

Victorian Women's Trust

About Bloody Time: Let's Talk Menstrual Health

Webinar Transcript

Date: 18 Feb 2026

Speakers: Jane Bennett, Hannah Bambra

Context:

On Wednesday 18 February 2026, the Victorian Women's Trust proudly presented a webinar on *About Bloody Time: The Menstrual Revolution We Have To Have* to celebrate the release of the updated second edition of this classic period resource.

About the book:

First published in 2019, ABOUT BLOODY TIME makes the case for menstrual revolution as an essential key to unlocking gender equality. Thousands of women and girls shared their experience of menstruation and menopause. The results were clear. Shame. Stigma. Humiliation. Disgust. Negative attitudes are pervasive, entrenched, and harmful. In this second edition with an updated call to action, About Bloody Time digs deep into the menstrual taboo: where it exists, how it came to be and why it's so resilient. Our culture asks women and girls to view their bodies through a prism of negativity and fear. We want to change that. Co-authors Jane Bennett and Karen Pickering produced this much-needed and celebratory book with the support of the Victorian Women's Trust.

In this discussion, hear **Jane Bennett** (author and educator) in conversation with **Hannah Bambra** (journalist and advocate) on menstrual health, resistance, self education and advocacy.

[About Bloody Time: The Menstrual Revolution We Have To Have](#) is available now. Published by the Victorian Women's Trust.

Webinar Transcript

Transcripts are provided for reference only and may contain typos. Please confirm accuracy before quoting.

00:00:10:24 - 00:00:12:12

Hannah

Welcome to this chat about the new edition of About Bloody Time. We've been planning this talk for a while, so it's exciting to be having it today.

00:00:22:20 - 00:00:34:04

Jane

It really, it really is. It's great to see everyone turning up. I'm hoping they're bringing their sandwiches, if it's lunchtime where they're joining from.

00:00:34:07 - 00:00:51:12

Hannah

That's a really nice reminder. While we're waiting for a couple more seconds for people to come through, if people who have joined us want to get a glass of water, want to make a cup of tea, please make yourself as comfortable as you can. Please take up space. Y

[Cross talk]

00:00:54:16 - 00:00:58:11

Hannah

I say there might be people joining from work as well.

00:00:58:14 - 00:01:12:00

Jane

I'm sure there are. I'm saying, Bindi is joining us from India. She's in India at the moment. A few other people from Victoria, Mary Lipschitz in Sydney.

00:01:12:02 - 00:01:30:19

Hannah

Amazing. Well, we might get started while people are joining, and on that, what you were just saying, Jane, I'd like to acknowledge that I am, dialling in from Wurundjeri Woiwurrung Country, from the people of the Kulin Nations, and Jane, what Country are you joining from?

00:01:30:21 - 00:01:36:14

Jane

I'm delighted to be joining from Dja Dja Wurrung Country in Central Victoria.

00:01:36:17 - 00:02:03:10

Hannah

Beautiful Central Victoria. If people are able to access the chat, please feel free to put which Country you are joining us from today. It's really nice to see a chorus of Country coming through, of people who are joining from different parts of Victoria in Australia. And I'd just also like to acknowledge that having a yarn and sharing information in women's spaces has thousands of years of history in this country.

00:02:03:12 - 00:02:31:04

Hannah

Australia is home to the longest continuous culture in the world, which is a lot of people managing a lot of periods over a very long time. So it's beautiful to be part of that lineage of menstrual care and be talking about this topic today. I'll note as well, just as a bit of housekeeping, that the folks from the Victorian Women's Trust are monitoring the chat.

00:02:31:11 - 00:03:06:12

Hannah

So if you have any technical difficulties, they are there. And they will also be sharing links for resources, when things come up and a link to be able to view Jane's wonderful book as well or to purchase that. And I'll also note that I will often be talking about women in this conversation, but want to acknowledge and celebrate that not all women have periods, and not all people who have periods are women and would really like to celebrate the diversity of experiences, which is very present in About Bloody Time as well.

00:03:06:14 - 00:03:22:08

Hannah

So I'm joined by Jane today. And it's lovely to be here. This is the second edition of About Bloody Time. And you've been working on this topic or this idea for more than ten years. Can you tell us a little bit about the process and where the idea came from?

00:03:22:10 - 00:03:48:10

Jane

Absolutely. So the very seed came late 2012. So you know, 14 years ago, and a group of us who had been involved in menstrual education for many years, came to the Victorian Women's Trust and spoke to the then CEO Mary Crooks. And, and we had the, you know, a really lively, riveting conversation.

