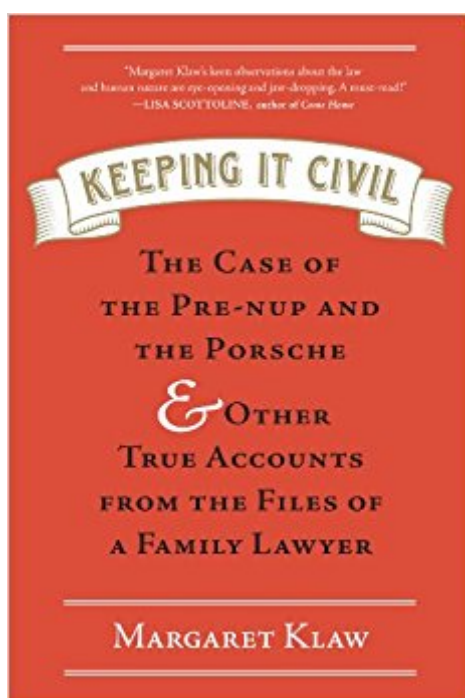


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# Keeping It Civil: The Case Of The Pre-nup And The Porsche & Other True Accounts From The Files Of A Family Lawyer



## Synopsis

Provocative true cases that explore the intersection of our most intimate relationships and the law—and offer a window into how we define a family today. A woman seeking a divorce has no idea of the family finances—her husband doled out money only after she gave him requisition slips for her intended purchases. A lesbian couple wants to include their sperm donor in their child's life—the sperm donor is the brother of one partner, so he will be the biological father as well as the child's uncle. These are the clients who come knocking on family lawyer Margaret Klaw's door, hoping for resolution.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"With a lawyer's mind and a writer's heart, Klaw brings a deeper understanding of the way cultural attitudes about sex, money, women and relationships influence the law--and vice versa. Keeping It Civil grants access to Klaw's most intriguing cases, exploring today's hot button issues through the lens of ordinary people seeking counsel." —Philadelphia Tribune

"What doesn't happen very often is that I read a book straight through, but that's what I did with Keeping It Civil. I just couldn't stop myself. That's because author and Pennsylvania 'Super Lawyer' Margaret Klaw shares her cases with excitement, energy, and compassion here. The Bookworm Sez it is both Klaw's legal expertise and her warmheartedness that make this book so approachable--and her terrific prose doesn't hurt, either. I especially recommend this for book groups, where discussions about these ethical and legal dilemmas will no doubt be spirited."

"An excellent, non-technical crash course on how and why lawyers do what they do

. . . This book accomplishes an admirable goal: to foreground the humanity in the halls of justice.â •  
â •Publishers Weekly, starred reviewâ œLove can be messy, and law is just as complicated.  
Klawâ™s book reminds readers that nothing about law is impersonal. Instead, human emotion  
remains the glue of the legal system, societal norms, and family law.â • â •Foreword  
Reviewsâ œConversational, entertaining . . . Informative and smart . . . An accessible description of  
an intricate field of law, examined in an open-hearted style.â • â •Kirkus Reviews â œMargaret  
Klawâ™s keen observations about the law and human nature are eye-opening and jaw-dropping.  
This book shows how today's cultural conflicts are played out in the lives of ordinary families in  
true-life cases that involve love, money, sex, betrayal, and power. A must read!â •Â â •Lisa  
Scottoline, New York Times bestselling author of the legal thrillers *Save Me*, *Think Twice*, and  
others

Margaret Klaw is a founding partner of Berner Klaw & Watson, a family law firm in Philadelphia,  
Pennsylvania. Named by Martindale-Hubbell as a â œPreeminent Woman Lawyer,â • she has been  
recognized as a Pennsylvania â œSuper Lawyerâ • for the past five years. An adjunct professor of  
family law at Temple Universityâ™s Law School, she speaks frequently on family law and blogs for  
the Huffington Post and DailyWorth.com.

It's hard to believe that this book is only 250 pages; there is so much in it. In some parts, it is a  
behind-the-scenes look at how family law operates. As a non-lawyer who has not been divorced, I  
now have pretty solid grasp on the rudiments of current legal frameworks for dividing joint property,  
general guidelines used for custody etc. In other parts, the book is an exploration of how family law  
is rapidly changing in a world of gay marriage, surrogacy, female breadwinners etc. It is also a  
meditation on the need for professional boundaries, even in a field of law particularly fraught with  
intense emotion, and a discussion of when those boundaries intentionally or inadvertently break  
down. Additionally, the book is a memoir of Margaret Klaw's own journey--one that many women  
can learn from as they read about how she managed to become a successful lawyer with a fulfilling  
family life. And, perhaps most compellingly, it is the story of a heartbreaking but not atypical custody  
case that is told in segments interspersed throughout the book. What holds this varied narrative  
together is *Keeping it Civil's* greatest asset: the author's voice. In spite of the sometimes complex  
legal subject matter being presented, as I read I continually felt that I was having a long talk with a  
good friend. An attorney friend who I had asked to explain something about a family law-related  
issue in that day's headlines, or who was telling me about a particularly interesting event in her work

life, or who was explaining why she made some of the choices she did both personally and professionally. The consistently clear, straightforward, and disarmingly informal style of prose allows Klaw to flow from describing the murder of a client to later describing her own daughters' questionable choices of attire in elementary school in a seamless and natural manner. I certainly hope that I NEVER, EVER have to experience the pain of divorce myself--but having read Keeping it Civil, I wish that all people who divorce or face similar challenges could be represented by someone as informed, caring, smart, and sensitive as the person who I feel that I have come to know in these 250 thought-provoking pages.

Anecdotal stories are used to walk us through the family law process, and the emotional ups and downs family law attorneys grapple with every day. The author's passion shines through, making the read that much more enjoyable.

I especially liked the case that was revisited through out and the stories that appeared in the chapters in between. A fun read for anyone interested in family law issues

A very interesting book about a family Lawyer and her experiences. I would recommend it if you like true life experiences.

Very pleased

Great reading for my Book Club.

I loved the vignette format, a series of very different, very interesting stories set against Margy's resonance and professional experience. I particularly liked the one longer story that weaves through the rest. I didn't like that it was so short and I'm already done! Full disclosure.. Margy is my lawyer , and she is super. I had no idea that she worked in an all woman's firm, nor that she was so eloquent and thoughtful in so many ways. I feel privileged!

Anyone who has been or is considering a divorce would find this book interesting. I enjoyed the straight forward descriptions and explanations of the client's situations and the legal basis and choices available to the court. All very rational and easy to understand. Ms. Klaw sounds like the perfect divorce lawyer. I gave the book 4 stars.

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