

Summary of Diana Nyad's Abuse Statements

With two exceptions, Nyad alleges from 1989 until her 2017 *New York Times* op-ed that Jack Nelson raped her. From 2017 to 2023, she's adamant that no penetration occurred. She alleges rape again in 2025. My emphases throughout.

Nyad Alleges Rape (1989– June 2017)

1989 Appears on television talk show with “Raped by coach” under her name.

([*People Are Talking*](#))

1992 “Brutally raped” at 16.

([*Daily Herald*](#), Illinois)

“A former coach . . . raped her when she was in junior high.”

([*Chicago Tribune*](#))

“The coach . . . raped Nyad.”

(*Daily Herald*, Illinois, [page 1](#) – [page 2](#))

1997 [Raped](#) as a 17-year-old high school senior.

([“The Courage To Succeed”](#))

1998 “I threw up all over the sheets and bled.”

([*Atlanta Constitution*](#))

Coach abused “other teammates.”

([*Tampa Bay Times*](#))

The next two citations come from two installments of the The New York Times’ speaker series, “Breaking the Silence: Gays and Lesbians in Professional Sports.” In both versions, Nyad connects her alleged abuse and her sexual orientation.

1999 Indeterminate — suggests attempted rape

([“Reflections on a Secret Life in Professional Sports,”](#) *The New York Times*)

([“Breaking the Silence: Gays and Lesbians in Professional Sports,”](#) 1999)

2000 At 14, “I suffered a rape by this beloved coach who is my parent.”

(“2000 Breaking the Silence: Gays and Lesbians in Professional Sports,” [19:02](#))

2007 Indeterminate

(["Jack and Diana," Broward/Palm Beach New Times](#))

2010 "When multiple reports of a predator are credible and consistent, there must be some action to keep these deviants from their easy access to impressionable young people."

([KCRW](#))

2011 "I had been raped violently by my swim coach as a 14 year old."

([National Speakers Bureau, 9:36](#))

"Violent Rape." "At Least 37 Girls."

([GeoFest, 5:47](#))

2014 "[Nyad] has since the 1980s accused Nelson of having raped her when she was 14."

([New Times Broward/Palm Beach](#))

"... frankly was unforgettable. I suffered a rape."

([Beachbody](#))

"At 14 she went to his house, and 'in a gripping, violent few minutes I suffered a rape from my coach.'"

([Appetite for Advocacy](#))

2015 Not rape in *Find A Way*

2016 "And so yes, I was molested, raped by my coach."

([BBC Midweek, 9:33](#))

2017 "I went through a rape."

Jun 11

(*Brink of Midnight* podcast [clip](#))

This podcast has vanished, but Nyad [tweeted about her appearance](#) on it.

Nyad alleges molestation but not rape from November 2017 to 2024

2017

Nov 9

"I didn't breathe for perhaps two full minutes, my body locked in an impenetrable flex." ([NY Times op-ed](#))

- Nov 11 "I had corroborators."
"I want to be one of the leaders of the voices who collect the archiving."
(["All Things Considered,"](#) 1:17)
- Nov 17 "I had a coach, extremely charismatic as a lot of these sociopaths are. That's how they get away with this . . . And there was one afternoon taking a nap and he pounced, and it wasn't — didn't lead to, you know — full intercourse. I can at least be happy for that."
([Facebook Live](#), 6:15, 6:58)
- Nov 20 "I'm going to start the National Archive of sexual abuse. I'm going to be called survivor number one."
([Hang Up & Listen](#) podcast, [clip](#))
- 2020** "He did not penetrate me."
([CNN Brasil](#), [clip](#))
- 2023** According to Annette Bening, who starred as Diana Nyad in her eponymous biopic, Nyad's "early swimming was imbued with a lot of pain because her swim coach was abusing her sexually — **as well as all the other girls on the team.**"
(Annette Bening [speaking to the LA Times](#) — also [here](#))

Nyad alleges rape again in 2025

- 2025** "'The idea I never would have been this champion or never had this drive if I had not been raped by my swim coach... that I should be thankful that happened to me because it made me so tough, is bull***t,' she says."
(["Making Waves,"](#) *Saga Magazine*, February 2025. Also available at libraries via [Overdrive](#), and archived [here](#).)

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