

Booklist

Advanced Review – Uncorrected Proof

Issue: December 1, 2013

The Big Lie: Motherhood, Feminism, and the Reality of the Biological Clock.

Selvaratnam, Tanya (Author)

Jan 2014. 300 p. Prometheus, hardcover, \$19.95. (9781616148454). Prometheus, e-book, \$11.99. (978161614846). 618.3.

At the outset, Selvaratnam discloses that she's had an abortion, a miscarriage, and unsuccessful fertility treatment. But somehow—even when faced with a cancer diagnosis, pregnancies that ended in the first trimester, and an unwanted separation from her husband—she remains upbeat. She's intelligent (she's a Harvard grad), passionate (she's a feminist and activist), and artistic (she's a documentary and theater producer). And she wants to share her hard-won wisdom so that young women in the future don't make the same mistakes she did. Selvaratnam regrets mistreating her body (she smoked and copied the bulimic behavior she saw in older girls) and not thinking about fertility (she didn't give it much thought until she started trying to conceive at age 37). Her message: Don't fall victim to The Big Lie that women can delay motherhood until they find the perfect partner, feel emotionally and financially ready, and figure out their career. She also reminds us to “honor and care for the people who are already here on this Earth.” And to “Advocate for a better future.”

— *Karen Springen*