

A Victim No More

Interview with Stephanie L. Jones,
author of *The Enemy Between My Legs*.

By Jill Hart



Stephanie Jones: Daniel Lippett

"Every two and a half minutes, somewhere in America, someone is sexually assaulted."

Statistics like this make us shudder, yet this is a reality in our society. Stephanie L. Jones is the author of a new book, *The Enemy Between My Legs*, written to help victims find hope and healing.

Jill: Welcome, Stephanie. You discuss an incredibly difficult topic in your book. Tell us a little about the book.

Stephanie: *The Enemy Between My Legs* has been

an interesting journey for me. I was really reluctant about writing the book, but people kept encouraging me to, because when I would go out to speaking engagements, I spent so much time – hours afterwards – speaking to people individually because they had so many questions. So, the book is a way for me to answer those frequently asked questions.

I wrote this book from an approach different from what you typically see. I find a lot of books on

child and sexual abuse deal with clinical issues, but they really don't (to me) reach where the person is at. I really wanted to go inside that person – to go inside their mind: what they are doing; how they feel inside (things that most people don't discuss in books).

Jill: It had to be hard to sit down and think through all the things you encountered and struggled with. Where would you say you found the strength to write this book?

Stephanie: Prayer. My relationship with God is very personal, and I spend a lot of time in prayer. I just asked God every step of the way for His hand to be upon me in writing this book.

Also, the support that I have from my husband was great encouragement: To have my husband, despite all that we have been through, say, "Go ahead and do this. I support you one hundred percent."

Jill: How did healing come about in your life?

Stephanie: When I got married, I started looking into the things that I had done as a teenager – all the relationships, the drugs, the alcohol and everything I was involved in – and I felt worthless. This is what took me to the next step: discovering what was going on inside me and why I felt like this about myself. I kind of had a breakdown when I was around 26 or 27 years old, and from there is when I really began to deal with the situation.

Jill: What advice would you give readers who may be struggling with past or current abuse?

Stephanie: The first thing – number one – they need to tell someone. That is so important. When I say "someone," I'm not just talking about someone who is going to have a listening ear. This is someone who is going to move them to action.

Second, they need to learn to forgive themselves and those who abused them. I know many people feel guilty about not saying anything. Forgiving the person who abused them is key, because you have to let that anger go in your heart. I can't stress enough about the importance of that and asking God to help in your situation.

Jill: What do you want your readers to learn from this book?

Stephanie: Number one, that there is hope. So many people, I believe, feel that they've done so many bad things in their lives that there's no hope for them. There is hope. So many people are angry, and they have so much hate in their lives – in their hearts about what happened to them. There is hope and there is healing, not only for them, but for their family. That's very important.

The second thing would probably be that this is an opportunity for them to come forth and stop this cycle of abuse for their families. People don't realize sexual abuse is generational. I think about my own case and the other kids who came after me that were sexually abused. Had I said something, things could have been much more different for them. ✨

*RAINN, "Statistics," Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, <http://www.rainn.org/statistics/index.html> (accessed August 17, 2007). Stephanie L. Jones' book, *The Enemy Between My Legs*, is available in bookstores nationwide and at www.amazon.com. Readers can get more information on Jones' website: www.stephaniejones.com.*