

*Mopsy* { MOPSY STRANGE KENNEDY }



## A DARK MYSTERY *The shadowlands of a mother's life and death*

**T**HE EQUANIMITY AND curiosity that Nancy Rappaport applies to her subject is admirable, given that she's exploring her mother's suicide. Her mom (also Nancy) was the vibrant yet unstable mother of six who ran for school committee, wrote a novel, had an affair with a married man, then married someone else. Meanwhile, husband Jerry, a prominent Boston developer, married the wife of his wife's lover and won custody of his children, creating an upper-middle-class, blended family that burgeoned to 11 kids. Mother Nancy wrote in a heart-squeezing style full of intense, almost adolescent yearning that showed sensitivity to her children despite spouse-exchanging, suicide attempts and the ugly polarization of a



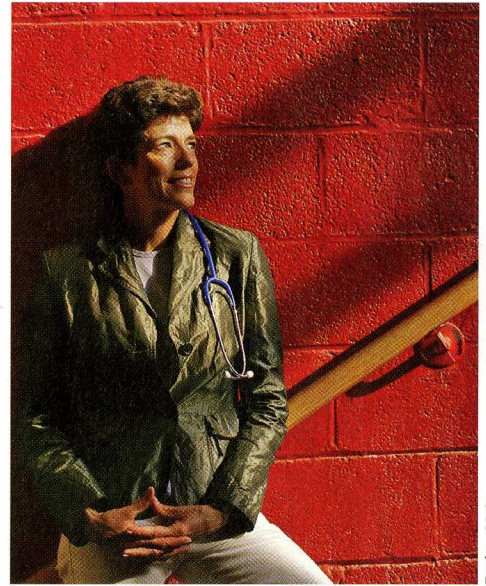
### In Her Wake

By Nancy Rappaport

Rappaport, assistant professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, lives in Cambridge.

and to her stepmother. The family's viewpoints and memories sprawl out in many directions, tinged with the lifelong aftermath of suicide. \*\*\*

very public divorce. Alas, she abandoned her children while also (that old paradox) fighting to get them back. In her book, daughter Nancy, a child psychiatrist, unspools lifelong wonderings about her mom's tragic demise, a loss that has helped in her work with depressed teenagers. She also talks to her father, dazed and burdened by the gigantic sorrow and responsibility that death entailed,



Esdras M. Suarez