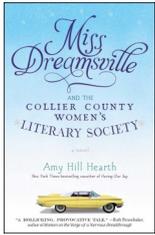


Miss Dreamsville and the Collier County Women's Literary Society



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What happens when an energetic, middle-aged Bostonian moves to a sleepy town in Florida in 1962? First, she starts a radio show under the persona of Miss Dreamsville and secondly forms a book club. Ex-Bostonian Jackie Hart starts a ruckus when she invites people of other races and sexual persuasions to the club in a decidedly racist, homophobic town where a divorcee is considered socially-risky and improper. Narrated by a lovable octogenarian, Dora, who does not fit into Naples herself, this novel discusses important issues such as racism, feminism, and homophobia while presenting an interesting mix of characters. With a backdrop of serious and important issues, it provides a humorous and entertaining read. In her debut novel Amy Hearth manages to take on both the Ku Klux Klan, North versus South, the nature of community, and newcomer angst to Naples, Florida.

In an interview Ms. Hearth described how much she is drawn to older people. Her grandmother lived to be 101 and many of her aunts into their 90s. She also said, "How else can we learn if not by sharing our stories? Reading, writing, and storytelling are acts of love, not the physical kind, but love for humanity, and with any luck, they just might save us."

The *Library Journal* called this novel "a heartwarming and poignant tale." And the *Southern Literary Review* described it this way: "One can feel the immense joy of Amy Hill Hearth's engagement in her first novel. It radiates through every scene and through every page. Sometimes, an exceptional writer finds an exceptional premise, and the result is a truly exceptional book."

Posted by Dory L. on October 29, 2014

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