

WOMONSCAPE TIMES

~A monthly publication by the Womonscape Center Inc.~



W O M O N S C A P E C E N T E R

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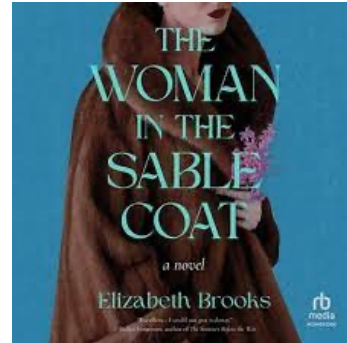
NO-RULES BOOK GROUP (NRBG)

We're taking a summer break on book group meetings during July.
See you next month!

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, August 15. On this page and the next are some brief reviews from our June meeting.

THE WOMAN IN THE SABLE COAT by Elizabeth Brooks

Romance. Mystery. Wartime drama. This book has it all. First, we meet twenty-two year old Nina Woodrow who joins the British Royal Air Force during World War II and finds herself falling in love with a married officer named Guy Nicholson. Meanwhile, back at home, Guy's wife strikes up a strangely dangerous friendship with Nina's widowed father. And who is the woman in the sable coat, anyway? Find out by reading this novel, written by successful British writer Elizabeth Brooks.



THE FROZEN RIVER by Ariel Lawhon

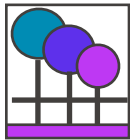
The Frozen River is based on a real-life mystery. In 1789, midwife Martha Ballard discovered the body of Joshua Burgess, a prominent citizen from the community of Hallowell, Maine. Martha was familiar with Burgess as one of two men accused of rape several months before his death. But while Martha was sure Burgess was murdered, a Hallowell physician declared the death an accident. Determined to get to the truth and get justice for the rape survivor, Martha immersed herself in the trial. Ariel Lawhon used Martha Ballard's detailed diary entries as important source material in writing this dramatic and fascinating book.

[Note: Martha Ballard's story has also been told in documentary form in *A Midwife's Tale* in the PBS series *American Experience* (1998)].

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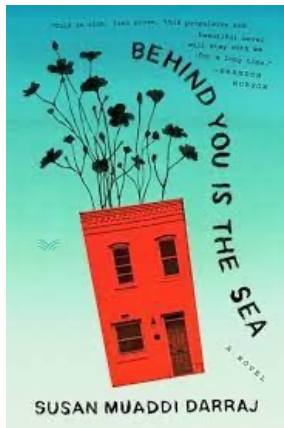
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NO-RULES BOOK GROUP

(Continued from page 1)



BEHIND YOU IS THE SEA by Susan Muaddi Darraj

This is a lovely little book of intertwined short stories about the people in a Palestinian-American section of Baltimore. Some of the characters are first generation immigrants who remember a life of war and poverty in their homeland. Others are second or third generation family members, trying to identify with an ancient land they have never seen while living in a modern multicultural environment. The themes of family conflict are universal; the story lines have clever surprise twists; and, most importantly, these are stories that will make you think.

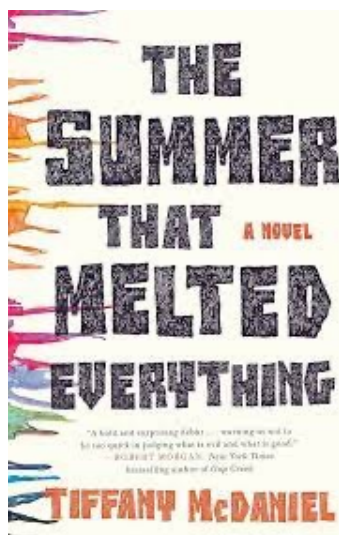
BETTY by Tiffany McDaniel

Betty is Tiffany McDaniel’s mother and one of the children featured in this book. Betty was born and raised in Appalachian Ohio in the 1960s, one of eight children parented by Landon and Alka Carpenter. McDaniel uses her uniquely beautiful prose to introduces the reader to each member of the family, as well as a myriad of other characters, each full of depth and personality. We witness racism, spirituality, tragedy, nature, pain and suffering as well as mystery, beauty and love. Though presented as a novel, McDaniel gleaned most of her material from talking with her mother and grandmother as well as other family members and worked to get it published for over 20 years. The result is a truly beautiful novel, well worth the wait.

