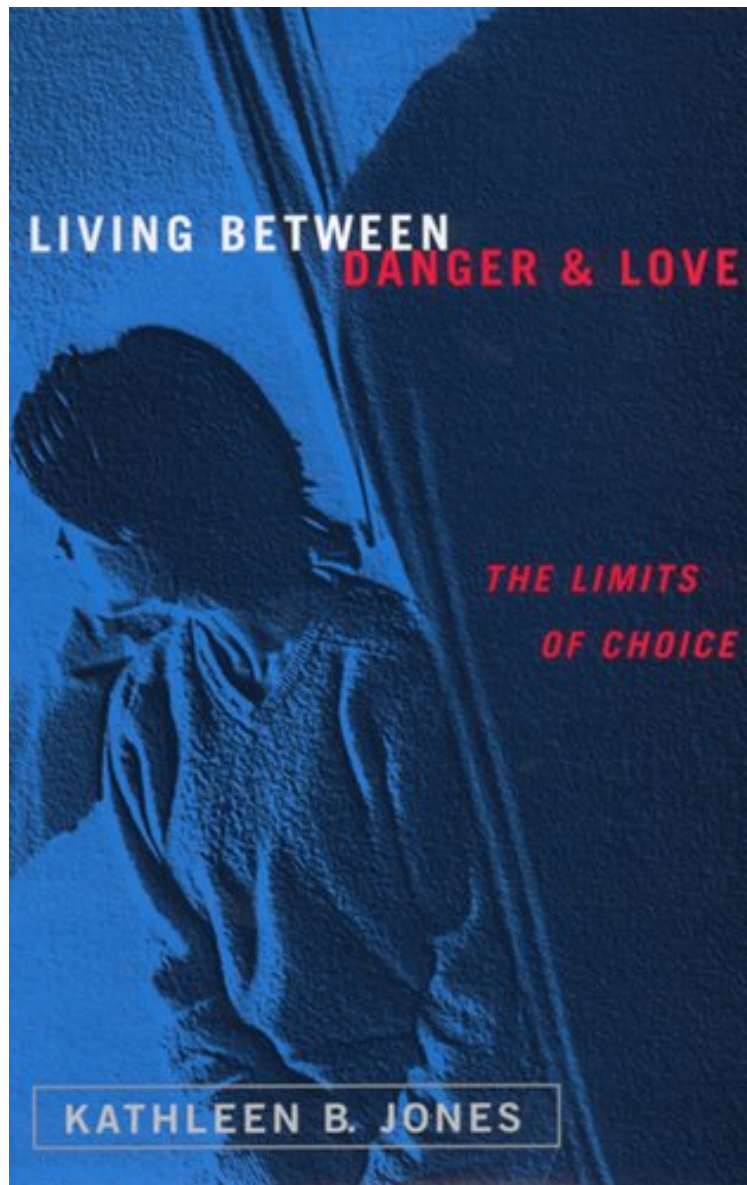


[Download] Living Between Danger and Love: The Limits of Choice

Living Between Danger and Love: The Limits of Choice

Kathleen B. Jones

**Download PDF / ePub / DOC / audiobook / ebooks*



DOWNLOAD



+

READ ONLINE

#1715858 in Books Rutgers University Press 1999-12-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.31 x .80 x 6.34l, 1.04 #File Name: 0813527449198 pages | File size: 41.Mb

