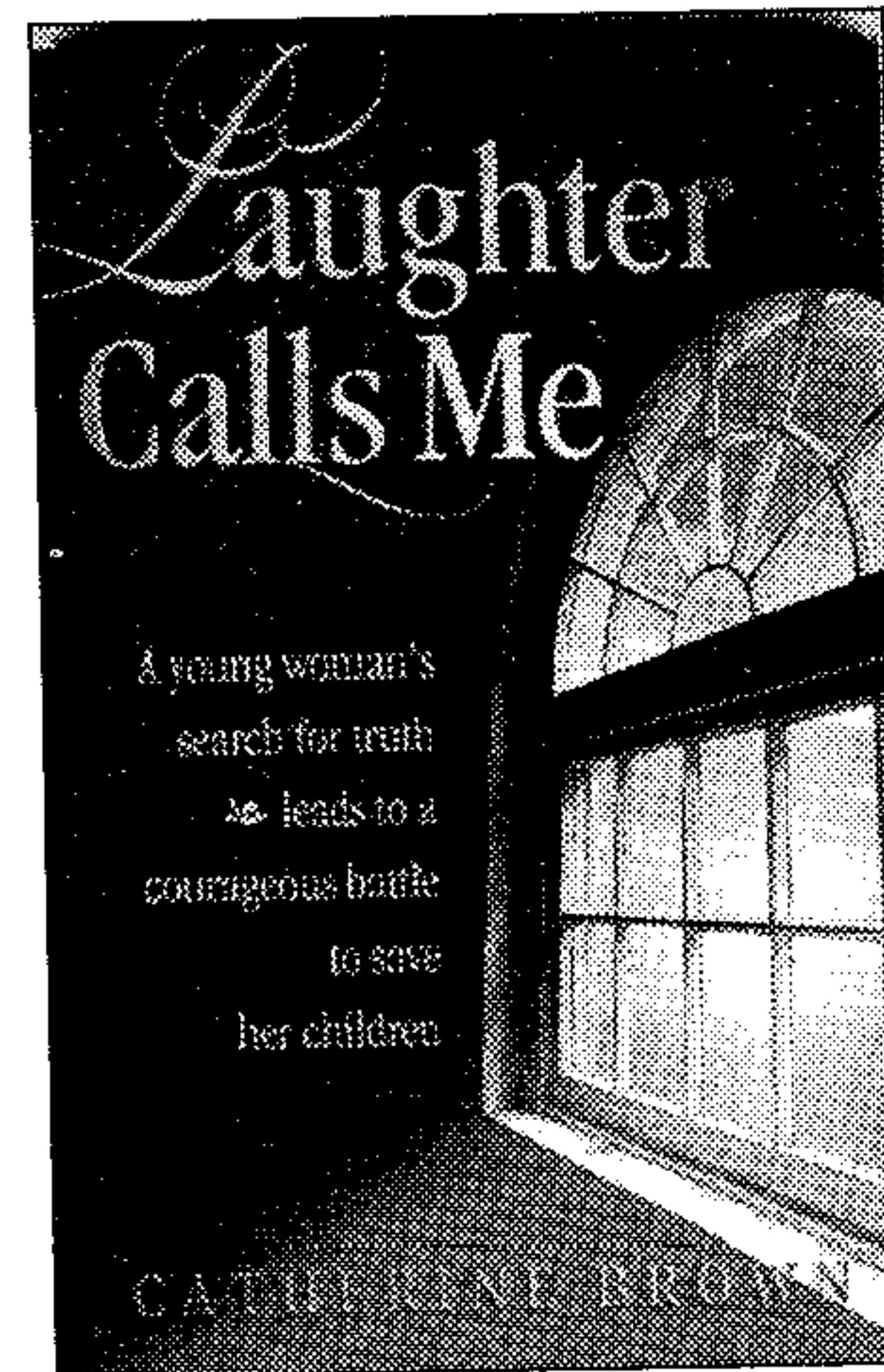
Beginning her search for God as a teenager in the 70's, she adopts a hippie lifestyle, hitchhiking across the United States until she meets Tom, a young man who enjoys smoking dope, drinking and a rustic

lifestyle which she finds appealing. She finds herself pregnant within a year of moving in with Tom and his friend. Coerced by Tom's overbearing family to marry, Catherine describes a scene from their wedding, "...I had no pretty dress to wear, and Tom was so drunk on the day of the ceremony, he grabbed his brother's hand instead of mine when it came time to say the wedding pledge."

The young couple man-

ages to get a place of their own and find farm work. Now a Christian, Catherine still smokes dope with her husband, growing marijuana in a secluded field. Unsure if this is acceptable in God's eyes, she asks Him for a sign -- minutes later, a patrol car pulls into their driveway.

The couple grows apart. Tom eventually abandons her and the children and returns to his parents' home. Catherine struggles



to nurture her children, put food on the table and grow spiritually. Eventually, Tom returns, demanding visitation rights after their divorce is final.

The rest of the book recounts how Catherine dis-

covers that Tom has been molesting their children and the steps she takes to prevent him from further abuse, hiding with the children until his visitation rights are legally revoked.

Laughter Calls Me tackles an issue that is as close to our hearts as we keep our children. Brown's book gives readers permission to do what they feel is necessary to protect their children. When she is asked by law enforcement officials to leave the room while they interview her young son alone, she refuses. When a man from Children's Protective Services tells her son, "Your dad isn't a bad person. He's just made a mistake," she throws him out of their home.

Laughter Calls Me isn't light reading, but it is important reading.