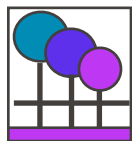


THE SUMMER THAT MELTED EVERYTHING by Tiffany McDaniel

The reader who reviewed Betty couldn’t get enough of Tiffany McDaniel, so she went on to read one of the author’s earlier books. The Summer That Melted Everything centers around a character introduced briefly in Betty. It is deeply thought-provoking, with a bit of mystery. While it has been compared to To Kill A Mockingbird, because it deals with Southern racism and a progressive lawyer’s family, this book deserves to be read and evaluated on its own merit. At the beginning of the book, a wise-beyond-his-years boy appears in a small town and claims to be the devil. The question for the town: is the boy telling the truth? Don’t let the premise put you off; it is a riveting read that leaves you with a new sense of beauty and wisdom.



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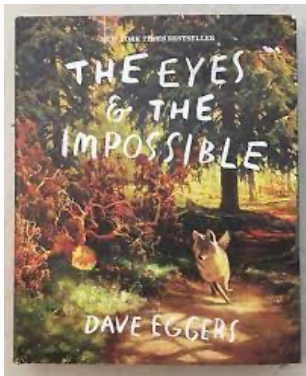


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NO-RULES BOOK GROUP

(Continued from page 2)



THE EYES AND THE IMPOSSIBLE by Dave Eggers

This is narrated by the main character, who is a dog living in a very big city park. Our reviewer reports, “the free spirit in me loved the story and the animal lover in me loved the story. It is told from the animal perspective and the friendships and interactions they have with each other as they co-exist in the park and work around the humans involved with the park. The illustrations are a unique and rich addition that have a story of their own.”

CURED: THE LIFE-CHANGING SCIENCE OF SPONTANEOUS HEALING by Jeffery Rediger, MD

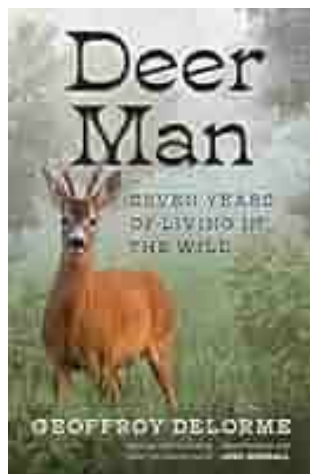
This book is an account of Dr. Rediger's study of spontaneous healings. He explores hundreds of cases, looking for patterns, explanations, and processes that the cases may have in common. The text is inspiring and informative as individuals share their stories of health improvements. There is no Magic Formula presented; instead, these are case studies of real people and the different ways they found improved health and well being. There are also wonderful bits of wisdom one can draw from their stories.

CURED



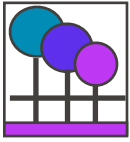
The Life-Changing Science of Spontaneous Healing

JEFFREY REDIGER, MD



DEER MAN: SEVEN YEARS OF LIVING IN THE WILD by Geoffrey Delorme

The author chose to live in the wild with a group of deer. Drawn to the woods as a youngster, his connection with the woods and its residents pulls him. He is accepted by the deer and learns from them. His life is a hybrid that leans more and more into the woods and less and less on the occasional shower or pick up of pantry food. The respect and connection he has with the deer is rich and inspiring. It is one more book that pleads the case of nature and animals deserving respect and habitat.



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HAVE YOU HEARD OF THIS WOMAN?

MARY TWO-AXE EARLEY

When the social and political conflicts in the United States become extra stressful, it's easy to think that countries like Canada are idyllic. But Canada has had its share of dark times, too. Mary Two-Axe Earley was a Canadian who brought to light some major injustices facing Indigenous Canadian women, and was successful in rectifying them.