00:03:48:17 - 00:04:26:29

Jane

And it turns out, then, that the Trust and Mary were very keen to support what turned out to be a study into women's experiences and actually really gathering the true experiences women were having. And it was just so fascinating hearing that even though we'd had quite a lot of experience in menstrual, menstrual education, it was still amazing to get that breadth of experiences of almost 3500 women and girls aged from 12 to 80.

00:04:27:02 - 00:04:53:18

Hannah

Yeah, that's an amazing origin story. Someone just popped in the chat as a reminder as well, that the Q&A function should be working for you. And if you can, please pop any questions for Jane, into the Q&A function. We can come back to those at the end as well. So thank you for that context about About Bloody Time, Jane, can you tell us a little bit about the name as well as this book About Bloody Time for what?

00:04:53:21 - 00:05:30:22

Jane

Yeah. Well, exactly. Well, as always tends to happen with books. There's a, there's a lot of to and fro about what the name will be. So this was sort of an iteration probably, you know. But really, you know, I think the tagline really says it is the menstrual revolution we have to have. And that it was time and really past time, that we really needed to change the way that we as a society were, were, dealing with or not dealing with menstruation and the experiences that women were having around that.

00:05:30:24 - 00:05:40:27

Hannah

And that was in 2019 where the first edition came out. And so now we're here to talk about the second edition. That's just been released. What's sort of changed since then?

00:05:40:29 - 00:06:15:16

Jane

Yeah. Well, the, the, the motivation to, to bring, you know, to really update and have a second edition was that since 2019, a lot seems to be happening on many fronts in Australia. So for instance, in that time schools around the nation were really decided to provide menstrual products for everyone who needed them, mostly secondary school, but in some instances a senior primary as well.

00:06:15:19 - 00:06:48:23

Jane

In other places, they've started offering, making available menstrual products in any public space. So it might be in libraries, in community centers. And so on. And there's been some legal changes. There's been studies into women's pain, inquiry into women's pain, which found that two thirds of which was related to the menstrual cycle, as well as the Senate inquiry into menopause, which also came up with some, you know, fantastic recommendations.

00:06:48:26 - 00:07:12:17

Hannah

Yeah. That's so great to hear that people are talking about it. And it feels like this menstrual revolution is starting. One of my favorite quotes in the book, actually, is, something that comes up a few times, this idea that women are reliable narrators of their own lives. How does that idea kind of tie into what we're seeing from things like the women's pain inquiry that you just mentioned?

00:07:12:20 - 00:07:36:14

Jane

Well, I think it was also really central to the women's pain inquiry. And for many women who were reporting their experiences, this is something they haven't felt, that they've heard for a long

time. The majority of women who have attended over the years, perhaps, you know, medical appointments to get some help felt that they weren't really heard.

00:07:36:14 - 00:08:02:20

Jane

They didn't understand that there were very few options for them, which may be in part to do with the very short consultations that they were offered. There's a whole lot of reasons for that. But also I think is, you know, a society wide, what I would say is a default to silence. So across the board, you know, the general public through the health professions, it's through to educators and so on.

00:08:02:23 - 00:08:12:07

Jane

We have a lack of, you know, of sufficient education and understanding about the menstrual cycle.

00:08:12:10 - 00:08:29:25

Hannah

And I think something that comes across really nicely in the book is a lot of quotes and lived experience stories and something that maybe it was the mindset that I was in when I last read it. But a lot of those feel like people are really sick of being ignored and sick of not being listened to.

00:08:29:27 - 00:08:56:15

Jane

Yes. Yeah. No, I think that that's I think, you know, and I've been hearing this for a long time myself in my own work. And also that came through really strongly when we were, when we were putting together the material from the survey, of the book and, and also then looking at what our recommendations were and this is coming through with other, you know, some of these other, government studies that I mentioned before, you mentioned.

00:08:56:17 - 00:09:23:18

Jane

And, so I think what I'm seeing is we are starting to say that this is important, that we need to listen to these experiences, and it's not, we can't anymore say, oh, well, it's just a period or it's just a just an anything, that, we, we need to be really paying attention to this, you know, you know, incredibly common, ubiquitous experience.

00:09:23:21 - 00:09:40:04

Hannah

And there's real world implications of women and people with periods and pain not being listened to as well. Right. One of my other favorite quotes in the book is this idea that misogyny is material and is often located in our bodies. Can you talk a little bit more about that?

