



J. Albert Mann

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This compelling historical novel spans the early and very formative years of feminist and women's health activist Margaret Sanger, founder of Planned Parenthood, as she struggles to find her way amidst the harsh realities of poverty.

Margaret was determined to get out. She didn't want to clean the dirty dishes and soiled diapers that piled up day in and day out in her large family's small home. She didn't want to disappoint her ailing mother, who cared tirelessly for an ever-growing number of children despite her incessant cough. And Margaret certainly didn't want to be labeled a girl of "promise," destined to become either a teacher or a mother—which seemed to be a woman's only options.

As a feisty and opinionated young woman, Margaret Higgins Sanger witnessed and experienced incredible hardships, which led to her groundbreaking work as an advocate for women's rights and the founder of Planned Parenthood. This fiery novel of Margaret's early life paints the portrait of a young woman with the passion and courage to change the world.

What Every Girl Should Know Details

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Author : J. Albert Mann

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From Reader Review What Every Girl Should Know for online ebook

Bethann Albert says

The book is titled "What Every Girl Should Know". I would like to expand that title to include "what every woman should remember"! Sanger's early life was mostly unknown to me until I recently read this beautiful and heartbreaking novel. Mann made Sanger's journey pierce my heart. I am no longer a "girl" and I wish I could have had this when I was one. I am purchasing this book to share with all the "girls" in my life -- young and old.

Melissa says

Such a wonderful historical biographical novel of Margaret Sanger as a teen. Margaret comes to life in Mann's novel, and one can understand how she would become the woman who would create Planned Parenthood. Infused with heart and humor, this well-researched book is a great introduction to Margaret Sanger for young people.

sabrina (thereaderdevotee) says

Margaret Louise Higgins Sanger's (Maggie, for short) story was about her hardship and poverty that she faced with both of her parents and an ever-growing number of siblings in a small house at Corning, New York. The daughters of the Higgins family worked day and night to scrub, wash, prepare and tidy the house and all of the humans inside it. The boys were not such a help either and that made the daughters worn out after calling it a day. Their father was a free-thinker, and this made him to be blacklisted and excluded from the society because of his such contradicting believes on God and religion. His father was not able to provide for the family well.

Education was Maggie's only hope to get out of the house and to help her family escaping from the hardship that they had faced. She wanted to become a doctor, so she could learn how to treat patients. Her experience in facing extreme poverty has made her to become an advocate for women's rights and the founder of Planned Parenthood.

At such a young age, she has learned and realised that women are not meant to stay at home doing chores only. Women are also equally equipped to work, vote and make a change in the society. Women deserve to be heard. She realised this because of his father, he was totally "free" and able to express his feelings strongly and Maggie envied him for that. She was very brave in giving speeches in school to express herself on why women should take part in the society.

I was not so sure of the ending, it was a bit too fast and blurry because the final part did not tell the readers on the Higgins' wellbeing.

I have never read any of her biographies before and I am very much interested in reading them soon, to learn about her self-discovery and journey in advocating women's right.

If you have the chance to read this, please do because this read will change your life.

Thank you Pansing for providing me this powerful read!

Brooke says

It can be said that it was Margaret Sanger's childhood that led her down the path to becoming a birth control activist and the mother of the organization that would eventually form Planned Parenthood. Born Margaret Higgins in the 1870s, she saw firsthand how limited choices and opportunities for women could lead to a stifled life, and often death. Margaret's own mother had 18 pregnancies in 22 years, although only 11 babies survived. Margaret, the sixth child of eleven, saw the toll that being nearly constantly pregnant took on her mother and their family, and it can rightly be said that Margaret pursued a life in which she advocated for women's rights and the opportunity for women to have control over their bodies due to what she witnessed in her own home growing up. J. Albert Mann's *What Every Girl Should Know* tells that story - how Margaret grew from being a "girl with promise" yet no real future beyond becoming a mother or teacher, to a champion for women everywhere.