By the time Mary Two-Axe was born, in 1911, the government of Canada had gradually taken away most of the land and rights of its native citizens, not unlike the government of the United States. Native people, according to the laws of Canada, could live in cities, in urban areas, or on tribally-owned reserves. Mary was of Mohawk descent, and was born on Kahnawa:ke Mohawk Territory, a Haudenosaunee reserve near Montreal. She grew up living with her mother and her mother's extended family. When Mary was ten, her mother was working as a nurse, taking care of flu patients in North Dakota. Mary's mother caught the flu from one of her patients and died, leaving Mary to live with her grandparents on the reserve. When she was eighteen years old, Mary left Canada for the United States in search of work.

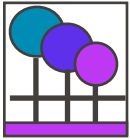
Mary settled in Brooklyn, New York, where she lived in the State Street area, among a group of other Canadian Mohawk immigrants that had arrived before her. The area was called "Little Caughnawaga," and all of the families were from the same Kahnawa:ke reserve. While living in Brooklyn Mary married an Irish-American man named Edward Earley, and the couple had two children. Edward was an electrical engineer and the family lived a comfortable life primarily in the United States; every summer Mary visited her relatives in Canada on the reserve.



What Mary didn't realize was that, by marrying a man outside of her own tribe, she had lost her legal status as a native Canadian. According to a Canadian law passed in 1876, Mary and her children had lost their rights to live on the Kahnawa:ke reserve, to vote in council elections, to use social programs, to own or inherit property on the reserve, and to be buried on reserve land when they died. In fact, Mary pointed out, the reserve had three graveyards: one for Catholics, one for Protestants, and one for dogs. But "if you were a Mohawk woman who married a non-[same tribe]Indian, you

had to be buried outside the community." Although Indigenous people did not originally discriminate against women as second-class citizens, this law clearly did: the law only applied to native Canadian women, not to native Canadian men. This was because the law reflected the Victorian-era European idea that women were legally the possessions of their husbands.

(Continued on page 5)



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HAVE YOU HEARD OF THIS WOMAN?



MARY TWO-AXE EARLEY

(Continued from page 4)

In 1966, the injustice of this law became personal to Mary. One of her friends from the Kahnawa:ke community in Brooklyn had lost her legal status by marrying a Mohawk from another reserve. After being ordered to leave the reserve and to sell her house, the friend had a heart attack and died in Mary's arms. Mary was convinced that the stress of discrimination caused the heart attack.

Mary began organizing to change the law. In 1967 she founded *Equal Rights for Indian Women* (later named *Indian Rights for Indian Women*) along with Cree activists Kathleen Steinhauer and Nellie Carlson. The group wrote letters, made speeches, and submitted proposals for change to the government task force and its ministers. Not only did the group face opposition from the Canadian government, it also faced opposition from the male native leaders, who were afraid that the cost of extending full tribal status to thousands of deregistered native women and their children would be too high.

But Mary kept fighting for her rights. After her husband died in 1969, Mary moved back to Canada, where she wanted to live in the Kahnawa:ke log house she had inherited from her grandmother. The tribal leaders told her she was not welcome to live on the reserve, but she worked around them. Mary's daughter had regained her tribal status by marrying a Mohawk man, so Mary gave her grandmother's house to her daughter, who allowed Mary to live in it. The tribal leaders were not happy; in 1975, when Mary was attending an International Women's Year conference in Mexico, her daughter told her that the tribal council had used the Canadian law to evict her. Mary told the women at the conference about the eviction, causing a lot of negative publicity for Canada in the world community, so the tribal council rescinded the eviction.



Here is a list of the key events in Mary's legal challenges in the years that followed.

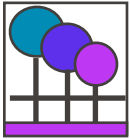
1977: The *United Nations Human Rights Committee* challenged the Canadian law. Canada replied that it was unable to change the law because the indigenous community itself was in conflict over it.

1981: The *United Nations Human Rights Committee* ruled that Canada was in violation of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, a symbolic victory for the indigenous women of Canada.

1983: Quebec Premier Rene Levesque gave up his chair at a constitutional conference to allow Mary to speak about justice for native women.

