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The Story Of Jane: The Legendary Underground Feminist Abortion Service



Synopsis

An extraordinary history by one of its members, this is the first account of Jane's evolution, the conflicts within the group, and the impact its work had both on the women it helped and the members themselves. This book stands as a compelling testament to a woman's most essential freedom--control over her own body--and to the power of women helping women.

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Customer Reviews

From 1969 until January 1973, when the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion, a pioneering group of Chicago feminists who called themselves "Jane" provided illegal access to abortions for thousands of women. Kaplan, who is now a lay midwife, joined Jane in 1971 as a counselor. Here she draws on her personal recollections and interviews with Jane members and clients and the doctors who performed the abortions to provide a well-written, detailed history of this radical group. Initially Jane was a referral agency only, but as demand grew, members became involved in counseling and attended clients' abortions, and some eventually trained to perform the abortions. Jane volunteers were convinced that women were entitled to control over their bodies, and they acted on their principles, despite the consequences. Several members were arrested in 1972, but the suit was dropped. Jane disbanded after abortion clinics became legal. A dramatic and important piece of women's history. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From 1969 until the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court ruling in 1973, a group of Chicago women formed a loose underground organization whose sole purpose was to aid women who needed abortions (then illegal, of course) in getting them as safely and inexpensively as possible. They called their referral service "Jane" and worked out a set of complicated procedures to keep both themselves and their clients out of jail. At first they handled referrals to willing doctors on a very limited basis-only three or four a week-but as word about Jane got around their business increased. Eventually the women were taught by an expert to do the abortions themselves, which enabled them to charge next to nothing to those in financial need. But the operations were not all they did; every one of the 11,000 women who came to Jane also received health education and counseling. As a study of this remarkable but little known phenomenon, this book will be of value to anyone interested in women's health, the women's movement, and women's reproductive health and rights, particularly now that those rights are coming under increasing attack. Audrey Eaglen, Cuyahoga Cty. P.L., Parma, Ohio Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"The Story of Jane" by Laura Kaplan. An account of what it will be like if the pro life zealots ever manage to outlaw abortion again. No doubt, what is currently going on in states where the right wing has been almost legislated it out of existence by those determined to impose their religious beliefs upon the rest of us. That's all the belief 'Life begins at Conception' as well as the erroneous term 'baby's' comes from. You would have thought the Prohibition era where alcohol was banned by the same moralistic crowd would have taught these zealots something, but apparently it didn't. Where crime ran rampant in this country and was swimming in illegal alcohol. It did nothing to stop people from drinking. In most cases, it encouraged people to drink. Morality cannot be legislated into existence with useless laws. Laws that only aid crime to run rampant and wind up being paid for by the taxpayer who is left to foot the bill for moral ideologues ignorance. People will always take matters into their own hands and will do what is illegal if they want the service bad enough. Admittedly these ladies were a bit more sophisticated, audacious and ingenious than I always imagined the average abortionist being, but, I was raised in the 50's where sexual information was a dirty word. I got married not having a clue about sex. I always saw abortionist's in a different light, one that was propagated by moralist's bent on painting the worst picture imaginable. So reading this book was an eye opening experience. From all of my research into the subject, they were not the only ones indulging in illegal abortion. It was common for Doctor's at the time to do such things too. There was a whole network of doctor's across this country doing the exact same thing. Dr. Tiller discovered after his father died in an automobile accident that he had been doing the same thing

since the early 40's. So no matter how many useless laws these people legislate, abortion will still be around. These ladies appeared to be more in the business on moral grounds than they did monetary reasons. Even though a lot of people see abortion as immoral. A lot of us see unwanted children who are abused as being a bigger immorality that is a result of no abortion. That doesn't include overpopulation, grinding poverty, starvation and homelessness only to name a few. So, I admire ladies like these, even though I don't think I could do it. I would definitely find myself tempted if it ever becomes illegal again. It's the best account I have read to date as what we know will happen if abortion becomes illegal. So if you are looking for a 'what if' books this is it.

Only took a week to receive. Perfect

Women Empowerment! This is a great read looking at the time before Roe v Wade and what lengths women went to take care of an unwanted pregnancy. This story shows what women can do to together to undo how we are still socialized to view ourselves and our bodies. Anyone interested in women's health, healthcare or has had an abortion or knows a friend that has will undoubtedly benefit from this book. The knowledge and clarity from the consciousness raising of the 60s is still needed today.

As a child of the 80s, I have had the privilege of existing only in a world with legal abortion. The Story of Jane introduced me to the realities of the pre-Roe era that I only vaguely knew about from films like "Dirty Dancing" or "Cider House Rules". I couldn't put it down.

My son love it

Ok

Good

I knew several of the woman who worked in Jane, though it was important to keep as much as possible on a need-to-know basis. I knew that a friend needed some supplies from a hospital where I worked, and that was enough. When religious fanatics succeed in imposing their narrow idea of religion on American law, as they once did and may again, it is important that we overcome their evil.

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