I delivered twenty babies in the summer of 1977. I was hardly more than a baby myself, just turned twenty-four and starting my third year of medical school.”—from Birth Day

So began Mark Sloan’s three-decades-long exploration of the wonders and oddities of human childbirth. Pediatrician, husband, and father, the author has attended nearly three thousand births since that long-ago summer, encountering everything from routine deliveries to tense labor-room dramas. In Birth Day, Sloan draws on his personal and professional experience to weave the strands of memoir, history, science, and culture into a fascinating—and often funny—tapestry of this fundamental human passage.

Birth Day takes the reader on a remarkable journey, from the dawn of human history to the quiet efficiency of a modern operating room; from Aristotle and Julius Caesar to a trailblazing, cross-dressing British army surgeon; from a recent past filled with the horrors of childbirth gone wrong to a present day, in which every pregnancy is expected to end happily. Some of Birth Day’s many topics include

• The evolution of human childbirth—or, why do gorillas have it so easy?
• The first five minutes of life—scuba divers, astronauts, and the amazing adaptations that transform a fetus into an air-breathing, out-in-the-world baby

• Cesarean section—a look at its origins, its future, and how it came to be the most frequently performed operation in American hospitals

• Pain and politics—the age-old quest for painless childbirth, starring Adam and Eve, Queen Victoria, a nineteenth-century medical brawl, and the rise of today’s “epidural monoculture”

• Daddies—raging paternal hormones, hidden anxieties, and the emotional evolution of men (including the author, his father, and grandfather) as they approach fatherhood

• The five senses at birth—does light enter the womb? how loud is it in there? what is a newborn baby searching for with those first anxious glances?

• A tour of the newborn body—springy skulls, hairy ears, inners and outers, the advantages (and disadvantages) of looking like your father, and why the United States is one of the world’s most circumcised nations

Delightfully instructive and entertaining, Birth Day offers a fresh, sometimes irreverent take on a universally familiar topic. Warm, reassuring, and packed with stories from the author’s work and life, this unique book is one pediatrician’s meditation on the hiding-in-plain-sight marvels of human birth.

My Personal Review:
I’m usually not a non-fiction reader, but this book was incredibly well written. His stories are fascinating, and the way he links them into interesting information about pregnancy and childbirth is very well done. It answered a lot of questions about the whole process that I hadn’t even thought to ask. I recommend it for anyone, but specifically for women about to give birth because it explains so much that other books don’t. I think it’s very helpful to know the background of a lot of common medical practices, not to mention the evolutionary and medical reasons for the way childbirth works.

For More 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price:
Birth Day: A Pediatrician Explores the Science, the History, and the Wonder of Childbirth by Mark Sloan - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!