

The Selling of Contraception : The Dalkon Shield Case, Sexuality, and Women's Autonomy (Women and Health Ser.)



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Reviews

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(Billy Christiansen)

THE SELLING OF CONTRACEPTION : THE DALKON SHIELD CASE, SEXUALITY, AND WOMEN'S AUTONOMY (WOMEN AND HEALTH SER.)



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Ohio State University Press, 1992. Hard Cover. Book Condition: New. Dust Jacket Condition: New. 1st Edition. New book, never been read. In this brutal indictment of the birth control industry, Nicole J. Grant documents the history of the Dalkon Shield case and places the controversy within a larger historical and social context, examining the ways in which social conditions affect women's choices about contraception. Drawing upon an analysis of thirty years' worth of articles in medical journals and popular magazines, family planning literature, medical texts, government documents, and transcripts from interviews with women discussing procreative choices, Grant examines the IUD's place in the history of contraception and the politics of bringing the Dalkon Shield to the market, including the commercial bias of the device's inventor and chief medical consultant. She discusses the dissemination of false and misleading advertising about the device, the manufacturer's disregard of evidence suggesting that it was unsafe, and the stake of various family planning agencies in promoting its use. She goes on to examine the social conditions under which women chose to use the Dalkon Shield and considers the fact that many women, wishing to exercise control over procreation, freely selected it over alternative forms of contraception, even though they knew there were associated risks. According to Grant, the Dalkon Shield case is not a historical anomaly. Today, advances in technology are making new methods of contraception available to women, but these methods carry risks as serious as those associated with the Dalkon Shield. Moreover, the social context in which women are making decisions about contraception is much the same as it was during the time when the Dalkon Shield was widely used. Grant concludes her study by proposing ways in which women can enhance their informed risk/benefit analysis of all options while maintaining their autonomy...

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