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# **This Common Secret: My Journey As An Abortion Doctor**



## Synopsis

In *This Common Secret* Dr. Susan Wicklund chronicles her emotional and dramatic twenty-year career on the front lines of the abortion war. Growing up in working class, rural Wisconsin, Wicklund had her own painful abortion at a young age. It was not until she became a doctor that she realized how many women shared her ordeal of an unwanted pregnancy—and how hidden this common experience remains. This is the story of Susan's love for a profession that means listening to women and helping them through one of the most pivotal and controversial events in their lives. Hers is also a calling that means sleeping on planes and commuting between clinics in different states—and that requires her to wear a bulletproof vest and to carry a .38 caliber revolver. This is also the story of the women whom Susan serves, women whose options are increasingly limited. Through these intimate, complicated, and inspiring accounts, Wicklund reveals the truth about the women's clinics that anti-abortion activists portray as little more than slaughterhouses for the unborn. As we enter the most fevered political fight over abortion America has ever seen, this raw and powerful memoir shows us what is at stake.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In rational, compassionate and honest language, Wicklund chronicles more than 20 years as a medical doctor and women's health provider with a "fundamental commitment to patients and to the cause of keeping reproductive rights safe and legal," a commitment that would put herself and her family under direct threat from anti-abortion extremists, and cause her to adopt disguises and even

a personal bodyguard in order to continue her work. Wicklund's story is gripping and poignant, not only for its numerous personal accounts-including Wicklund's own experience terminating her pregnancy-but in her consideration of current and proposed reproductive rights legislation; in addition to eye-opening statistics ("In 2006, 87% of counties in the United States had no abortion provider"), Wicklund provides a fine resource guide for further reading. Though a digression concerning her parents' unrelated health issues derails the narrative, and she fails to discuss abortion law in other developed countries, this topical memoir will make a compelling read for anyone interested in women's health and reproductive rights in America. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"(This Common Secret) teems with fascinating, often tragic stories... Wicklund's book is a compelling account of the hypocrisy and secrecy that surround this subject." The Guardian "This is shocking stuff, and goes a long way to explaining (Susan Wicklund's) extraordinary sense of being a woman on a mission... Her book... leaves a vivid impression of the damage inflicted on civil society when one side in an important debate resorts to terrorist tactics." The Times"

I know Susan Wicklund and she is the most caring, compassionate, woman you will ever meet. She's been followed, harassed and had her family harassed, all because she wants to provide legal, safe medical care to women.

This book, *This Common Secret*, by Dr. Susan Wicklund, provides us with an interesting and emotional account of the war between modern women's reproductive medical services and religious zealotry in America from the perspective of a women's doctor. There were many revealing and interesting stories including where on occasion one of the protesters finds herself pregnant and becomes a patient at the clinic where she protests. This account also reveals why it is so dangerous to become a physician who is an abortion provider in America, particularly in states where clinics have been bombed, vandalized, destroyed by arson, patients have been harassed, and doctors and their protectors have been murdered, all in the name of a deity. This account also reveals the lack of science literacy in America where basic deficiencies in the high school level understanding of human reproductive biology and religious fundamentalism combine to manifest a dangerous level of ignorance. Read this, and *When Abortion Was A Crime* by Leslie Reagan, and you will not only attain a higher understanding of the abortion issue but also you will see that it is immoral for this

nation to return to the days of the aseptic back room abortion. For those of us who have women in our lives who we love, a wife, a daughter, a mother, an aunt, a friend, or any other loved one, please read this book, it will change your heart.

Excellent and insightful read by a true hero in the medical world. Highly recommend if you are interested in learning more about the personal experiences and battles of someone who has fought to provide safe, legal abortions to patients, and the repercussions we might face if we were to lose this right.

I would recommend this book to pretty much anyone who is interested in learning about women's reproduction regarding abortion behind the scenes, not only the procedure but the emotion that comes with it. Not only the struggle for the patient but for the provider as well. Also, I would say this is a good read for women who have had abortions, there are many stories shared of patients who have circumstances or particular reasoning behind their unplanned or unwanted pregnancy, and I feel it might help the healing process by being able to relate to some of the brief stories shared. I feel like this is a book for any and everyone after you read this book you can't look at abortion the same way. There is no bias, it's not claiming abortion is the right thing or wrong thing, but an option that is there. Susan Wicklund is a true fighter for women.

This book was great, as it explained the life of an abortion doctor. . Despite what most anti-choicers think, at the clinics Dr. Wicklund worked, there was no coercion used to scare patients into having an abortion. Dr. Wicklund also described an encounter with a patient who really did not want an abortion. She called the local crisis pregnancy center to assist and the staff at the CPC was less than proactive in wanted to provide support services to someone who was not "abortion-minded". The most interesting thing about the books she allowed her daughter to write an epilogue. The daughter, now grown up, is able to understand what it was like to provide much needed abortion serves to poor desperate women.

This is an excellent resource for people who want to inform themselves. Wicklund's story is important because it records with great compassion the range of women she has served and the myriad of barriers both she and her patients have endured.

I'm pro-choice and although I don't think I would have an abortion (a moot point & this stage of my

life), I feel the right should be legal and safe for women who may want or need them. I will save readers my deep opinion about the matter as not to make this review political or hateful but I will say that it's absurd what anti-abortion zealots are able to do and get away with. Stalking, threats, invasion of privacy, violence including murder. Dr. Wicklund is a brave, caring doctor and I admire her tenacity to help women despite the ridiculous, outrageous behavior of this zealots. Her story covers the years she dedicated herself to helping women in spite of these threats & sadly at the risk of losing her marriage and missing her daughter growing up.

I read this book almost in one sitting. The stories are incredible, rich and amazing. No one can read this book and walk away with their previous opinions on abortion unchanged. Go ahead, I challenge you.

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