00:09:40:07 - 00:10:15:11

Jane

Yes, the as you say, the implications, you know, I mean, I'm sort of hesitating to find the word because they're, they're so they affect every part of a person's life. If they're having any difficulties, with their menstrual cycle and difficulties can come in a whole lot of different ways. It might even just be not having the information they need, not having the words they need to be able to talk about what's going on for them or having been told even several decades ago.

00:10:15:11 - 00:10:42:11

Jane

Well, this is normal, this level of pain, by people who didn't know that that wasn't normal. And, and just and even, degrees of shame about actually going and talking to someone. This can be a huge, huge source of anxiety for, for some people to be able to talk to anyone or just not feeling they, they or perhaps even giving up after not being heard.

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Jane

These are not uncommon experiences.

00:10:45:15 - 00:11:09:19

Hannah

If GP's and other health professionals kind of aren't meeting that concern and help seeking behavior, that makes a lot of sense. And you talked a little bit about shame. There. Something that I think comes across really strongly in this, in this book and survey of thousands of women as well, is that idea of stigma and taboo, particularly across generations.

00:11:09:21 - 00:11:33:12

Hannah

I learned reading this book that the word hysteria comes from the Greek word for uterus and taboo comes from a Tongan word or concept. And I really like how many different perspectives it brings in, but it seems like this is quite a common human experience. That's just starting to change in, possibly, the generations coming through now.

00:11:33:14 - 00:11:41:22

Hannah

Why do you think it's so important that we talk about stigma and taboo in relation to periods in women's health?

00:11:41:24 - 00:12:04:17

Jane

I think, I think it's, I think it's central to the problems that we're having, and that it's not sufficient to say, well, this is natural and normal. We should be able to talk about it, which, of course, is true. But it's to me, it's a deep, deep part of the collective unconscious. We're not so conscious of it for many of us.

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Jane

And perhaps, you know, many, many of the listeners we wouldn't identify as someone who has menstrual shame. However, collectively we do, we tend to avoid talking about it. We avoid funding, research into it because it seems it's just all in this dark, mysterious box of, you know, women's troubles and, so being able to bring that into the light, making effort to bring that into the light, making the effort of sort of traversing that line, that's a little bit uncomfortable.

00:12:37:17 - 00:12:59:20

Jane

Do I bring it up here? Do I say something here? And rather than just defaulting into silence, it's so easy to do that, to be too busy doing other things to, to really look at. Well, how would this be for someone who's menstruating or having difficulties with their menstrual cycle, or having other conditions that are impacted by the menstrual cycle?

00:12:59:23 - 00:13:39:04

Jane

It's important that we consider it in every situation. How is this for, to support, women who I mean, in fact, I'll mention very briefly, I was excited to come across something just yesterday, a couple of, young women who, sparkies in Tasmania, and they were finding on a lot of the sites they were working on that the portable toilets had been taken away before the job had been finished, or they were in some remote place and there was nowhere, to perhaps change your pad or to take care of themselves and, in other ways.

00:13:39:04 - 00:13:59:27

Jane

And so they came up with this great pack with all this sort of, you know, called the go bag with all the different things you might need. I mean, it doesn't necessarily replace the need for a toilet, but it does. It does mean that something you can pop under your seat in your car and have available for those times you need it.

00:14:00:02 - 00:14:12:10

Jane

So I thought that was a great idea. And they're doing lots of agitating. So it's so great to see people actually stepping forward and finding solutions to these problems.

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Hannah

Yeah, I love that. And I imagine it starts with sort of talking about it and as you said, sort of bringing it out of the dark and removing some of that shame and stigma and then being able to normalise, periods and access to period care as well. That's a great example. And looking into the Victorian inquiry into women's pain, which you mentioned earlier as well, what did we learn

through this process and particularly sort of in relation to hormonal shifts throughout the life course?

00:14:45:23 - 00:15:21:23

Jane

What, you know, it's it was it was I just have to say it was a fantastic inquiry. So great to see it. And there were five key learnings that they came up with, number one was there were unmet healthcare needs. So for many women who were the majority who had, you know, significant pain were going to health practitioners, but also most of those were not, satisfied with the the help that they received, that there are serious gaps in research and representation.

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Jane

So there's so much that we don't know. And, you know, we really need to make a commitment to fund those. Now, that is starting to change. But I think we really have to stay onto that, that there's a gender bias in health care, that women's pain is not treated in the same way as men's pain.

