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Pro: Reclaiming Abortion Rights



Synopsis

A POWERFUL ARGUMENT FOR ABORTION AS A MORAL RIGHT AND SOCIAL GOOD BY A NOTED FEMINIST AND LONGTIME COLUMNIST FOR THE NATION

Forty years after the landmark Roe v. Wade ruling, "abortion" is still a word that is said with outright hostility by many, despite the fact that one in three American women will have terminated at least one pregnancy by menopause. Even those who support a woman's right to an abortion often qualify their support by saying abortion is a "bad thing," an "agonizing decision," making the medical procedure so remote and radioactive that it takes it out of the world of the everyday, turning an act that is normal and necessary into something shameful and secretive. Meanwhile, with each passing day, the rights upheld by the Supreme Court are being systematically eroded by state laws designed to end abortion outright. In this urgent, controversial book, Katha Pollitt reframes abortion as a common part of a woman's reproductive life, one that should be accepted as a moral right with positive social implications. In *Pro*, Pollitt takes on the personhood argument, reaffirms the priority of a woman's life and health, and discusses why terminating a pregnancy can be a force for good for women, families, and society. It is time, Pollitt argues, that we reclaim the lives and the rights of women and mothers.

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Customer Reviews

When I was 14 or 15, I read *Reasonable Creatures: Essays on Women and Feminism* by Katha Pollitt. It was a collection of short essays on feminism. I had been exposed to feminism before, but mainly in a historical context. It was something that had happened and was now over -- or so I thought. Reading this book exposed me, for the first time, to a modern voice writing as if women truly matters. It changed my mind and it changed my life. Pollitt correctly identifies that for a woman to be able to control her own life, she has to be able to make decisions about if and when she will become a mother. Anti-abortion advocacy isn't just about fetal personhood (in fact, as she shows, those who oppose abortion often don't believe the embryo/fetus is a person), it's about what role women can play in society. Those of who support equality for women have given up a lot of ground by acting as if abortion is something shameful and Pollitt's book is a useful corrective. She challenges us to be clear about what we mean when we say there should be fewer abortions -- do we mean that there should be fewer women and girls with unwanted pregnancies? If we do believe there should be fewer unwanted pregnancies, what real world steps are we taking to bring that about? By this standard, many anti-abortion advocates fail, and miserably so. Is what they're really saying that we are okay with the number of unwanted pregnancies, but that women and girls should simply toss their plans for their own lives whenever fate demands? Pollitt makes a good case for the latter scenario.

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