

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

With this issue we begin our twelfth year of publishing a monthly newsletter! We started in a brick and mortar establishment in Baraboo, WI, in 2012. Ever since we published our first newsletter, a short time later, we haven't stopped.

No-RULES BOOK GROUP (NRBG)

December weather was definitely NOT our friend. We cancelled our *No Rules Book Group* meeting last month when a combination of rain and snow and fallen trees made travel difficult if not impossible.

The next NRBG will meet on Thursday, January 19 at 10:30 in the lower level of the Richland County Courthouse. We'll gather near the elevator and proceed to our meeting room.

We heard from many of our NRBG regulars, however, by phone or email and received some book suggestions. Of course, it wasn't the same as discussing these gems in person, but it was good to know we could improvise a bit.

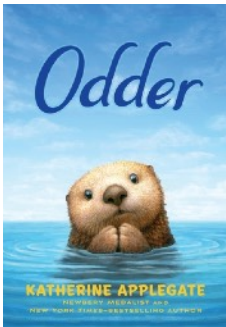
Table of Contents

NRBG + film Reviews	1-2
Have You Heard of...?	3-6
Quotes	2, 4-7
Next Meeting Date	1, 7

J
A
N
U
A
R
Y

2
0
2
3

ODDER by Katherine Applegate

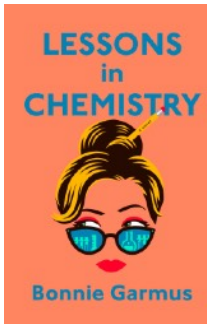


This book is set off the coast of Central California and in an aquarium. It tells the story of daily aquarium life from an otter's point of view. Written by a Newberry Award winning author, this "children's book" is a winner for all ages.



STAY TRUE: A MEMOIR by Hua Hsu

Hsu has written a memoir about his unlikely friendship as a first generation Taiwanese American with a fourth generation Japanese American living in New York City. The story explores identity and philosophy as well as the importance of deep friendships.



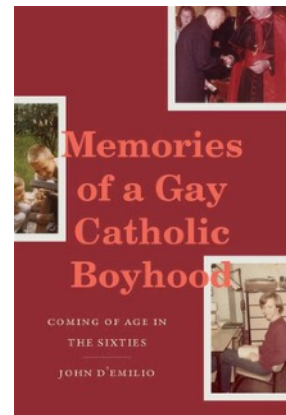
LESSONS IN CHEMISTRY by Bonnie Garmus

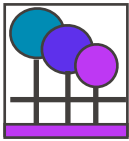
Set in the 1960s, a woman faces challenge after challenge in pursuing her career as a chemist, but emerges victorious.

MEMORIES OF A GAY CATHOLIC BOYHOOD: COMING OF AGE IN THE SIXTIES

by John D'Emilio

D'Emilio is a historian who specializes in LGBTQ stories. In this memoir he tells of his personal evolution from Joseph McCarthy supporter to antiwar demonstrator, and from ardent Catholic to out gay activist.





Womonscape. Serving Women. Enriching Lives.

NO-RULES BOOK GROUP

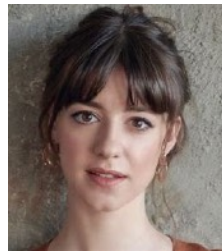


(Continued from page 1)

FILM REVIEWS

FRESH (streaming on Hulu)

If you are looking for a feminist-based horror film, this is for you. If you have trouble sleeping when you hear about psychopaths, you probably should avoid this one.



Daisy Edgar-Jones

The film features Daisy Edgar-Jones (*Where the Crawdads Sing*) as a single woman navigating the dating scene. When she mysteriously disappears while away on a romantic weekend with her new boyfriend, her best friend becomes concerned. And, let's just say, *she should be*.

SORT OF (streaming on HBO Max)



Bilal Baig as Sabi

Sort of is an award-winning television series set in Toronto. It features a multi-ethnic, multi-generational, and multi-gender cast in a unique modern story line that combines drama and comedy. Now finishing its second season, *Sort of* follows the life of twenty-something Sabi Mehboob, a first generation Pakistani-Canadian, and their friends and family. Like many people in their twenties, Sabi is trying to figure out their relationship with their parents, what they want to do with their life, and how they present themselves to the world. This is particularly complicated since Sabi identifies as non-binary. Bilal Baig, the actor who plays Sabi, created the series, based on many experiences from their life. The result is truly marvelous. The characters are well-developed, with such universal themes, that all types of viewers should find it fascinating.

• I know what it feels like to make a lot of autonomous choices at earlier ages because I could see that what was being presented to me wasn't enough, or didn't speak to me at all.

~ Bilal Baig, television writer and actor

DESCENDENT (streaming on Netflix)

The *Clotilda* was the last known slave ship to arrive in the United States, illegally, in 1859. The discovery of the ship and interviews with many of the descendants of slaves who came over on the ship are included in this riveting documentary which won a special Jury Award at Sundance. When freed at the end of the Civil War, the former slaves formed Africatown, where many of their descendants still live today.

