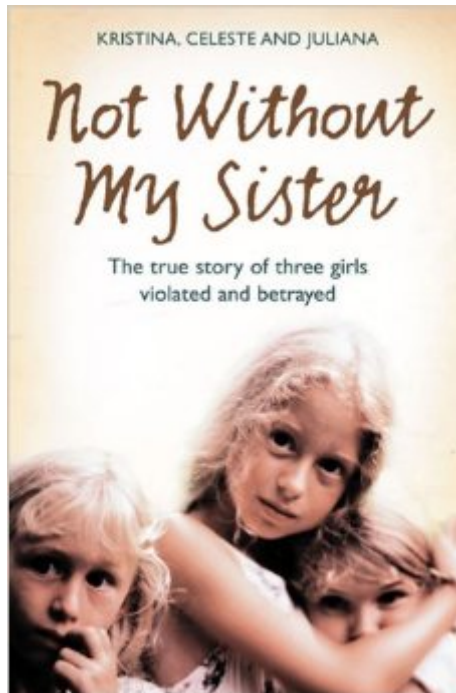


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Not Without My Sister: The True Story Of Three Girls Violated And Betrayed By Those They Trusted



Synopsis

The bestselling, devastating account of three sisters torn apart, abused and exploited at the hands of a community that robbed them of their childhood. It reveals three lives, separate but entwined, that have experienced unspeakable horror, unrelenting loyalty and unforgettable courage. From as early as three years old, Juliana, Celeste and Kristina were treated as sexual beings by their 'guardians' in the infamous religious cult known as the Children of God. They were made to watch and mimic orgies, received love letters and sexual advances from men old enough to be their grandfather, and were forced into abusive relationships. They were denied access to formal schooling, had to wander the streets begging for money, and were mercilessly beaten for 'crimes' as unpredictable as reading an encyclopaedia. Finally, unable to live with the guilt of what had happened to her children, their mother escaped with Kristina, cutting herself off from her remaining children in a bid to save at least one child. Desperate to save her sisters, Kristina eventually returned to the place of her torture to free Celeste. Years later, Juliana found the courage to escape, knowing that the child she was carrying would be subjected to the same fate if she did not. Now the three sisters have finally come together to reveal in full and horrific detail their existence within the Children of God cult. Their stories reveal a community spread throughout the world and its legacy of anorexia, depression, drug abuse, suicide and even murder. Lives are ripped apart and painstakingly mended with a shared strength that finally enabled the sisters to free themselves from the shadows of their past.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars Â See all reviews Â (230 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #76,382 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #25 in Â Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Sociology > Abuse #39 in Â Books > Religion & Spirituality > Other Religions, Practices & Sacred Texts > Cults #47 in Â Books > Religion & Spirituality > Religious Studies > Psychology

Customer Reviews

This book does an excellent job of capturing, in a matter-of-fact narrative delivered in unembellished prose, a picture of what it was like to have been born circa the 70's to parents who joined the "Children of God" cult (which now goes by "The Family International"), and to have been raised there. Although I grew up in "Family" cult communes in another continent half a world away, not knowing the authors (except for seeing videos and pictures of Celeste Jones at Music With Meaning, which the cult published and circulated), as I read "Not Without my Sister" I recognized the various directives from the cult leaders' "letters" that the authors mentioned - and the unfortunately mirrored consequences when the adults around us implemented those directives on me and the other children around me. So many of the incidents that the 3 authors recount and the trademark environments, atmosphere and modus operandi during the various phases of the cult's history, echo uncannily with what I experienced and saw when I was confined in that insular world. Like the authors as children, it was the only world I had ever known; escape from servitude and a better future seemed impossible dreams. I think the authors handled particularly effectively the challenge of communicating, in a direct and almost conversational manner notably devoid of melodramatics, a child's inner experience of confusion and entrapment in the face of cult-approved and sponsored molestation and exploitation delivered by the perpetrators in tones of religious devotion and of being all "sweetness and light".

ABSOLUTELY 5 Stars. No question about it. I picked up this book, in paperback, from my local library a couple days ago, just perusing the shelves for a quick book to read. The cover photo caught my eye, and with the title, gave an inkling of a tragic event these girls must have gone through. I did not pick it up because I knew it was about cult survivors, I picked it up because it made me think about my own sister and the bond of friendship we have together and how we have always helped each other through life's ups and downs and laughs and good and bad times. When I finished reading it a day later, I realized this recounting of abuse and terror beyond belief, hidden from the outside world, most likely will stay with me for the rest of my life. You don't forget atrocities like this, especially to young innocent precious children....children who look to adults for gentle and sure guidance, and well founded morality, and mostly, the LOVE of the parent for his/her CHILD, repeat: CHILD, not 21 year old, CHILD, THAT DOESN'T INCLUDE knowledge and/or actual actions of: intercourse, oral sex, strip teases and suggestive nude dances, nude photo sessions, sex ed at age 3, sex practices at age 3, belief that it's good to "LOVE" Jesus, etc....(AS IF you needed to have anymore to add to that list). As for the people who reviewed here saying this was a fabricated story, why would you sincerely doubt them? Why else would these women go on in their lives to start an

organization to help children in life threatening abusive situations? [...]They could have been accountants, teachers, sports pros, scientists, etc., but they chose to be abused child advocates...a job ALL of us aspire to, don't we? Yep, sounds like they are full of hot air, uh huh, yup. Sigh.

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