00:15:39:26 - 00:16:11:20

Jane

And there have been several studies about that, that there are barriers for particular communities. This might be women living in regional or rural Victoria, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, LGBTQ plus communities and women with disabilities face greater barriers than even the rest of us. So it's sort of adding layers of difficulty and that there's, you know, there's really clear places for change.

00:16:11:20 - 00:16:51:18

Jane

So as far as what you were saying about those hormonal changes over a lifetime, to me, this is, very much, you know, central to education, central to the the literacy body literacy, menstrual cycle, literacy, understanding the different stages of life, where we're at and really being the experts and advocates for ourselves. You know, I think this is such an important part of our lives in so many different ways that really, being the expert ourselves and and of course, getting professional help as we need it.

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Jane

But I would really encourage, you know, wherever I can, that level of education and, you know, really being able to understand for ourselves what's going on.

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Hannah

So being listened to, but also being empowered with this information and care, can we talk a little bit more about education now that you've brought it up? What do you think? And we can

look at it at different stages of life or however you'd like to approach it. But what do you think parents, caregivers, and educators need to know to help shift the stigma around menstruation?

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Jane

I think, you know, it depends who I was talking to. If I was talking to individuals, there might be different answers. But as a general comment on that, I think it's important for someone who has the care of young people in their life, whether be it, their own children or students is to spend some time reflecting on what is their own experience, what happened when they were young, what education did they receive, what it was like for them, when they got their first period, you know, what information, what messages they were getting, whether they were, you know, positive or negative or or otherwise, just to kind of really see what they're

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Jane

carrying. And, you know, I think is, is important because we can get up in front of a class, you know, tick the box as far as the information we give. But if we're not comfortable being there, if we're not able to be, you know, present and aware of what we bring into the room, it can make a huge difference as to how that, that, that information or how those processes are received.

00:18:32:26 - 00:19:00:29

Jane

I do think, for me, menstrual education is, you know, I live and breathe menstrual education. It's what I wake up thinking about often. So I think, you know, all situations, all ages. And for parents, I think it's important not to not to think. Well, at some age, there's going to be the talk. I think just natural inclusion, natural normalisation, from, from a young age.

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Jane

And of course, that involves, you know, what's age appropriate. But being able to talk about periods whenever it's relevant or whenever there are questions, from a young age, it's really important.

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Hannah

And kids might say pads or tampons in the cupboard or something. And there's, there might be opportunities to start having informed conversations that are age appropriate from a young age. Right.

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Jane

Absolutely, absolutely.

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Hannah

But it's funny I think last time you and I spoke, we were talking a little bit about how long some things can stay with you. And I shared with you that it was 25, 30 years ago for me. But I remember having an education in school where they talked about periods and they said, you will bleed as much as fill up a glue stick.

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Hannah

And that's always stayed with me because I'm like, I've never filled up a glue stick with liquid. I don't know what that means. How much actually is that? And I think that a lot of people have shared two memories of, of education where, say, people put blue liquid on a pad, rather because they didn't want to acknowledge blood or they didn't want to, kind of talk about blood in that way.

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Hannah

So it's funny how long some of that can stay with you as well. So I love hearing you say that people kind of need to address what's coming up for them as well. Do you think that, or are you seeing in schools at least, and, at home with parents as well, that people are starting to use more, kind of correct terminology or that's sort of starting to change the way that they speak to young people about bleeding and periods.

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Jane

Not being in every home, in every classroom. I can't say necessarily, but my observation would be that it's lumpy in some places. Yes. And certainly people are wishing to provide the best of whatever they need to for their, you know, their children or the young people in their care. Again, I think it falls back on, you know, what is the, you know, that there's that there's a lack of it has been a lack of education across the board.

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Jane

And I would say in my experience, for people that teachers in schools that are tasked with menstrual education, it can vary enormously. Some are really, you know, have really up to the task and have really have really studied it. And for others, really not so much. And they're given the job just, just purely because they have a menstrual cycle, not because they have any extra, extra expertise, which to me is a little bit like, you know, we wouldn't ask someone to run childbirth education classes purely based on the fact that they've had a baby.

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Jane

You know, it certainly does give you some really real world experience, but it doesn't mean that you're really up to that full task. So I think we need to see more. Targeted education for those

who are educating, to really be able to cover, cover, you know, the, the topics as needed and to understand what they're going to come up with and come across in delivering that education.

