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In the small town of Seneca Falls, New York, history was in the making. And so was murder... Amidst the bustle of the Women's Rights Convention of 1848, the independent, free-thinking town librarian Glynis Tryon is called on by Elizabeth Cady Stanton to help organize the historic event. But when a body turns up in the canal, Glynis puts her natural curiosity and her talent for sleuthing to work and takes a stand against a murderer...

Seneca Falls Inheritance Details

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From Reader Review Seneca Falls Inheritance for online ebook

Susan says

Working as a librarian in the small town of Seneca Falls located on the Erie Canal, Glynis Tryon has both witnessed and experienced the challenges faced by women in 1848. When a body is discovered in the canal, Glynis works with her friend Constable Cullen to find the culprit. I enjoyed the clever twists, meticulously described historic setting, and an inside view of the famous Seneca Falls women's conference, but perhaps there was a bit too much historic detail at the expense of the flow of the story.

Nancy says

What a charm of a mystery! Although you can't characterize this book as anything but light reading, it was fascinating because of its feminist historical perspective. The "detective" is a small town librarian in the mid-1800's who has a fiercely independent streak (I guess all gal-detectives in mass market mysteries are portrayed as "fiercely independent" aren't they?!) For me, the mystery was not as critical to the book's success as the gentle education the reader is given on the Women's Rights struggle in the 1800's.

The protagonist is predictably smart and pretty, but the cliches or conventions used by the author don't spoil the fun in reading this first novel.

Lori says

Historical mysteries featuring well-known persons usually fall a bit flat with me. I enjoyed this one a bit more than some of those. In it Elizabeth Cady Stanton, acquaintance of the murder victim and her mother, testifies in the case. While local officers are investigating the murder, librarian Glynis Tryon plays an important role in the solution. Set during a time women are struggling to earn the right to own property and vote, the mystery's biggest flaw lies in gaps in evidence collection. The genealogist in me screamed "obtain a copy of the marriage license" in one instance. Another situation in the book's narrative produced one. A license plus other evidence readily available would quickly establish the proof needed for the earlier situation.

Amelia Seiler says

Now that I've read this one, I want to read the entire series. The covers alone are enough to enchant!

Lucy Takeda says

I'd actually give this 3.5. The characters are fairly well developed, but just a trifle lacking. The plot is logical, and provides several complications. The connection with the suffrage movement are interesting.

Glynis works as a librarian in a small town. Her job may exist under false pretenses: a well-to-do ex-boyfriend promised her a position. A woman appears, evidently believing she is related to the rich man that recently died—and is then murdered. Then her husband appears, contesting the will. The main characters are interesting, but could use a bit more background to make them compelling.

Susan says

This mystery takes place at the beginning of Elizabeth Cady Stanton's push for women's rights. Glynis, a librarian in the small upstate New York town of Seneca Falls, is drawn into the movement as well as into helping solve a suspicious murder. Historical characters mingle with fictional ones, and the overall effect is a tiny history lesson in a delightful package.

Eunira says

Set in 1848 in Seneca Falls, NY, this historically correct novel is also a mystery. Glynis Tryon is a 40ish spinster librarian in Seneca Falls at the beginning of the Suffragette movement. Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton make appearances in the book. This is the first in a series that carries through the Civil War. Well written and entertaining with a good eye opener to what life for women was like during these times.

Alisonpaddock says

This story is a murder mystery set in Seneca Falls in 1848 - Elizabeth Cady Stanton is organizing the first convention of the women's movement. I have visited the town and could easily visualize the beautiful countryside in the Finger Lakes. The suspense was not very strong but more of a puzzle. Good strong characters with plenty of internal conflict plus exposure to many of the social problems of the day made it an interesting book. I had never heard of a group of young women who pledged never to marry - what a surprise to Glynis's family that she didn't plan to be available to them as cook, nurse, and general dogsbody! Worth reading!

Janice says

Set in Seneca Falls in 1848, this book is a light mystery, with the Women's Rights Convention that was held there that year also integrated into the story. Glynis Tryon is the town librarian, and a spinster, at about 30 years of age. Glynis is a strong believer in women's rights, and throughout the book she observes women who are in powerless positions due to the laws of the time, and the submissive role they play in their families. Glynis becomes involved in investigating the murders of two women, and Glynis herself demonstrates a great deal of autonomy and authority compared to other women of her era. Elizabeth Cady Stanton plays a lesser role in this story, and during the convention others who did in fact attend that event are noted, such as Frederic Douglas. I enjoyed this quick easy read, another that is a reminder of how far we have come, in some ways. Thanks, Jan, for recommending it.

Piper D says

I enjoyed the book- good job with the lot and the characters. It was not my choice- it was for a book club. As a history teacher I have a few problems with the history in the book- aren't we forgetting about England/Great Britain and its laws and how much it influenced the women of this country (and vice-versa).

QNPoohBear says

Glynis Tryon is the librarian of a private library in the sleepy village of Seneca Falls, New York. Her work has brought her into contact with Elizabeth Cady Stanton who is trying to organize a meeting for women's rights. When Glynis's kind benefactor Freidrich Steicher and his wife die in a tragic accident, Glynis is devastated. She fears his son Karl will remove her from her position and as an unmarried woman, what else can she do? A mysterious woman comes to town searching for Mrs. Stanton and abruptly heads off to find her. The next time Glynis sees this woman, Rose Walker, Mrs. Walker is lying dead in the canal. Could her death have something to do with Steicher family secrets? What happened to the family Bible that accidentally made it's way to the library and could solve the mystery of the mysterious Mrs. Walker. With her friend, the sheriff Cullen Stuart, Glynis is determined to figure out who killed Mrs. Walker and why.

