Our Bodies, Ourselves is a book that we have anticipated for a long time. It is the first published text and the first source of information available in Serbian language that deals with woman, woman’s body, and woman’s health. It has been written by women and they dedicated to other women. This book should enable us to get to know ourselves, as well as to start exploring ourselves, to discover the possible choices and opportunities for protecting our health. It is not a medically orientated book, but it does put emphasis on women’s health by introducing the perspective of what are the things that we can do for ourselves and for each other, all by drawing the strength and the energy from our everyday experience.

The aim of this book is to provide information about women’s health, to make the different female experiences ‘talk’ by making it available for as many women as possible and empowering them to take the full engagement in the care of their bodies and their lives, to encourage women to fight for advancement and progress in the health security system, to support both women and men that are working on the restructuring of the existing health system and the system of medical security in order to create the society in which health will be a right not the luxury and to give way to a society without gender inequity.

For a long time, it has been presumed that men’s and women’s health differed due to men’s and women’s biological differences. This perspective defines women’s health strictly through the family and the society of the existing culture,
through the tradition and the medicine, in which the key
decision-makers are men. So far, the concept of women's
health has been (and still is) closely related to pregnancy and
child-delivery. Most women accept the state of ill health as
though it was a prize of a lifetime and consider themselves
healthy for as long as it is required by their socially allocated
role. Millions of women all around the world live their
lives suffering from bad nutrition, chronic conditions of
reproductive organs and many other diseases. They tend to
neglect the signals that their bodies are sending them until
they are no longer able to get up in the morning, perform
their everyday duties and look after their families and
households.

The knowledge about women's health allows us to better
understand women's needs as well as women's fears regarding
their needs. The feminists dedicated to the problem of
women's health are devoted to the fight demanding that the
attitude of treating women as men of a different packaging
should cease, for that is definitely something that we are not.
It is the reason why it is not sufficient to merely collect the
problems regarding women's health and women's health
safety, but these problems also need to be further analysed
from women's perspective. It is obvious that health is
determined by gender, and that the gender discrimination
does influence health. The issues such as the male aggression,
the poverty and the less-paid jobs, the responsibility pressure
brought about the role of a mother and a housewife and so
on are all undoubtedly the factors that have a large impact
not only on the physical integrity of a woman, but also on the
control she exercises over her life, her chance and her right
of choice.

The authors of the book *Our Bodies, Ourselves* are women.
They are the feminists from the United States of America
who, thanks to their enormous energy and devotion to
women, approached the task of collecting and writing
down the medical facts, the significant information and the
necessities drawn from the female experience. This book
treats the concept of woman's health as a continuous process
that requires to be constantly worked on and that is indeed
constantly worked on. Hence, the text is regularly being
updated with new data and modern approaches, which
should provide all women with worthwhile information about
their bodies, their health and their rights to health safety.
Another aim of the book *Our Bodies, Ourselves* is to induce
each one of us into the thinking and taking the initiative
for active participation in the processes of determining and
changing the current reality regarding this issue. The book
emerged as a result of the enduring and devoted work of a
large number of women from Boston Women's Health Book
Collective together their fellows from the medical as well as
the non-medical circles. The book had several editions and
got translated to a number of international languages.

Summing up their work, the authors wrote: “Being feminists
we feel strongly bonded with all women. We appreciate
the solidarity that the women from different countries and
different environments express when they meet up and when
they listen to each other and share their experience. We
believe that feminism as a political perspective needs to jump
over and by-pass all national boundaries and to devote itself
to all kind of problems that affect the lives of women no matter
where they are. For the issues like denial of reproductive
rights, domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment at work
or in the street, racism, sexism, disclaiming of lesbian rights,
threats at workplace, economic exploitation, and war horrors
do not respect the legal borders of a State.

The translation and edition of this book, that for the first
time appears in Serbian language, has been brought about
by the activists from five different women's groups. These
women invested their enthusiasm, their enormous will and
work in order to bring the text closer to the women from this
linguistic area. The following women Sunčica Vučaj, Tanja
Drobnjak, Milica Minić, Dušanka Vučinić, Isidora Jarić, Slavica
Stojanović, Lepa Mlađenović, Stanislava Otašević, Tanja Labus,
Bobana Macanović and Violeta Krasnić have tried to give their
contribution by providing translation, editing and technical arrangement of the text, or by supporting the enlargement of knowledge and by encouraging women to bring more security and hope into their lives. We want to generate further reflection and change of attitude, so that the activities and the activism of women may influence and alter the current state of affairs.

We hope that you shall enjoy reading this book and we invite you to call us, write to us and share your experience and participate in the realisation of the following editions of this book, which will allow us women to replace the uncertainty by courage.

And do not forget that women write books like this one and they dedicate them to other women.

Stanislava Otasevic
Translated by: Maja Sotra

…”Our Bodies, Ourselves” is a book that we have anticipated for a long time. It is the first published text and the first source of information available in Serbian language that deals with woman, woman’s body, and woman’s health…”