

# World issues

[Life](#), [Death](#)



World Issues January 3rd, 2013 Half The Sky: A Book Review Half The Sky, a novel written by Pulitzer Prize winning couple Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, has been soaring of the bookshelves as of late. The book was published by the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group on June 1st, 2010 and holds 320 pages of inspiring stories of extraordinary women. It is classified as a nonfiction, gender studies novel that brings the tyranny against women to light. The main reasoning for this novel is to spread the word against cruelty on young women and girls in third world countries. While many people around the world are joining in the movement, I will go into detail on both the positive and negative aspects of this book. Then you, the reader, will decide whether to read or not read the novel, but for those who do, I hope you become a part of the movement, Half The Sky. In the novel, readers are faced with many issues that are running rapid worldwide. The book and film take readers to unusual countries, where the distress of women is becoming unbearable. Some of those countries include Cambodia, Kenya, India, Sierra Leone, Somaliland, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Liberia, and even the United States. By broadcasting the bravery of women and girls, who rise above their circumstances, shows that there is a light at the end of this tunnel of suppression. Talking about the nations individually in a negative way, may leave you with a bad taste in your mouth about these countries. This review is not to judge any of these countries and their shortcomings. It is to bring specific issues to the surface that are being handled improperly. Forced Prostitution, Maternal Mortality and the lack of a good Education, are the three main issues that need to be reversed in order for the healing process to begin. Forced prostitution is an issue that no

country can escape. It can happen anywhere and at anytime. There are many reasons why these young women and girls are forced into prostitution. It could vary from the lack of jobs, force by her own family, or even because she feels that prostitution is all she is good for. In a recent study in nine of the countries listed above about 89% of women and girls entered into prostitution unwillingly. This shows that there is a history in prostitution whether if it happened generations before or is beginning now. Prostitution is like a fire, the bigger the flames get, the more people get burned. So the question is now, how do we bring prostitution to an end? Truth of the matter is we do not, prostitution has been around for thousands of years and in this day in age I see no true end to prostitution. Now, what we can do is give these women a choice. Give them an opportunity to prove themselves worthy and to becoming more than just the average prostitute. With choices and helping organizations, we as a people can begin to help fight the brutal cycle of forced prostitution. Maternal Mortality is an issue that not every country is commonly faced with. Countries like the United States and Ireland, for example have amazing technology and birth techniques that make the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) fairly low. Often while a woman is pregnant, risk may be the last thing on her mind but in countries in Africa and Asia, it may be the first. If a pregnancy is not handled with proper care it can lead to severe bleeding, infections, and even death. A woman in a developing country has a much higher risk than a woman in a developed one. For example, in a developing nation the average MMR is 290 deaths for 100, 000 births. While on the other hand in a developed nation the average MMR is 14 deaths for 100, 000 births. Clearly, there is no competition when it comes to the MMR

averages that a woman in a developed country has more of a chance to survive. For the women with slimmer chances, death is avoidable. By getting the proper care before, during, and after a pregnancy can be the difference between life and death for these women. It is time for developing nations to take command of their government and to put the mothers and mothers to be first. Education is something that many of these third world countries lack in especially for girls. If only they knew that education is the key out of poverty and out of a life of hurt and close mindedness. Worldwide there are about 75 million children who do not attend school and more than half are girls. Some are kept at home to help with daily duties while others are burdened with the cost of tuition. We all know education is important and it is the reason that the world has come so far throughout the ages. By young women and girls being educated, it can not only aid them but their villages, countries, and even the world. Whatever schools have to do in order to receive a higher acceptance rate, they should. Whether it is to lower tuition, bribing parents and guardians, and even granting scholarships can help in the movement toward a better education. By supporting and aiding in these programs we can get these children into school, one child at a time. My overall evaluation of Half The Sky is an equal tie of both positives and negatives. Firstly, Nicholas and Sheryl have done everything they have set out to do, by spreading the word on the many abuses of women. The writing of this novel was powerful, yet depressing. Some of its strengths were fighting for causes that we should all take pride in. As the novel went on I started realizing that there were hardly no happy endings and it made me ask myself “ when is it ever going to stop?! ” Now the question is “ would I

recommend this book to others? " and the answer is " yes. " I would recommend this book to a mature audience, anyone who can handle raw but real stories. No one under the age of 18 should be allowed to read this novel because of its ongoing blunt stories against gender based violence. The effect that this novel can have is a heavy one, it has often left my classmates and I very angry and sad. Even though it does put a damper on positive spirits, it does empower the readers to make a stand in helping the women and girls who can not help themselves. Thusly, Half The Sky was a good and knowledgeable novel for me to read. I learned many things about the strength and power of women I did not know before. From forced prostitution, maternal mortality, and education, women still grow today regardless of their situation. This novel has inspired me to continue on with my schooling and soon becoming a part of half the sky.