What Every Girl Should Know alternates between the past, where we learn about Margaret's life growing up in a home bursting at the seams with children, and the present as Margaret returns to her childhood home and her mother's deathbed. While most of the story takes place in the past, the present day chapters set the scene for the impactful events that solidified Margaret's decision to spend her life advocating for women.

As a historical YA novel based on Margaret Sanger's life, *What Every Girl Should Know* would probably work best for an older young adult audience, including those in their late teens and early 20s. Quite literary and descriptive, as well as grounded in sociology, philosophy, and religion, this novel will connect best with those who have some life experience and understand what it means to sacrifice, as well as fight for what you believe in.

As a reader, I would have liked the novel to focus more on Margaret's later teenage life, once she goes away to school, becomes involved in her first relationship, and pursues a string of careers. This part of the book was given little time or attention, with most of the novel covering Margaret's younger years, which involved caring for her many siblings, helping her mother take care of their home, being publicly chastised for her father's radical ideas, and attempting to become more than just a "girl with promise" in school. I feel that this part of the book could have been shortened to make way for the years in which Margaret really came into her own.

Readers should note that this novel does not cover Margaret's adult life, in which she becomes a birth control activist, taking on the U.S. courts and opening our nation's first birth control clinic. Rather, *What Every Girl Should Know* paints a picture of how Margaret's upbringing turned her into the women's crusader she became.

Thank you to NetGalley and Atheneum Books for an ARC of this book in exchange for an honest review.

T.J. Burns says

I received a copy of this book from Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Ms. Yingling says

E ARC From Netgalley

I am a big proponent of the right to legal abortions existing, but the book just didn't accomplish what I wanted. It is a fictionalized biography of Margaret Sanger's early life. This is great. I was a huge fan of the Childhood of Famous Americans series. This is well researched, and describes in great detail how horrible the conditions for women could be in the 1800s. Sanger certainly had every reason to work to change the conditions for women like her mother, who suffered from tuberculosis but was constantly pregnant.

Having read some biographies of Sanger, I knew a lot of the basic background information, but I felt the book didn't necessarily explain everything that a young reader who didn't know this information might need to know. Sanger's father rubbed elbows with many progressive thinkers of the time, but there isn't much context for how important they were. We see a little of Sanger's attempts to get an education and leave home, but not enough. The afterword explains some, but more details would have been useful in the narrative.

This isn't really useful for research, since it takes place before Sanger began the reproductive rights work for which she is famous, so the book ends up being an extremely bleak picture of one family's existence in the late 1800s. I'm just not quite sure what to think of this one. I'd love to be able to have a middle grade appropriate book about Sanger, but I'm not sure this one is as informative as I would like one to be.

Jessi says

Margaret Sanger did cool stuff. There should be books about her work, and the movement. But she was also super racist and a eugenicist and her work is, in a lot of ways, tainted by this. Yes, celebrate the fact that she saw more worth in her sex than having babies and she worked hard to educate women about their bodies and their choices. But how do you write a fiction book about these heroics without touching on the fact that she also was overeager to share contraception with certain populations because, to be frank, she felt that society would be better off without them? This isn't a matter of opinion- she states it herself in her letters. I don't know. Maybe this book would have been a better idea if it had been written from the perspective of one of her friends or colleagues instead of Sanger herself. I just can't wrap my head around the inspirational vibe, knowing what I know. It gives me a creepy feeling, like if I read a book about a young Osama bin Laden that painted him as a patriotic hero (which he was, once upon a time; the US actually referred to him and his fellow soldiers as "freedom fighters") and then didn't touch on the radicalization, the terrorism, the violence. It just leaves a bad taste in my mouth. I'm disappointed.

Carrie Kellenberger says

What Every Girl Should Know is the true (but fictionalized) story of feminist and women's health activist Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood. The story begins with Margaret's life as a young girl struggling in her family to keep up with her never-ending siblings. Her family lives in extreme poverty and

her mother is pregnant all the time.

