



In Defense of Women: Memoirs of an Unrepentant Advocate

Nancy Gertner

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In Defense of Women: Memoirs of an Unrepentant Advocate Nancy Gertner

From a “Human Rights Hero,” a memoir of her illustrious career litigating groundbreaking cases

In the boys' club climate of 1975, Nancy Gertner launched her career fighting a murder charge on behalf of antiwar activist Susan Saxe, one of the few women to ever make the FBI's Most Wanted List. What followed was a storied span of groundbreaking firsts, as Gertner threw herself into criminal and civil cases focused on women's rights and civil liberties.

Gertner writes, for example, about representing Clare Dalton, the Harvard Law professor who famously sued the school after being denied tenure, and of being one of the first lawyers to introduce evidence of Battered Women's Syndrome in a first-degree murder defense. She writes about the client who sued her psychiatrist after he had sexually preyed on her, and another who sued her employers at Merrill Lynch--she had endured strippers and penis-shaped cakes in the office, but the wildly skewed distribution of clients took professional injury too far. All of these were among the first cases of their kind.

Gertner brings her extensive experience to bear on issues of long-standing importance today: the general evolution of thought regarding women and fetuses as legally separate entities, possibly at odds; the fungible definition of rape and the rights of both the accused and the victim; ever-changing workplace attitudes and policies around women and minorities; the concept of abetting crime. *In Defense of Women* is the one-of-a-kind memoir of an exceptional, self-proclaimed "outsider lawyer."

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