

Some Notes on the Second Edition

When we started to revise *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, we thought it would be a simple two-month job of updating some facts. Now, several months and much hard and exciting work later, we surface for air and rush to get the “new Book” out by February! The revised edition turned out to be sixty pages longer and more than half new, because:

1. We ourselves have grown and changed with two more years of living, as we have worked, loved, played, read, heard from others and shared among ourselves.
2. Readers of the first edition have energetically urged us both by letter and in person, to include more of

certain kinds of needed information—for instance, on menopause, breast cancer, self-help.

3. Much has changed in the health field, including improvements (like the increased availability of first-trimester abortion and the emergence of various woman-generated health-care alternatives), and setbacks (such as increasing medical intervention in normal childbirth).

These three kinds of change have affected nearly every chapter in the book. Some parts have been almost totally rewritten: Sexuality, Common Medical and Health Problems (in Chapter 6), Venereal Disease, Rape, Abortion, Considering Parenthood, Preparation for Childbirth, Some Problems in Childbearing, Menopause and Women and Health Care.

The new book costs two dollars more to cover rising costs of paper and printing. We hope that clinics and other health-care delivery and education groups with IRS tax-exempt status will take advantage of the clinic discount mentioned on the copyright page. (If your group has trouble qualifying for a clinic discount you can write to us.) We have used the royalties from book sales to support health-education work done both by our group and in conjunction with other women's health groups.

We have been together now for more than five years as a work-and-personal-sharing group. Since the book's publication we have experienced some conflict between our work load as authors of a widely selling book and our desire to be a close personal support group for one another. We have been exploring ways of getting our work done more effectively. And we have been learning more about how to ask for help from each other and how to give it. As our interconnectedness grows, we feel increasing love and appreciation for each other.

We feel proud and glad that the book has reached so many people. It has been published in Japan and Italy, and is soon to come out in France, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Greece and Great Britain. A number of Spanish-speaking women have been working on a Spanish translation for the United States (and possibly other countries) which we hope to have published in 1976.

The book has also been put into seven volumes of braille (Braille No. 2328, Library of Congress No. 301).

The work of redefining health education and health care for women is being carried on, expanded and improved by a dramatically increasing number of groups and individuals in the women's health movement. Many women, both as consumers and as health workers, are making a radical challenge to the health-care system as we have known it. The hardest work is ahead: as the challenge has become more effective, most of the medical world has intensified its resistance to change. We urge you to work for change, in any way that feels right for you.

The experience of finding so much of the 1973 edition outdated less than two years later has made us aware that by the time this edition comes out even some of the "revised" material will not be totally up-to-date. Throughout the book we have tried to list resources for the most current information, and we hope you will find them useful tools as you move to take control of your body, your health, your physical, emotional and spiritual well-being—your life.

Remember the dignity
of your womanhood.
Do not appeal,
do not beg,
do not grovel.
Take courage,
join hands,
stand beside us.
Fight with us . . .

—CHRISTABEL PANKHURST
English suffragette, 1880-1958

From,
Norma Nancy Wilma Wendy
Pam Paula Esther Joan
Judy Ruth Jane

May, 1975

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