I didn't read all of this book word for word. It was too long and dark for my personal tastes. The author deftly ties in the issues of women's rights of the 19th-century and links those issues to the characters. There are dark secrets in the town involving prostitution, gambling, corruption, alcoholism, wife abuse, too frequent pregnancies and past relationships. There's also the issue of marriage and married women's property. I read enough to figure out who the killer was just before Glynis did. It was a hunch but Glynis found the evidence in a very gutsy and surprising move. It was very sad.

Glynis is a character I can REALLY relate to. She has chosen to remain unmarried and even went to college (gasp!). She is viewed as an anomaly- possibly insane by her family. She has made a new life as an independent woman in Seneca Falls, yet her job is dependant on a board of governors made up of all men. The clergyman thinks Glynis is immoral because OBVIOUSLY a single woman can't POSSIBLY be friends with a man, especially an older man. It's true Glynis had romantic feelings for Mr. Steicher but he apparently never saw her as anything except a daughter and friend. He saw her potential and helped her reach it. Cullen also helps Glynis realize what she's capable of while Elizabeth Cady Stanton's firebrand politics force Glynis to take a stand on woman suffrage and women's rights. Of course I've known about ECS and the convention since elementary school but here I found the actual transcription of the Declaration of the Rights of Sentiments to be too long and ponderous for the many of the women in the audience to understand, let alone the modern reader unused to such language.

Each one of the grievances against the men is tied to a specific character here. The women, other than Glynis and Elizabeth are subjected to terrible treatment at the hands of their husbands, even when the husband is caring. I was surprised to find myself liking Karl in spite of thinking he was the murderer. None of the other women in the town, except an Irish mill worker, are appealing to a modern woman. This book takes a look at the darker side of the 19th-century. Lydia and the women at the boarding house are empty headed, idle gossips with nothing to do or think about in contrast to Glynis. Perhaps the author tried a bit too hard to make her point about lack of education and opportunities for women. The men too are not very sympathetic

to the plight of women. Not even Henry Stanton supports his wife's call for women's suffrage. He thinks it will jeopardize the abolition cause. Frederick Douglass makes a cameo here and a few other men come out in support of the women. The only likable men are Cullen and his deputy, a Seneca Indian man. Cullen is maybe a wee bit anachronistic and outside the law letting Glynis investigate.

Though the author did extensive research on women's rights of the 19th-century, she forgot to research the small details. This drives me CRAZY!

First: small, scruffy, white terrier? The West Highland White Terrier wasn't introduced to America for 60 years! Yes his sire came from Scotland but to obtain this relatively new breed would be expensive. Duncan is adorable though and a true Westie. He helps solve the mystery!

Second: Bustles? Not in 1848! Hoops weren't even in yet in 1848. Wide skirts held out by multiple starched petticoats were in fashion. Honestly, a quick search of a fashion periodical like Godey's or Peterson's will show you that!

Finally, jack o'lanterns would be more familiar to Irish immigrants than Glynis. It would be an unusual reference for her to think about.

Please please please do your homework authors! Little details matter as much as the big. Even though this book was published in 1994, before the Internet, a librarian and historian should know where to look for that information.

Jann Barber says

This month, members of the mystery book club at the library were to read a book by an author who was not well known/had not won awards. I found this author in my online search, as none of the authors on the provided list wrote anything that gripped me when I read the descriptions.

Monfredo has created the beginning of a good series. Her protagonist is librarian Glynis Tryon, a female librarian in a time when this occupation was held mainly by men. The year is 1848 and Elizabeth Cady Stanton has Glynis surveying women in Seneca Falls to see if they would be willing to attend a meeting about the rights of women. Glynis has an interest in suffrage, but Elizabeth feels this issue might put a damper on the meeting's other issues. In this time, women were either married and subject to the will of their husbands, or single and spinsters.

There is a murder...well, there are several murders and enough suspects to make things quite interesting. Widowed police constable Cullen Stuart has an interest in Glynis, and while she is fond of him, she is not disposed to marriage.

The combination of history and mystery made for a very good read. It also made me appreciate air conditioning!

I plan to continue with this series.

Dennis Fischman says

I really enjoyed this book for the heroine, who is clearly a 19th century feminist and not a 21st century woman in costume. The historical setting rings true, and although the Constable respects Glynis and allows her more latitude than I think wholly believable, she clearly deserves it.

There are one or two threads hanging loose, which is one of the classic weaknesses of a first book, and the courtroom scene at the end is a little Perry Mason for my taste. All in all, this book makes me eager to read the next in the series.

Phair says

Reread for mystery f2f discussion. I had forgotten much of the detail of this but remember how much I loved it on first read. It was just as good 2d time around. So much background on Women's Congress, as well as general history both political & cultural in 1848. I liked the way she presented examples of the many types of women and their problems in a subtle way that never seemed forced or didactic. And it's a plus that Glynis is a librarian!

Joan says

Let's say 3.5 stars. A good mystery, set in Seneca Falls, not far from me, with historical characters (and the Woman's Rights Convention of 1848) mixed in. Will definitely look for the next one in the series.