Kathleen B. Jones : Living Between Danger and Love: The Limits of Choice before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Living Between Danger and Love: The Limits of Choice:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Provocative BookBy J. AragonThis book was gripping and caused me to re-think my comfortable ideas about choice, power, and even feminist politics. Jones makes us reflect on who is a victim and who can be a good victim. Surely we wouldn't expect that feminists are also in abusive relationships?! Of

course, we know that abuse crosses all SES lines, class lines, and more. However, this book sheds light on choice and abuse in an honest, painful way. I read this book immediately after its publication and I couldn't put the book down. Jones is a great writer and weaves in theory within her personal reflection. She puts a face to the issue and by doing so causes people to talk about this issue more honestly. Disclaimer- The author was a professor of mine and I knew the SDSU student who was murdered. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent and thought provoking. By Stephanie Living Between Danger and Love is the kind of book that I continued to think about long after I read the final words. More than being about the murder of a college student by an abusive boyfriend, Jones questions the idea of choice. She overlaps stories from her own past with the events following the murder of a student in the department where she teaches. What results is a beautifully written, thought-provoking book on love, choice and all the complexity that surrounds those things. 5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Graduate Student at Columbia University. By Kendall This is the kind of book that resonates with you way after you finish. The true stories are engaging and yet hauntingly sad. The images are strong and powerful. Jones evokes questions that keep popping into everyday stuff I do or subjects I am talking about. It makes me see and hear things slightly differently -- relationships, appearances, and the choices we make. Very nice.

"Andrea O'Donnell did not fit what criminal justice experts call the "victim profile." The twenty-seven-year old women's studies major at San Diego State University was the director of the campus Women's Resource Center and a self-defense instructor. Nevertheless, in the early morning hours of November 5, 1994, she was brutally murdered. Her decomposed body was discovered in the apartment that she shared with her boyfriend, Andres English-Howard. In August 1995, he was convicted of first-degree murder. The night before he was scheduled to appear in court for sentencing, English-Howard hanged himself in his jail cell."--BOOK JACKET. "Author Kathleen B. Jones, one of O'Donnell's professors, was particularly shaken by her death. In *Living Between Danger and Love*, she examines O'Donnell's death and what it has to say to all of us. She provokes readers to consider the irony that our ideas about choice might prevent us from imagining and discovering social relationships of intimacy where love and power are not in conflict

"A compelling, vivid account that highlights how any woman can become a victim of domestic violence. It is equally the story of Kathleen Jones, who shares her own pain and resulting activism in trying to make sense of this student's tragedy and prevent other deaths." - Joan Zorza, editor of *Domestic Violence Report*. -- Joan Zorza, editor of *Domestic Violence Report* "A thickly braided marvel: part memoir, part memorial and lamentation, part compassionate feminist cosmology. *Living Between Danger and Love* is a fast read that makes you think long and hard." - Rickie Solinger, author of *Wake Up Little Susie: Single Pregnancy and Race before Roe v. Wade*. -- Rickie Solinger, author of *Wake Up Little Susie* "Kathleen Jones shows us the complex and painful side of modern feminism's unfinished agenda. *Living Between Danger and Love* brings home the stories of domestic violence that we all read in the newspapers. Her book makes you realize that this type of tragedy can happen to someone like me, someone like you, or someone you love." - Patricia Ireland, President, National Organization for Women. -- Patricia Ireland, President, National Organization for Women. From the Publisher Interview with Kathleen B. Jones Author of *Living Between Danger and Love: The Limits of Choice* Q: When and how did you meet Andrea O'Donnell? What sort of relationship did you have? A: I first met Andrea in late October 1993, at a welcome party that a colleague of mine hosted for women's studies students at San Diego State University. Early the next spring semester, Andrea became the new director of the Women's Resource Center (WRC), an on-campus, student-led organization that provides information and programs for women on campus. Since I was chair of the department of women's studies at that time, I would have many occasions to work with the WRC. With Andrea, the connection was intensified by our shared enthusiasm for politics. Throughout the next year, right up to the time that she was murdered, I acted as a kind of political mentor for her. She frequented the department office to talk about her plans for the WRC, to secure departmental endorsements for different programs, and to leave flyers for events. I wouldn't have been the person she would have confided in, personally. With some of the students and with other faculty and staff at the University, she'd hinted at difficulties that she had had. Still, we would have recommended that she get counseling if we had known things were beyond control. The difficulty is knowing soon enough. Q: Why did you decide to write this book, not only about Andrea's life, but also about your own? What similarities and differences did you find in your lives? A: I resisted writing this book until it became impossible for me to avoid it. But it was fairly early after her death that it became impossible for me to avoid. At first I struggled with the ethics of it all. It seemed disturbingly sensational. And that was when it hit me: this was not such an unusual thing. All the questions that I kept getting about how it could happen to her made me ask, "To whom is it supposed to happen?" And then, it became obvious to me that I wanted to write about that insight. So many of us spent a long time coming to terms with the fact that Andrea was a young woman who was so well informed about the very circumstances that led to her death. Yet this knowledge gave her little protection in the end. So, if this really could happen to anyone, what does this mean and what do we do? I'm not naive. I don't think that simply understanding something like domestic violence - the warning signs in relationships and so on - or even having strong

