



2nd Edition

never, ever, again...

Why Australian abortion law needs reform

CAROLINE DE COSTA

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With new chapter reporting on the Cairns abortion trial and its implications for abortion practice and law reform in Australia

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Why Australian abortion law needs reform

CAROLINE DE COSTA

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So many trials. So many courts.

So many inquests.

So many women – dead, or damaged.

So many women – blamed.

Never, ever again.

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glossary of names and terms used in this book

Abortifacient – a drug intended to bring about an abortion, usually used in the context of unlawful abortion and not in the context of drugs (such as mifepristone and misoprostol) used for lawful medical abortion.

Abortion/miscarriage/termination of pregnancy – the intentional expulsion or removal of the products of conception (embryo or fetus, placenta and membranes) from the uterus or womb. In this book these terms are used interchangeably to indicate induced abortion, as although ‘abortion’ is more commonly used by the general public today, ‘miscarriage’ is often used in legal documents and legislation to describe induced abortion. In the few instances in the book where spontaneous natural miscarriage is mentioned, this is clearly spelt out.

Bayliss, Bayliss and Cullen – when used in italics indicate the 1986 case in which Drs Bayliss and Cullen were charged with procuring an abortion and were acquitted.

Bourne – when used in italics this indicates the 1938 case in which Mr Aleck Bourne was charged with procuring an abortion and was acquitted.

Cervix – the lower part or ‘neck’ of the uterus.

Chemist – a pharmacist.

Curette, curettage – surgical procedure to empty the contents of the uterus – loosely used in the 20th century to refer to an abortion performed by a doctor.

Davidson – when used in italics indicates the 1969 Victorian case in which Dr Ken Davidson was charged with procuring an abortion and was acquitted.

Levine – Judge hearing the Wald case.

McGuire – Judge hearing the Bayliss and Cullen case.

Macnaghten – Judge hearing the Bourne case.

Medical abortion – abortion performed using drugs such as mifepristone and misoprostol.

Menhennitt – Judge hearing the Davidson case.

Methotrexate – drug used for medical abortion.

Mifepristone – RU486 – drug used for medical abortion.

Misoprostol – drug used for medical abortion.

RANZCOG – Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

Shilling – unit of currency used in Australia prior to the introduction of decimal currency in 1966. There were twelve pence (pennies) to one shilling, twenty shillings to one pound, twenty-one shillings to one guinea. The shilling was also known colloquially as a ‘bob’.

Surgical abortion – abortion performed using instruments or suction apparatus to remove the pregnancy from the uterus.

Uterus - womb.

Wald – when used in italics indicates the 1971 case in which Dr Wald was charged with procuring an abortion, and was acquitted.

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so many women – damaged

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