1985: *The Canadian Indian Act* was formally amended to give native women and their children full status as tribal members, even if they were married to non-tribal members. This reinstated tribal membership and benefits for an estimated 16,0900 women and 46,000 children.

Mary lived to see the Canadian law changed and to have it survive legal challenges for several years afterwards. And in 1996, because of her decades-long fight for change, Mary was able to be buried on Kahnawa:ke land after her death.



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HAVE YOU HEARD OF THIS WOMAN?

LILY EBERT

Lily Ebert was born over 100 years ago, on December 29, 1923. Just surviving for so many years is quite an accomplishment. But Lily survived the horrific Auschwitz death camp back in 1944, when she was 20 years old. And she is still determined to tell her story. Yep, Lily is still alive! So, with the help of a great-grandson, she has become a TikTok star. “I want to tell you about my story,” she explains, “because in a few years’ time I won’t be able to. It will become a history.”



Lily was born in Hungary, the oldest daughter in a Jewish family that included six children. In March of 1944 the Nazis invaded Hungary, and in July of that year Lily, along with her mother, two brothers, and three sisters, were deported to Auschwitz. Upon arrival at the camp, Lily’s mother and two of her siblings were immediately executed in the gas chambers. Lily and her other siblings were spared, as they were selected for work. They survived four months at Auschwitz and several more months working in a munitions factory near Leipzig until they were liberated by the Allied Forces in 1945.

After the war, Lily and her surviving siblings (one brother and two sisters) moved to Switzerland for a new start on life. Eventually they moved to Israel, where Lily married and had three children. In 1967 Lily and her husband and children moved to London, where she lives today. Lily currently has ten grandchildren, thirty-eight great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

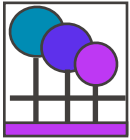
World War II has been over for decades, but Lily continues to push forward with Holocaust education. During the Covid-19 lockdown, great-grandson Dov Forman helped Lily write a best-selling memoir, [Lily’s Promise: How I Survived Auschwitz and Found the Strength to Live](#). In 2021 Dov helped Lily start posting Holocaust question-and-answer sessions on TikTok, gaining more than a million followers. They have appeared on radio and television. interviews in more than thirty-five countries and spoke at the United Kingdom Parliament to promote a UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.



Perhaps one of the most meaningful conversations Lily has had regarding her Holocaust experience, however, was a zoom conference in 2020. Lily was able to meet the descendants of an American soldier who gave her a good-luck bank note in 1945, as a start to a new life. Lily has kept the bank note for over nearly eighty years because, “This soldier was the first human being who was kind to us. It was the first time after this terrible life that somebody was kind and I knew that somebody wants to help.” Although the soldier who gave Lily the bank note died in 2013, his descendants kept letters he had written during the war, telling about meeting Lily and other Holocaust survivors. “I know that this

soldier told his family, he wrote to his family every day the stories that he saw. With that, I feel some connection to them.”

To see and hear Lily in her London home, check out the BBC news story and video posted on her 100th birthday, December 29 of last year.



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HAVE YOU HEARD OF THIS WOMAN?

ZONA GALE

Sometimes life in a little, ordinary hometown is more interesting than you might think.

That's what writer Zona Gale discovered. And this discovery led her to become the first woman to win a Pulitzer Prize for drama.

Zona was born in Portage, Wisconsin in 1874. She was an only child, who led a relatively sheltered life with protective parents, to whom she was very devoted. During her lifetime the population of her hometown was no more than about 5000 people, and Zona was eager to visit larger, more exciting places.

Zona knew from an early age that she wanted to be a writer. She started submitting stories for publication at the age of 13 and went to the University of Wisconsin in Madison with the goal of becoming a professional writer. During her time as a university student she published her first story in a Milwaukee newspaper and received a check for three dollars. She was so thrilled that she immediately got on a train and traveled 40 miles to Portage, just to show the check to her parents, and returned the same evening on another train. After graduating in 1895, she moved to Milwaukee, where she was a reporter for the *Evening Wisconsin* and the *Milwaukee Journal*, and later New York City, where she worked as a journalist for the *Evening World*, all while continuing to write short stories.



