

Description

Book Review: Born Stroppy by Ruth Weston

Review by Indie Luna, Midwife

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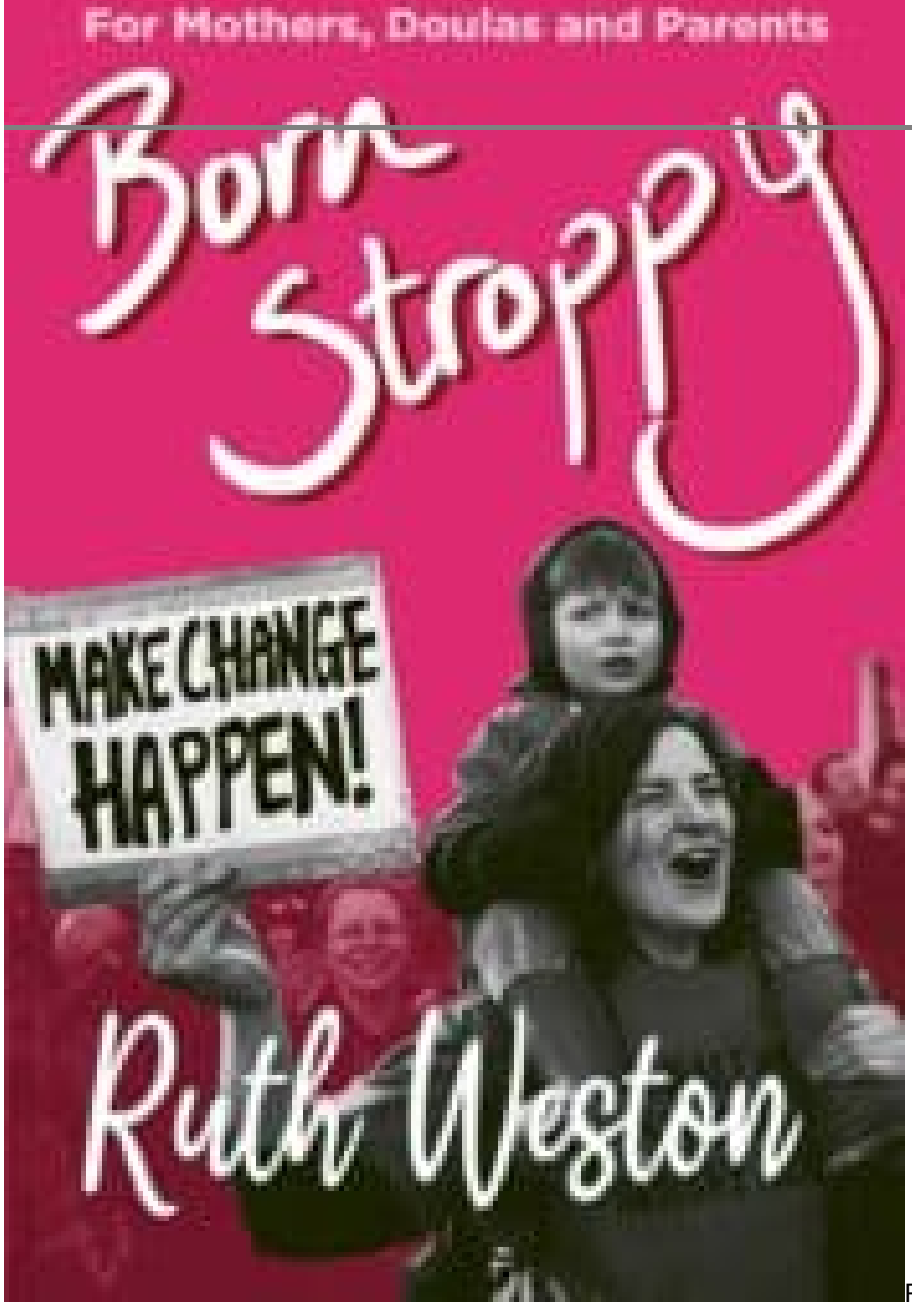

Ruth Weston's *Born Stroppy* is one of those books that leaves you feeling both challenged and energised. At its heart, it is about refusing to accept that "this is just the way things are." Through stories drawn from her own experience of campaigning for safer, more compassionate maternity care, Weston demonstrates how persistence, collaboration and an unwavering focus on women and families can gradually shift even the most entrenched systems.

What I found most refreshing was the book's honesty. Weston does not romanticise activism or suggest that change comes quickly. Instead, she acknowledges the frustrations, disappointments and occasional failures that accompany campaigning, making the successes feel all the more meaningful. There is a quiet confidence to her writing; she allows the experiences to speak for themselves rather than overstating their significance.

Although maternity care provides the backdrop, the book is ultimately about leadership. Weston shows that leadership is not confined to those with formal authority but is something exercised through courage, curiosity and the willingness to keep asking difficult questions. Her reflections on building alliances, maintaining momentum and navigating resistance are applicable far beyond healthcare.

> *Born Stroppy* is an inspiring and entertaining read for anyone interested in maternity services, healthcare leadership or social change

The writing is clear and engaging, balancing personal narrative with practical insight. Rather than offering abstract theories, Weston grounds her ideas in real experiences, making the lessons both accessible and credible. By the end, the reader comes away not only with a greater appreciation of the complexities of healthcare improvement but also with the conviction that individuals really can influence the systems around them.

Born Stroppy is an inspiring and entertaining read for anyone interested in maternity services, healthcare leadership or social change more broadly. It is thoughtful without being preachy, optimistic without being naïve, and serves as a timely reminder that meaningful progress is almost always driven by ordinary people who refuse to stop caring.

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