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Hannah

Yeah. So that's one sort of key intervention that you'd love to see happen for the educators themselves to be receiving more training around periods of menstruation. What else is still lagging behind in this space? More broadly, what else would you like to see change?

00:22:34:20 - 00:23:01:01

Jane

I think, you know, education, really lifelong. I mean, many women who are coming toward, into perimenopause and menopause. And we found this through the survey for About Bloody Time. Many, you know, really, you know, probably the majority really decried that they did not understand what was happening. They didn't have the information they needed.

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Jane

So I think we really need to look at menstrual education as something as a lifelong sort of process. We really need to go through all the different stages, different things at different times. But it's not a one time wonder or once here and once there. For instance, in schools, there might be particular sessions early on to explain what's going on.

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Jane

But then I think I've heard of some schools that, you know, quite regularly might, get together with those who are menstruating or due to be menstruating and, you know, have some quiet, spacious time to have conversations, to answer questions too. Because for all of us who have had a menstrual cycle, it doesn't stop.

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Jane

Once we've had one period, you know, where things are always changing for this mean this is this happening, why is this happening? You know, hearing about different products that might suit me. How do I manage swimming? How do I manage camp? You know, there's no end of possible questions or how do I manage teasing? You know, or, or someone saying something to me or, or I'm too embarrassed to ask for a pad at the front desk, you know?

00:24:16:23 - 00:24:30:05

Jane

What do I do? This. You know, endless, endless possibilities. And I think we need to create more spaces, at all different ages for conversation. Not just not just information.

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Hannah

I read something recently that said that a lot of young people are still kind of missing out on sports and social activities and other things because they might have hormonal changes or periods that are stopping them from actively participating. So that sounds like a really useful idea to kind of have different stages, through a young person's life, but then also later as well as you said, right.

00:24:58:08 - 00:25:09:24

Hannah

Like, I've had a lot of friends who haven't been sure when they're going to stop bleeding after, say, having a pregnancy, for example, and what that means for their fertility and for their reproductive health.

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Jane

Yeah, absolutely. I think it's, there needs to be opportunities at every turn, really?

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Hannah

Yeah. And also, I mean, we've talked about it a little bit, but things like PCOS, picos and, and endometriosis can also affect people's periods and experiences of pain. And we know that in this country, it still takes up to or around seven years for people to get a diagnosis. So that's another one of those real world kinds of outcomes of people not being listened to.

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Jane

Absolutely. And if we think of that it's often seven and sometimes more years of, you know, feeling, feeling like they haven't been heard, feeling like something's wrong. This is not right. It's really interfering with my life. I can't do this and I can't do that. And yet I'm not getting help. I'm not getting a diagnosis. So, you know, there's a lot happening in those, you know, on average, seven years.

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Jane

Yeah. Similarly, with PCOS and also, from a mental health point of view, you know, a lot of the impacts of PMS, but particularly Pmdd, which a significant number of women and girls are experiencing. And really, given the extent of it, we have had very little funding and research, going into that and support, support as well.

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Jane

Connected to that is an understanding so very often the fast easy in inverted commas easy way is to switch off the cycle. You know, we can switch off the cycle and we can do that, medically.

And of course, that can be really helpful for some people. It can be really, really problematic with lots of other side effects for, for other people.

00:27:03:26 - 00:27:30:21

Jane

But what we're starting to see now is research coming through. So showing not that the value of the menstrual cycle is not just for fertility, for the odd time in our life when we want to conceive, but it's also really valuable on a whole lot of fronts for our health and wellbeing. To have a natural menstrual cycle, which means including ovulation because we need ovulation to produce progesterone.

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Jane

And progesterone has a whole lot of positive effects if experienced through a lifetime. And these effects can continue long after we've stopped having a cycle. So that research is only really just beginning to pop through. So we need much more understanding about that. Just to sort of cap off that thought, it's not to say that, you know, there isn't a place sometimes for, you know, if someone is particularly suffering and it's the only way to switch off the cycle, or there might be other needs.

00:28:04:24 - 00:28:28:13

Jane

But I think we also need to place some value on the menstrual cycle itself. Not just that we maybe one day want to conceive, and that's useful then. But actually it is, it is our natural, healthy cycle, and it has benefits in and of itself. So we need to protect that. We need to understand it.

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Jane

If I was to think of an analogy, it's a bit like if we can say that breastfeeding is fantastic and fantastic for babies, and we understand a lot about breast milk and, and how responsive that is to babies needs, that doesn't mean that it's going to be the best and the right thing, or even the even something that all mothers can do.

