



BOOK RESUME: IN TROUBLE

In Trouble

by Ellen Levine

Carolrhoda Lab, Lerner Publishing Group, 2011

ISBN: 9780761365587 (Trade Hardcover)

*Age Range: 14-18 (Suggested by Publisher)

Grade Range: Gr 9 and Up (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

BOOK SYNOPSIS

Jamie and Elaine have been best friends forever, and now they're finally juniors in high school. Elaine has a steady boyfriend, and Jamie could have one—if she'd just open her eyes and see Paul. But Jamie has a bigger problem to worry about. Then Elaine gets "in trouble"—something they thought only happened to "other" girls. Are there any good choices for a girl in trouble?

In Trouble is a novel born of author Ellen Levine's interviews with women who came of age in the late 1950s and early 1960s, including those who knew what it was like to be a teen facing a horrible choice. In the decades before *Roe v. Wade*, a young woman "in trouble" had very few options—and all of them meant shame, isolation, and maybe much worse. Jamie and Elaine's stories are just two among the thousands of stories of teenagers facing unplanned pregnancies.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

"Author Levine has broached a delicate subject in the hope that readers will reflect upon what life was like for women before *Roe v. Wade* and where our nation could be headed if we refuse to learn from our history.... It's also a stark reminder of 'the more things change, the more they stay the same.'" —Booklist

"Valuable insight into a time when abortions were illegal and pregnant teenagers were hidden away instead of filmed for a reality TV show." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"A gripping, relevant read." —*Publishers Weekly*

"*In Trouble* should be available in every library serving young adults." —*School Library Journal*

"Misplaced love, date rape, and sexual ignorance all figure into this sympathetic but didactic novel about the importance of reproductive choice." —*The Horn Book Guide*

"This novel would be great as a discussion starter." —*Library Media Connection*

"Setting the novel in 1956 allows young readers to see how differently society views unwed teenagers today. For instance, Elaine is forced to live at the Catholic Home and give her baby up for adoption. Levine's novel also, unfortunately, shows us how much has stayed the same. The novel is a realistic account of girls 'in trouble' and how, with friends and family and fortitude, they make it through." —ALAN's Picks

Updated 7.17.2024

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Contact mciskowski@lernerbooks.com

"This one would be good for book clubs, inviting discussions about the implications of abortions in the 1950s and now, as well as the McCarthy era after-effects." —*BayViews*

"Many teens will want to take a measure of how far (or not) we've come over the past half century on the issue of reproductive rights." —*The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

"*In Trouble* is a book filled with surprises and mystery that readers won't be able to put down until the very last page." —*SLJTeen*

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Amelia Bloomer Project List
- Independent Publisher Book Gold Award

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

[TeachingBooks.net](#) – Author Page, Story Map Multi-Levelled Lesson, Cultural Representation Reflection, Submit Qualitative Text Complexity Rubric

***A NOTE ON AGE RANGES**

A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

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