Margaret's mother had 18 pregnancies in 22 years. Only 11 babies survived. Her mother, throughout all of this, also suffers from consumption and she is unable to care for her own children. This leaves Margaret and her older sisters to care for the new babies and other younger siblings.

As a young girl, Margaret dreamed of being different. She didn't want to clean the house or look after babies, but she also didn't want to upset her mother.

I thought that this book would take us through Margaret's childhood and then let us know a little more about how she became an advocate for women's rights and how she founded Planned Parenthood, but this book only focuses on her years as a young girl and young woman.

What Every Girl Should Know is an interesting read and it goes into great detail about what life was like for women in the 1800s, but it didn't really give me what I wanted. I was looking for a more complete biography of Margaret Sanger and the book ended at the point that I was most interested in learning about.

Teenreadsdotcom says

Margaret Sanger is an extraordinarily influential woman whom no one saw coming. *WHAT EVERY GIRL SHOULD KNOW*, by J. Albert Mann, follows young Margaret Sanger's journey in a society where girls were only expected to be wives and mothers, and the only work they could do was teach. However, Sanger had a different dream, she dreamed to become a doctor. Sadly, she was born in a time where the idea of a female doctor seemed impossible. How could she be a doctor if she couldn't even vote?

Margaret was not to be deterred by what society thought of her being a doctor, she had passion and a goal. She was the sixth of 11 children. Throughout Sanger's childhood, her mother was deathly sick. This was Sanger's first example of the strength women have. Sanger grew up with her mother constantly pregnant and seeing the toll these pregnancies had on her, especially the miscarriages. Margaret had to spend her childhood raising her siblings and doing household chores, as her own mother was too weak to do so. This would later lead to her passion of establishing the first birth control center in the United States.

Margaret's ideas of being a female doctor, being able to vote and legalizing birth control were widely unheard of in the late nineteenth century. Margaret was opinionated and an activist through and through. In the book, we can see the roots of Margaret's dedication to feminism and women's rights. We see Margaret's passion and her want for more. Specifically, how she wanted to be more than a mother or a teacher. Witnessing the incredible hardships her mother, her older sisters and herself had to face just because they were women invoked Margaret's want to advocate for women.

WHAT EVERY GIRL SHOULD KNOW was so heartbreaking. There were so many times throughout the story that I wanted to reach through and give Margaret a big, warm hug. My heart went to her every time one of her dreams were crushed or she was denied help and acceptance by those whom she needed the most. I thoroughly enjoyed this read, especially with Margaret's witty humor. Margaret is confident and dedicated,

and I greatly admired these qualities. She was bold and unafraid despite the most difficult of situations. The author, J. Albert Mann, was able to portray the struggles of a teenage girl so well. I was most impressed with her ability to express a teenage girl in the late nineteenth century with issues so distinctly different from the twenty-first century. However, despite these gaps in time, Mann was also able to connect Sanger's issues with problems faced today. Mann emphasized the importance of confidence and not to shy away from the "man in charge" but to take charge for yourself.

So many times throughout this book, I felt myself getting riled up with Margaret. When Margaret scoffed, I scoffed. When she got angry, I got angry. When she cried, I cried. I was there with Margaret from beginning to end and what a journey it was. I am so impressed with the author and her ability to get me to not only be there with Margaret in her journey but relate and feel with her too.

I highly recommend WHAT EVERY GIRL SHOULD KNOW! It is such a thought-provoking, insightful work of literature that I strongly encourage all young girls to read. I also encourage the men out there to read this work of art. Honestly, it is so easy to overlook the obstacles women have overcome and to take for granted those who have advocated and fought for women's rights. I was so enlightened about so many issues I haven't even thought about before reading this novel, and if you want to be enlightened read WHAT EVERY GIRL SHOULD KNOW: Margaret Sanger's Journey.