laws in place will automatically prevent it. But I don't think we have really fully appreciated what it means to take this issue on as a public problem. The point is, we are all caught up to some degree in a dynamic like the one Andrea and Andrs got stuck in. We are all trying to balance love, the kind of deep caring for another that makes us feel vulnerable, and power, the kind of deep feeling of strength and control that pushes us to the edge of not caring about another. The equation that balances these two life forces - and I think they are both essential - isn't easy to discover. I wanted to write a book about the process of discovering something like a balanced equation, which can allow us to feel strong, loving and loved. But I stress that it is a process. You won't find easy formulas in this book. It might not even be satisfying to you because I don't claim to have the answer to why this particular event happened or to know what little or big thing could have been done to prevent it. I don't want you to feel comfortable. I want you to struggle with the ambiguities. To write this story in this way, I had to put myself into it, too. Actually, I had a long conversation with a close friend and colleague of mine about the necessity of disclosure. It didn't feel right to be outside looking in. I could see parallels, even though they're not always obvious ones, between Andrea's story and my own. We grew up in different times and places, but we had some similar experiences - similar class background, divorced parents, and our mothers both had to work hard to make ends meet. Yet, Andrea was adopted, her mother and my mother are VERY different. And it was I, not Andrea, who had witnessed, as a child and young woman, considerable violence at home. I wanted to draw the reader into these parallels, but I also wanted to make it difficult to find pat answers. What I really want is for the reader to feel uncomfortable, to make connections back to her or his life and be able to feel sympathy for the characters. Because for me the point is that there are no simple explanations, no foolproof variables that can safely predict what will happen in a life. I am not trying to say we are all potential victims or victimizers. I just want you not to be able to keep your distance from the protagonists in this story, because I want all of us to understand we are all in this together. Q: Why did you title your book *Living Between Danger and Love: The Limits of Choice*? A: The title is meant to express the tension that I spoke of before. The stress, for me, is on living, "living between." I think love is always tinged with power. That's not bad. When we love, we feel vulnerable, open to another; we risk not being in control. That's always potentially dangerous. But to me, our intimate lives work when we are "in between." When we have love include power, but not have love be overtaken by it. Or vice versa. In all of the relationships in this book, I think you can see that balance sometimes working, often not. I invite the reader to reflect, to think about the tensions. Q: You write that you don't see Andrea as a victim. How do you see her? A: I am resistant to the language of "victims." I know that we need it sometimes. But I think labels like "victim" and "victimizer" flatten out the multidimensionality of any life's story. It's one of the ways we set up distinctions like "us" and "them." I have a hard time categorizing Andrea. Yes, she was a victim, a survivor, a caretaker, a warrior. She was a complex woman who, like all women, was trying to balance the parts of her life, to make them fit. They didn't all fit easily. She took on too much and when she felt overwhelmed, she felt lonely. Q: How did Andrea's murder and writing this book change your life? A: Andrea still has a deep effect on me. Her death catalyzed me into more activity around anti-violence work on- and off-campus. I wanted to reach a wider audience with her story and to do that I had to find a different way to write. I discovered that the writing process was a part of the mourning process for me. It opened me up to a wellspring of emotions and thoughts about mortality, love, politics. They're all connected, you know. I really can't live the same way anymore. I fall back into my old patterns, but I am more aware of them now. Q: People not involved in abusive relationships often ask the question, "Why didn't he/she just leave?" As both a scholar and someone who has experienced domestic violence first hand, how do you answer that question? A: I can't answer that question because it's always the wrong question. It looks backward, not forward. It looks at the one who will be called the "victim" and not at any of us "outside." I'd rather ask, What would I do if I were in that situation? I think we think we know. But spend time with that question. If you have an answer, then maybe you want to be part of the future - and that's where I think we should be going - forward. We have to enter another's story to be able to stop the violence. In fact, entering another's story is what stopping violence is all about. The tricky thing is, we have to enter from both sides, from the side of the victim as well as the perpetrator, because one does not exist without the other. The most shocking experience for me in writing this book was that I could not hate Andrs. You could say it's easier for me because it was not as close as someone in my own family. But I don't think that's the point. While I was writing this book, I had to come to terms with some folks who hurt me, whom I have hated. Once I no longer saw Andrs as a monster, but simply as another human being, disastrously imbalanced, but human, I found I had begun to come to terms with the ways I have, and even still could, cause pain to others. And that took me into the future, too. So to me, this book is about murder and hope. Q: What can we do to protect ourselves and our loved ones from being either battered or batterers? A: I believe that one of the most important things we can do is not keep secrets. I am not talking about a proliferation of confessional literature, but rather a more honest, more full dialogue about our fears. If you knew that I wouldn't judge you, no matter what you told me, wouldn't you be more likely to talk about this? If I think there is something that may be happening to you that is hurtful, then I ought to open the dialogue in a non-judgmental way. Almost every community in the U.S., and many other parts of the world, have resources with fact sheets that include advice to neighbors, friends, and family about how to offer help. The Family Violence Protection Fund and the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence are only two such resources that provide links to all sorts of organizations that