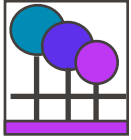


...white people, most particularly those directly connected to the story, didn't want to talk about this story at all. Silence. Africatown, on the other hand, was a community brimming with pride, deeply connected to its history, celebrating and conjuring its story in present and dynamic ways as it confronts current-day challenges.

~ Margaret Brown, documentary filmmaker

DONATIONS WELCOMED

Thank you to those who recently donated to the Womonscape Center. 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.



Womonscape. Serving Women. Enriching Lives.

HAVE YOU HEARD OF THIS WOMAN?



DOROTHY PITMAN HUGHES

Reinventing herself, again and again

If you missed the recent tributes to Ms. Hughes, who died in December of 2022, it is definitely worth taking some time to reflect on her life, work, and life outlook.

Ms. Hughes was born Dorothy Jean Ridley on October 2, 1938 in Lumpkin, Georgia, one of nine children. Her father ran a small trucking firm, and her mother worked as a maid. When she was ten, her father was nearly beaten to death and left on the family's doorstep. Neighbors believed it was the work of white supremacists, attacking Mr. Ridley because of his stance on civil rights.



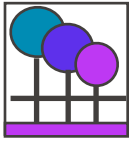
After graduating from high school, Dorothy moved to New York City, where she worked as a house cleaner and nightclub singer. Undeterred by her father's experiences with racism, Dorothy became a community activist and speaker. She organized several cooperative child care centers in the 1960s to help other young mothers like herself. According to her biographer, Laura L. Lovett, Dorothy "realized that child-care challenges were deeply entangled with issues of racial discrimination, poverty, drug use, substandard housing, welfare hotels, job training and even the Vietnam War....[She] recognized that the strongest anchor for local community action centered on children and worked to fix the roots of inequality in her community."

Dorothy also joined journalist-activist Gloria Steinem in the 1970s Women's Movement. Gloria credited Dorothy for helping her become comfortable speaking in public, and for expanding the Women's Movement beyond its white, middle-class stereotype. "Dorothy's style was to call out the racism she saw in the white women's movement," Lovett stated in an interview in Ms. Magazine. "She frequently took to the stage to articulate the way in which white women's privilege oppressed Black women but also offered her friendship with Gloria as proof this obstacle could be overcome."

Dorothy fought hard to keep her day care centers open for all women, despite a legal push to focus on low-income families. When new laws forced her to close her centers in the 1980s, she turned her activist energy in a new direction. She opened an office supply business, Harlem Office Supply, to provide printing services and other stationery items at reasonable prices to area activists, all the while establishing a business that was run by a Black woman and provided neighborhood jobs.

And when yet another government initiative forced her out of business by supporting the establishment of a Staples store nearby in the 1990s, Dorothy reinvented herself again. This time she became an author who explained the hopes and challenges of successfully living and working in urban America. Her 2000 book, Wake up and Smell the Dollars! Whose Inner City is This Anyway!?: One Woman's Struggle Against Sexism, Classism, Racism, Gentrification, and the Empowerment Zone, helped provide guidance to a whole new generation of activists.

(Continued on next page)



Womonscape. Serving Women. Enriching Lives.
HAVE YOU HEARD OF THIS WOMAN?



DOROTHY PITMAN HUGHES

(continued from page 3)

As Dorothy herself put it, “Some are convinced that empowering large corporations to provide low paying jobs for our residents will bring economic empowerment to the community...[But] without African-American ownership, there is ultimately no local empowerment.”

Dorothy continued speaking at various colleges and universities throughout her life. She eventually moved to Florida in the early 2000s, where she continued her activism, this time by organizing community gardens in Jacksonville, to combat hunger with fresh produce.

Dorothy is also known for being a co-founder, along with Steinem, of the *Women’s Action Alliance*, and of *Ms. Magazine*.

Racism, affordable child care, women’s rights, entrepreneurship, public speaking, writing for social change.....taking on any one of these challenges and turning it into an opportunity for social action would be commendable: taking on all of them is truly remarkable.



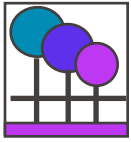
Gloria Steinem and Dorothy Pittman-Hughes cemented their solidarity with this photo in 1971.



Steinem and Pitman-Hughes reunited in 2014 to recreate their iconic photo.

If [women] could go to banks and get a [business] loan, the whole face of Harlem would change.

~ Dorothy Pitman-Hughes



Womonscape. Serving Women. Enriching Lives.

HAVE YOU HEARD OF THIS WOMAN?



KATHERINE MANSFIELD

If anyone was true to their word, it was Katherine Mansfield. She was arguably the Queen of Risk-Taking, as far as her relationships were concerned.

Born in 1888 to a wealthy and highly-regarded family in New Zealand, Katherine was one of five children. She had two older sisters, one younger sister, and a younger brother. She began her education in Wellington, where she became interested in writing and in playing the cello. She published her first stories in the Wellington Girls' High School Magazine when she was about ten years old. However, in her early journals, Mansfield also expressed feeling alienated and disillusioned, particularly with the mistreatment of the Maori people.