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Jane

You know, so we need to support all those situations.

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Hannah

Yeah. That's a really good analogy. I know that a lot of people can feel kind of shame and stigma around breast and chest feeding if they do it, and they can also feel a lot of shame and stigma around breast and chest feeding. If they don't do it or they choose not to do it or they can't do it.

00:29:11:02 - 00:29:32:28

Hannah

So there's, there's a lot of those kind of catch 20 twos in, women's health and, gender diverse health too as well. Right. But you're kind of like damned if you do, damned if you don't. And I've found that. Sorry. We're going a little on a little bit of a tangent, but I found that a lot with things like the pill, where there can be so many benefits, obviously.

00:29:33:01 - 00:29:55:20

Hannah

But then also there can be a lot of misinformation out there as well. And we've seen that with the rise of, say, like conservative information on TikTok, where they're sort of they paying influencers to talk about negative side effects of the pill, which do exist for a lot of people, but it can be really hard to navigate what where the sources of information are coming from.

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Hannah

Right. So if there's sort of conservative groups in America telling people to get off the pill because they don't believe in contraception or they don't believe in abortion and other types of reproductive health, that is not necessarily a helpful thing for us to be putting in the mix, where we're starting to try to determine what works best for us.

00:30:17:05 - 00:30:42:00

Hannah

So that's one thing that's really changed since the first edition of About Bloody Time. I mean, there's always been misinformation around, but AI has exploded as well. For example, what are some of the risks and opportunities with new health innovations? And should our audience be mindful of when they're looking to social media and to AI platforms to try and figure out what's going on for them?

00:30:42:02 - 00:31:14:29

Jane

Oh, we could spend an hour and a half on that. But I'll try and be really succinct. So I think ultimately what's really important here is informed choice and that we really practice discretion as to where we get our information. And as you say, there's been a lot of movement lately on TikTok and so on by conservative influencers, which I find as, you know, said that it's become a political thing.

00:31:15:05 - 00:31:37:11

Jane

You know, back in the, was it in the mid 80s when I learned natural fertility management? That's a fertility awareness method. It was far more, if you even to put it into any political spectrum, it would be far more fringe on the other end, you know, far more of a hippie, kind of, a hippie kind of, approach.

00:31:37:13 - 00:32:03:21

Jane

So I would say to people try and separate it from your politics for a start. There's a lot of this and really come back to understanding your body as best you can and really, be educated, have that literacy. We expect people to have literacy around a whole lot of other things in their lives that are important, be it their profession, their career, road rules and so on.

00:32:03:27 - 00:32:27:23

Jane

And yet we tend to say to women, don't worry, you know, just do what the experts tell you. Whereas we are living in this body, we actually can be and are the experts of our body, whether it's to do with fertility and the menstrual cycle or more generally, I think, that's the approach that I would really encourage us all to pursue.

00:32:27:23 - 00:32:46:20

Jane

And of course, there's no end to that. We continue with that process. And then we go to or employ health professionals for specific things that we know that they have expertise in. And that's really important. But ultimately, we are the experts in our own experience in our own body.

00:32:46:23 - 00:32:54:04

Hannah

And other people's politics have no, no place in determining our options and choices as well. Right.

00:32:54:11 - 00:33:31:29

Jane

Absolutely, absolutely. And just a quick comment on you were sort of bringing up AI and apps and so on. Again, I think we have to be really careful. There are now thousands of cycle tracking apps out there. For the most part, they're about, you know, us being the data, us being the product. So I would suggest and now, of course, it can be quite convenient and helpful to use, you know, if you can quickly put in your information on your phone, but I would practice a lot of discrimination when choosing an app.

00:33:32:01 - 00:33:57:17

Jane

And some, much more, transparently committed to not sharing your data. So I would look for one that does that. Also, there was a study done a few years ago looking at well over a thousand fertility apps. And of those, they found only a tiny percentage. It was 20 or 23 or something that were accurate, you know?

00:33:57:20 - 00:34:32:06

Jane

So, and only a tiny percentage that had properly qualified health professionals involved in creating the app. So mostly their fancy bells and whistles, they might, you know, and they pop up with things they're trying to sell you. Auto looks very nice, but it might come down to this is the rhythm method or it's temperature or, or they're telling you how you feel on a certain date rather than you kind of, observing and noticing and maybe noting somewhere how you feel on a.