address the issue. The biggest thing to communicate to the person in need is: You are not alone. Taking this issue out into the open has already saved lives. Many women and men will attest to that. But we have more work to do. I am a strong proponent of public dialogue. Dialogue means that we have to be able to listen to one another. And we also have to be able to continue to listen to those who criticize different intervention strategies. But talking about this won't work without continuing to build even wider networks and community action groups working in multidisciplinary ways to stop the violence. Because unless there are adequate exit strategies, when those who have been abused try to leave their partners they are often at the greatest risk. So the community has to be organized to help. From the Inside Flap Andrea O'Donnell did not fit what criminal justice experts call the "victim profile." The twenty-seven-year old women's studies major at San Diego State University was the director of the campus Women's Resource Center and a self-defense instructor. Nevertheless, in the early morning hours of November 5, 1994, she was brutally murdered in the apartment that she had shared with her boyfriend, Andres English-Howard. Days later, English-Howard was arrested on suspicion of murder. In August 1995, he was convicted of first-degree murder. The night before he was scheduled to appear in court for sentencing, English-Howard hanged himself in his jail cell. By all standard definitions, O'Donnell was not victim. She was self-assured, strong-willed, a feminist. Yet, she became a victim. If it could happen to her, her friends feared, it could happen to anybody. Author Kathleen B. Jones, one of O'Donnell's professors, was particularly shaken by her death. In *Living Between Danger and Love*, she examines O'Donnell's death and what it has to say to all of us. Grafting memoir with autobiography, Jones recounts riveting episodes in her own life that parallel O'Donnell's. Adding to these memories, she narrates crises faced by others she has come to know who shared stories of domestic violence. What emerges is a complex, hybrid tale of what Jones calls "unreasonable choices" - the kinds of choices that most of us feel we are expected to make between love and power, between care for another and care for ourselves. She provokes readers to consider the irony that our ideas about choice might prevent us from imagining and discovering social relationships of intimacy where love and power are not in conflict.