

BIOGRAPHY: LOUNG UNG

“Courage is when you dare to be yourself, in whatever ways you want to be – to not be afraid, to just be authentically you.” ~ Loung Ung

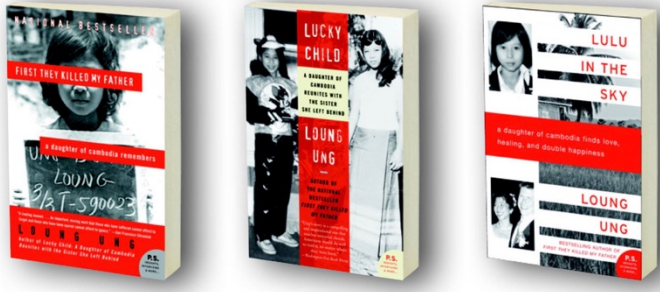


LOUNG UNG is a bestselling author, activist, and co-screenplay writer of *First They Killed My Father*, the critically acclaimed 2017 Netflix Original Movie based on her memoir directed by Angelina Jolie.

Born in 1970 in Phnom Penh, Loung was five when Khmer Rouge soldiers forced her family from their home during a mass evacuation. By 1978, the regime had killed her parents and two siblings. Orphaned and separated, Loung was trained as a child soldier in a camp where she was taught violence and hatred.

From Cambodia to America: In 1980, she and her older brother escaped by boat to Thailand, where they spent five months in a refugee camp. Her first memoir, the national best-seller *First They Killed My Father: A Daughter of Cambodia Remembers* (Harper Perennial), details her survival of Cambodia's killing fields, one of the bloodiest episodes of the twentieth century. From 1975 to 1979, some two million Cambodians -- out of a population of just seven million -- died at the hands of the infamous Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge regime. Of her family of nine, five survived. Harrowing, yet hopeful, Loung's powerful story is an unforgettable account of a family shaken and shattered, yet miraculously sustained by courage and love in the face of unspeakable brutality.

Activism & Writing: In 1995, while attending a memorial in Cambodia, Loung was devastated to learn that 20 of her relatives had been killed in the genocide and was angered by the continued injuries and deaths caused by landmines. Upon returning to the U.S., she served as the spokesperson for the Campaign for a Landmine Free World (1997-2005), a project of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines which was co-recipient of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize. She has since returned to Cambodia over 45 times.



A recipient of the Asian/Pacific American Librarians' Association Award for Excellence in Adult Non-fiction Literature, *First They Killed My Father* is widely taught in high schools and universities across the U.S. and internationally. It has been selected for numerous all-campus read programs and has been translated into 15 languages,

including Khmer, German, Dutch, Norwegian, Danish, French, Spanish, Italian, and Japanese. Loung's second book, *Lucky Child*, continues her story in Vermont, where she and her brother relocated and struggled to build their new life in America. In alternating chapters, Loung gives voice to Chou, the beloved older sister she left behind in war-torn Cambodia. Her third book,

Lulu in the Sky (Harper Perennial), tells the next chapter in Loung's life, revealing her daily struggle to keep darkness, anger, and depression at bay while falling in love and finding healing from the traumas of war upon her return to Cambodia as a young activist.



Africa, and the Child Soldiers Conference in Nepal, among others.

Sought-after Speaker: Loung has shared her messages of building resilience, healing from trauma, civic service, activism, and leadership in the U.S. and across the world. She has spoken at numerous schools and universities and organizations, including: Stanford University, Boston College, Yale University, Phillips Academy, Cathay Pacific Airlines, U.S. Coast Guard, the Young Presidents' Organization, The Million Dollar Round Table Plenary, Linkage Inc., Crowe Chizek and Company LLP, SONY, Omega Women's Leadership, the UN Conference on Women in Beijing, the UN Conference against Racism in Durban, South



NEWS *Nightline*, CBS, NBC, CNN, Fox, and C-SPAN. She is a recipient of the "Eleanor Roosevelt Val-Kil Medal of Honor" (2018).

Named one of the "100 Global Youth Leaders of Tomorrow" by The World Economic Forum, Loung is the subject of an hour-long documentary for the German ARTE, Japanese NHK, and U.S. NECN. She is also a contributing writer for the groundbreaking film *Girl Rising*, which profiles nine girls from nine countries, including Cambodia, who are struggling against odds to achieve an education. She has been featured in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *Boston Globe*, *London Sunday Times*, *Biography*, *Glamour*, *Jane*, and *Ms.* magazine. In addition, Loung has shared her story on *The Diane Rehm Show*, *Talk of the Nation*, *Weekend Edition*, *Fresh Air with Terry Gross*, *The Today Show*, and has appeared on ABC

When not writing or traveling for speaking engagements, Loung can be found tasting beers and foods with her husband, Mark Priemer at their restaurant-microbrewery, Market Garden Brewery, they co-own in Ohio City.

SPEAKING ON: Resilience, Leadership, Impact Writing, Storytelling & Memoirs, Activism, Overcoming Traumas, Mental Health & Healing. Topics include:

- First They Killed My Father: An Eyewitness Account of the Cambodian Genocide Also available with a Netflix Original Movie screening/discussion + Q&A
- Ordinary Citizens, Extraordinary Leaders: How We Can All Transform Our Community
- Resilience: lessons on overcoming trauma, finding joy, and becoming an activist.
- The Power of Narratives: Why Rewriting Your Story Will Change Your Life
- The Art of Memoir Writing: 7 tools to bring your story to life.

Loung can also tailor her talk to your organization's mission and event. For more information: visit www.LoungUng.com