00:34:32:07 - 00:35:00:11

Hannah

Certain rather than sort of prompting reflection in that way or slowing down. Yeah, that makes sense. Ava from Victorian Women's Trust has just popped a link in the app that talks a little bit. Sorry, a link in the chat that talks a little bit more about whether you can trust your cycle app as well. And I don't know about you, but that makes me feel really angry that on one hand we've got, you know, women and gender diverse people feeling like they're not being listened to.

00:35:00:13 - 00:35:35:19

Hannah

And then and this whole sort of medical system that often people experience what's often referred to as medical misogyny in this system. And then on the other hand, we've also got people trying to profit off our cycles and trying to sell us things when they know we're maybe in a moment of vulnerability, kind of the state of the world in that way is a really good, reason or really good reminder of why this book needs to exist, in my opinion, and why people need, points of, education and information that are reliable.

00:35:35:22 - 00:35:57:23

Jane

Absolutely. And I think that, I was thinking the same thing, Hannah. It just comes back to, you know, being our own expert as far as possible and, and getting our help when, when and if we need it is going to, is going to, mitigate a lot of those, a lot of those problems in those other circumstances.

00:35:57:26 - 00:36:18:02

Hannah

Absolutely. We've got a question in the chat. If you don't mind me turning to that. This is from Nicola. Thank you, Nicola, for asking this question. It says, "I am a secondary school nurse, and I'm wondering who you recommend referring to a teenage girl who has constant bleeding and her GP and gynecologists have no answer for."

00:36:18:06 - 00:36:33:18

Hannah

"(Everything they've tried hasn't helped. I'm surprised they haven't done a referral to the RCH, but I'm wondering if you know any other organizations that deal with period issues for teenagers)."

00:36:33:20 - 00:37:07:20

Jane

No, sadly. I think they'd be there's a place, they'd be a place and I've long wished for this, for a specialist clinic that included, you know, GP pads, perhaps other medical specialists, a specialist naturopath, maybe traditional Chinese medicine, and women's health physiotherapist would be awesome in, in such a place. What I suggest Nicola, because, you know, there's probably a conversation in this.

00:37:07:22 - 00:37:24:21

Jane

I would love it if you got in contact with me. Perhaps. I don't mind if my email address goes into the chat. So, Nicola, if you want to follow that up with me, because I probably have a few questions. Yeah, we could have a little to and fro about that, but thank you for your question.

00:37:24:23 - 00:37:50:14

Hannah

And I'm not sure if it's helpful, Nicola, but, I also know that one 800 my options with women's Health Victoria can sometimes help, find information and other resources and referrals as well. For women across different age groups. Jane Hales also has some great information about periods, but it does sound like this is quite a sort of specific example.

00:37:50:14 - 00:38:27:25

Hannah

And it might be worth reaching out to Jane as well. If you feel comfortable to do that. And some of that information is going into the chat. Now, if anyone else has any other questions, we've still got another five minutes. I know that this is a reasonably, quick amount of time, to be able to cover such a big topic, but maybe in the last couple of minutes, Jane, is there anything that we haven't talked about that you'd love to talk about that's central, to About Bloody Time, why it exists and and what this new addition includes.

00:38:27:28 - 00:38:32:13

Hannah

Oh gosh. Whole question.

00:38:32:16 - 00:38:37:07

Jane

That's more of a question.

00:38:37:09 - 00:39:18:21

Jane

Yes. I think one of the areas that we have spoken about in there is, the, the need for provision and changes in workplaces. And again, this, this, this sort of creeping beginnings, in this situation and, and, and we put out between the first and the second edition of About Bloody Time a book came out, from the, you know, which was sort of like the a practical booklet, a small

booklet, that came out, called, Ourselves at Work and that is available from the Victorian Women's Trust website.

00:39:18:23 - 00:39:49:00

Jane

And it really gives, some key information about people who have brought in, you know, menstrual policy or new adjustments in workplaces for the IT workers, and some, some really practical, really practical, guidelines and, you know, checklists and so on. And a template for a policy. So there's a lot of great tools in there to start the conversation in workplaces.

00:39:49:07 - 00:40:23:26

Jane

Or if you run your own workplace, if you have a small business, these are some great things. And from the people, including the Victorian women's charts, but from the people who have done this, they've found really only benefits. So often people worry cause people can take too much time off or they're going to do this, but actually they've found, great benefits for their workplace, for their workers, in bringing in, either adjustments or new policies, or changing existing policies for that matter.