Katherine completed her education in London at Queen's College where she planned to focus on playing the cello, but her success in working with the college newspaper paved the way for a career in writing. She became a master of the short story.



So far her story sounds somewhat interesting, but not exactly a blueprint for risk-taking. Ah, but there's more. Mansfield's romantic relationships were head-spinning.

In 1902, when she was 13 or 14, Katherine fell in love with Arnold Trowell, the son of her cello teacher. Apparently he wasn't all that interested in her.

In 1906, when she was 17 years old, Katherine began a romantic relationship with Marta Mahupku, a wealthy young Maori woman. Although Marta married in 1907, she continued to support Katherine financially.

From 1906 to 1908, Katherine was involved with another woman, Edith Kathleen Bendall.

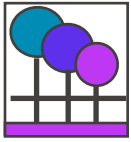
Then things got even more involved.

Katherine returned to London in 1908 and fell into a bohemian way of life. She supported herself with an allowance from her father and by writing poetry and short stories. She tried once again to get together with Arnold Trowell but, since Arnold was by this time involved with another woman, she began a passionate affair with his younger brother, Garnet, and became pregnant. The Trowell family did not support the relationship, so Katherine and Garnet broke up. She then quickly married George Bowden, a singing teacher who was eleven years older, but she left him the same day.

(Continued on next page)

- The mind I love must have wild places, a tangled orchard where dark damsons drop in the heavy grass, an overgrown little wood, the chance of a snake or two, a pool that nobody's fathomed the depth of, and paths threaded with flowers planted by the mind.
- Once we have learned to read, meaning of words can somehow register without consciousness.

~ See pages 6 and 7 for more quotes by Katherine Mansfield.



Womonscape. Serving Women. Enriching Lives.

RESPONSES TO OUR NOVEMBER CHALLENGE:



KATHERINE MANSFIELD

(continued from page 5)

Talk about a wild teenager!

Katherine's mother, Annie Beauchamp, arrived on the scene to try to straighten out her daughter's life. Annie sent Katherine to a spa town in Germany, where the controversial pregnancy ended in a miscarriage. At this point, Katherine discovered the works of Anton Chekhov and focused on her writing for awhile.

In 1910, Katherine began publishing her stories in a new avant-garde magazine called *Rhythm*. In 1911 she began an off-and-on relationship with the magazine's editor, John Middleton Murry.



Although the couple took breaks while Katherine was involved with other lovers, Murry remained supportive of Mansfield. She was, however, still legally married to George Bowden!

Around this time, Katherine's writing began to mirror some important events in her life. First, her brother was killed in a grenade explosion in 1915 during World War I. Second, Katherine became ill with tuberculosis. In typical Katherine-ish style, she refused to slow down her life or enter any kind of treatment center, but her writing became much more focused on stories that reflected both her brother's untimely death and her own struggles with ill health. Also, John Murry became a more permanent part of her life. Katherine was diagnosed with tuberculosis in 1917; her divorce from Bowden was finalized; and Murry and Mansfield married in 1918.

Katherine had a few years of prolific writing despite her illness, and Murry stayed with her until the end. She experimented with a number of radical treatments. She tried a treatment by a bacteriologist in Switzerland, a Russian doctor and X-ray expert in Paris, and following the teachings at an *Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man* in Fontainebleau. She died of a tubercular hemorrhage in early 1923 after running up a flight of stairs. She was 34.

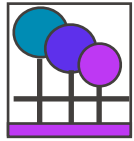
Katherine Mansfield left behind not only a legacy of loving whomever she chose and living precisely as she wanted, but also some of the finest short stories and poetry in the English language.

**THE COLLECTED
STORIES
of
Katherine Mansfield**



• Risk! Risk anything! Care not for the opinions of others, for those voices. Do the hardest thing on earth for you. Act for yourself. Face the truth.

• I am treating you as my friend, asking you to share my present minuses in the hope that I can ask you to share my future plusses.



Womonscape Center, Inc.
PO Box 335
Richland Center WI 53581

First Class
Postage

TO:



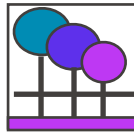
•WOMONSCAPE
CENTER, Inc.•

JANUARY 19— is
our next scheduled
No-Rules Book Group
in Richland Center.
See Page 1 for details.

**Womonscape
Times**

Published by
Womonscape
Center, Inc.
501(c)(3)
© 2023

~The Womonscape Center, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. All *donations* are tax-deductible.~



Womonscape. Serving Women. Enriching Lives.



KATHERINE MANSFIELD QUOTES:

- But that is the satisfaction of writing—one can impersonate so many people.
- How hard it is to escape from places. However carefully one goes they hold you—you leave little bits of yourself fluttering on the fences—like rags and shreds of your very life.

• I always felt that the great high privilege, relief and comfort of friendship, was that one had to explain nothing.



Katherine Mansfield

- Could we change our attitude, we should not only see life differently, but life itself would come to be different.

• I feel as though I were living in a world of strange beings—do you? It's people that make things so—silly. As long as you can keep away from them you're safe and you're happy.