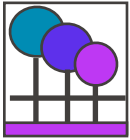
But Zona's first big break came after she visited Portage in 1903 and realized this little midwestern town had all the inspiration she needed for her fiction. She was gradually able to sell enough of her short stories and novels to move back to Portage. Zona was known for being realistic without being overly sentimental in her writing, portraying life in Portage in the fictionalized towns of "Friendship Village" and "Prospect." Her 1920 novel *Miss Lulu Bett* became a bestseller, and she adapted it into a play that won the Pulitzer Prize in 1921.

An exceptionally independent woman for her day, Zona was active in politics and supported many liberal causes. She worked for Robert LaFollette's Progressive Party and lobbied for equal rights for women, including the *Wisconsin Equal Rights Bill* in 1921. (See page 8). Zona believed in such radical ideas as racial integration and the abolition of the death penalty, attempting to overturn the death sentences of Nicolo Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, which she said were ethnically biased. Zona also held a seat on the board of regents of the University of Wisconsin from 1923-1929.

(Continued on page 8)

DONATIONS WELCOMED

Thank you to those who donated to the Womonscape Center in June. Donations help us print and publish this newsletter. Because the *Womonscape Center, Inc.* is a 501(c)(3) organization, all donations are tax-deductible. They can be sent by mail to *Womonscape Center, Inc.*, PO Box 335, Richland Center WI 53581; they can also be sent online via our website: www.womonscapecenter.org.



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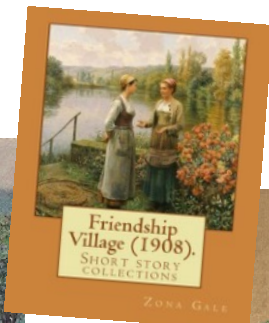
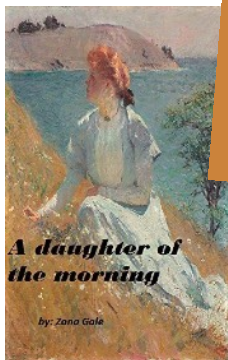
HAVE YOU HEARD OF THIS WOMAN?

ZONA GALE

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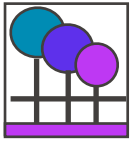
In 1928, at the age of 54, Zona married a widower named William L. Breese, who was a banker and hosiery manufacturer from Portage. Together, the couple raised Breese’s teenaged daughter and adopted a three-year-old girl named Leslyn. Ever the modern thinker, Zona used experimental methods for child-rearing with little Leslyn, including a vegetarian diet and regularly recording the girl’s every activity. Eventually, however, Zona hired a governess so that she could carry on her political activities and writing career. By the time she died, in 1938, this internationally known, Pulitzer prize-winning woman had also worked as a peace advocate with such luminaries as Eleanor Roosevelt and Jane Addams, and had traveled to Japan as a visiting lecturer.

Not bad for a girl from Portage.



On June 21, 1921, the Wisconsin Legislature passed the nation’s first equal rights bill. The bill stated “*women shall have the same rights and privileges under the law as men in the exercise of suffrage, freedom of contract, choice of residence for voting purposes, jury service, holding office, holding and conveying property, care and custody of children and in all other respects.*”

It was signed into law by Gov. John James Blaine a few weeks later.



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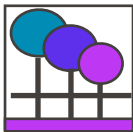
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August 15— is our
next scheduled
No-Rules Book Group
in Richland Center.
See Page 1 for details.

**Womonscape
Times**

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QUOTES BY WOMEN

~ When women age into their power, no wind can upset them, no hand can turn
aside their knowledge, no fact can deflect their point of view.

~Louis Erdrich

~ I want to teach people to be humans to each other.

~Lily Ebert (see page 6)

~ I can still help.

~Lily Ebert (see page 6)

~ The unexpressed is always of greater value than the expressed.

~Zona Gale (see pages 7-8)

~ I can promise you that women working together—linked, informed and
educated—can bring peace and prosperity to this forsaken planet.

~Isabel Allende