00:40:23:28 - 00:40:46:10

Hannah

Yeah. That's great. So there's practical things that workplaces can do to help support people. Day to day, week to week, month to month around managing their period, which is great. And then menstrual health, which also is, is hormones and other changes as well. I know that we're starting to talk more about migraine as well.

00:40:46:10 - 00:41:16:12

Hannah

And a lot of people experience migraine around, hormonal shifts and periods in their life too. So it's really great to see that we're talking about that in the workplace too. Right? Because, as you said earlier, if someone's waiting seven years for a diagnosis or for help, that sort of seven plus years is time where that really contributes to things like, the gender equality pay gap, for example.

00:41:16:17 - 00:41:37:17

Hannah

People think about that as a very simple sort of men get paid more to do the same job. But it's really complex, right? And things like how you support it in the workplace to continue, to reach your earning capacity and to put money into your super all of these things, affects, the gap that women experience, in lots of different parts of our lives.

00:41:37:17 - 00:41:38:11

Hannah

Right.

00:41:38:14 - 00:42:00:25

Jane

Absolutely. And this, this is, you know, also particularly comes out in relation to menopause as well. And there's been, there's been quite a lot of work in the last few years. And you know, there was the, the, the national survey on issues related to menopause and perimenopause that the Victorian Women's Trust contributed to.

00:42:00:28 - 00:42:33:21

Jane

And that was a really sort of fascinating and, and deep, exploration of those issues. And, of course, for women at that stage of their lives, they're often, you know, bringing to their workplace a great deal of expertise. They're in senior positions. And yet, if they're really overwhelmed by the changes that are happening for them, you know, when there isn't that support and understanding, often they feel like they're only choices to leave.

00:42:33:23 - 00:42:41:24

Jane

Which of course, has impacted the workplace, impacts them, impacts their financial future, so on and so forth.

00:42:41:24 - 00:42:43:19

Hannah

And less women in leadership as well.

00:42:43:20 - 00:43:10:19

Jane

Exactly, exactly. So you know, these, you know, I think I actually have to say, if I was to say something in conclusion, there's a long way to go. There's lots more for us to do. But I'm actually really hopeful we have this momentum. You know, we really have momentum. And I think in this second edition of About Bloody Time, we talk about what has happened and what we're looking at now, what's what's the next stage.

00:43:10:19 - 00:43:35:17

Jane

And it's really exciting. I think we're not stuck in a place, we're actually there's movement. There's things to build on. There's a growing understanding of the importance, and it's not just a couple of narrow areas. And really, I'm saying movement on a whole lot of fronts. So it's exciting times.

00:43:35:19 - 00:43:47:02

Jane

For that said, I do kind of live in a bubble where I really notice these things particularly. But I think it is making a real difference to people's lives.

00:43:47:05 - 00:44:16:04

Hannah

Yeah, that's great to hear. Okay. When nearly done. We've got quite a few questions come in at the 11th hour, and we will try to send as many links and resources out after this webinar as possible. That might help answer some of those questions. But one that also might just be nice to finish on is, Ingrid says, that they've been tracking this cycle for some years now without using any apps.

00:44:16:07 - 00:44:27:27

Hannah

And been learning a bit as they go. And they just asked, what are some must reads for people who want to learn about menstruation, in addition to About Bloody Time.

00:44:27:29 - 00:44:53:06

Jane

Okay. Or. Well, there's a, there's an oldie but a really goodie and still really current is a book called Natural Fertility by Francesca Nash. And the processes of our fertility. You know, they're pretty stable as well as, you know, whether we have a regular cycle or irregular or whatever. So I think that's a fantastic book to look at.

00:44:53:08 - 00:45:06:20

Jane

And the second book is, Period Repair Manual by Laura Bryden. These are two books, you know, if you have nothing else on your shelf. They will give you a lot of support over the years.

00:45:06:22 - 00:45:35:02

Hannah

I'm glad you knew that off the top of your head. That's great. And of course, About Bloody Time. So. And there'll be links in the chat and also follow up if you want to, look at it online, if you want to buy a copy, the second edition of About Bloody Time is now available. And it is an absolute treasure trove of different people's experiences about information on menstrual health and hormones and fertility.

00:45:35:05 - 00:45:51:12

Hannah

And I recommend that anyone go and pick it up to help become part of this menstrual revolution that needs to happen. Thanks, Jane. Thanks for the chat today. Yeah. Thank you, everyone, for joining.

00:45:51:14 - 00:45:52:05

Jane

Thanks, everyone.

