



The Ninth Daughter

Barbara Hamilton

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1773: Massachusetts colony is torn between patriots who want independence from British rule and loyalists who support the King. At the center is the educated and beautiful Abigail Adams-wife of John Adams, a leader of the Sons of Liberty, the secret organization opposing the Crown. When her husband is accused of murder, she will clear his name.

The Ninth Daughter Details

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Author : Barbara Hamilton

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From Reader Review The Ninth Daughter for online ebook

Kris says

An excellent mystery with extremely well rounded characters set against the days leading up to the Boston Tea Party in 1773. Kudos also to Ms. Hamilton for making the British soldiers sympathetic and human and giving us one of the most realistic portrayals of Sam Adams, I've read outside of non fiction.

Erika Bonaparte says

Great story line and the historical characters were well developed. However, the author's writing style slowed the book's progression but I will still read the next book in the series.

Sensitivemuse says

I didn't expect to enjoy this book as much as I would! It was a great mystery with a hefty set of characters (historical and otherwise) with an underlying theme of political tension playing throughout the plot.

I think that's what made the book enjoyable, was despite the mystery being the main hook, the political tension and bickering between the patriots and the British was always in the forefront and mentioned when need be as it was central to the story. Every so often you had mention of Abigail's refusal to drink tea for example, or minor scuffles happening between citizens and the Redcoats.

Despite the tensions however, Abigail puts her ideas and beliefs aside and works alongside the British to solve this mystery. I enjoyed reading her character. She's strong willed and has a good retort every so often when she needs to speak out, which shocks other characters as it wasn't considered "proper". I enjoy Abigail's unorthodox behavior and it may seem as if she gives an air of an annoying stubborn woman, but it's because of her personality that things get done no matter whose side you're on or who you support.

John and Abigail's relationship was also nice to read. They're both equals and you can see a subtle quiet strength between them and they compliment each other perfectly. There's a mutual respect between the two and if they were alive now, they would probably be a political supercouple ;)

The mystery aspect of the book was good and the intrigue is definitely noted. The setting is superbly done and very descriptive. The list of suspects was substantial and revelation of the culprit isn't much of a surprise but the execution of obtaining the criminal and his background story was excellent to read, and was very satisfying to see the bad guys get their dues. The supporting characters are also well done - although I have to admit, there are just a little too many for me. Even minor characters have their personality and details and although it's good and makes the world building more detailed and rich, sometimes it's a bit hard to follow as to who's who. (Perhaps a section of cast of characters would help in this case - especially when some characters share the same last name)

I'll be picking up the next book to read. It's definitely worth looking into for those that love historical fiction mysteries. The tea has been dumped!!! So you have to figure out what sort of chaos is going to happen and

what mystery Abigail will solve next.

Michelle R. Wood says

Hamilton has certainly done her homework: 18th century Boston came alive on the pages of this book in all manner of details usually glossed over in historical potboilers. Abigail walks most of the book, and nearly always with a male escort. She performs labor-intensive chores. It's hard to see at night despite having a lantern. The countryside is sparsely populated with few luxuries.

But don't think this author just regurgitated research on the page. The narrative really gets a lift through its great characterization. Abigail is a reluctant sleuth, and while unwavering in her support of the patriot cause, she's less happy with how many use it as an excuse to forget their fellow Daughter of Liberty. Her loyalty to her friend and dedication to the truth force her to grapple with the ever-changing loyalties of this world. Obvious antagonists (the overbearing estranged husband, the aristocratic British officer) turn out to be more complex individuals. Unexpected allies and even closer enemies abound.

Personally I was impressed by how Hamilton depicted religion. God, church, and theology all play a very real part in these people's lives, guiding and dividing people as much as the question of liberty. Abigail continually grapples with how to do right when the path is not clear, especially as many on both sides of the conflict seek to redefine it. There's little to no sacred/secular divide. It's an alien world for many people to imagine, perhaps more so than the muddy streets or horse-drawn wagons.

A few times the narrative repeated details that I thought were already established, and some people might be put off by the style of narrative (it's not nearly as driven as most mysteries). Readers should note that some coarser characters use strong language (of the restricted-on-television variety): rarely, but present enough to be jarring. While I did see the actual culprit a few steps ahead of the story, it didn't cheapen the ride, mainly due to how much more this novel stands as a grand story than a mere whodunit.

I found Hamilton's plucky tale a great take on a historical figure so often seen through the lens of her more famous male contemporaries. It was great to see John Adams play second fiddle to his dear friend for once.

Paige says

I often judge a book by its cover, and usually it serves me well. Case in point: I was immediately drawn to Barbara Hamilton's *The Ninth Daughter* because the quill pen and portrait of Abigail Adams on the cover quickly clued me in to the historical setting. Also, there was a prominent blurb praising the book written by none other than my favorite historical fiction author, Sharon Kay Penman (whose lushly detailed novels set in medieval Wales, Scotland and Britain set the bar for historical fiction).

Set against the backdrop of pre-Revolutionary War Boston, *The Ninth Daughter* is rich with historical specifics both about everyday life in colonial times and the political frictions between Tories and Patriots. It is 1773 and the dead body of a wealthy woman has been found. John Adams is accused of the murder, which seems to relate to the activities of his rebellious patriot group, Sons of Liberty. Adams' intelligent and feisty wife Abigail is determined to solve the murder and clear his name.

Mary says

The Ninth Daughter was very well researched and the mystery in the tale was engrossing at first, but the suspense until denouement lasted a little too long imho. I feel it was due mainly to a lot of repetitive detail."

William Smith says

I just finished reading the new "An Abigail Adams Mystery" - [The Ninth Daughter:] by [[Barbara Hamilton:]]. It is tough reading at first, but grows on you (me, anyway!).

The author goes into great detail about life in the 1770s in Boston, just prior to the Revolution breaking out. The ships of tea are in the harbor! By the end of the book (Mini Spoiler), the tea is dumped, by the way!

There is a grisly murder of a woman in the home of a good lady friend of Abigail. Were the Sons of Liberty involved? The British Provost Marshall thinks her husband, John Adams, did it... surely his "proof" is bogus! Abigail works with a British officer and his assistant to uncover the truth, as Sons of Liberty meetings are going on, and Abigail has her housewifely and community responsibilities to fulfill. Neither the officer nor Abigail trust each other, early on, but grow to build the necessary trust to solve the crime and apprehend those responsible.

The story is filled with great detail of household daily activities, the filthy streets, the bad weather, life on the dock and wharfs, etc., etc. Abigail makes two excruciating trips into the back country, tracing clues and interacting (or trying to avoid interactions) with a small community dominated by a religious zealot.

If you find this kind of historical setting and mystery plot of interest, than you will like this novel. Frankly, it is unlike anything I've read before, and that is a compliment.

Karen says

This was not an easy read.

Historical fiction is really interesting in that so much period detail can be confusing and slow the progress of the plot. I had a difficult time with some of the terms and a lot of the descriptions.

At its most basic this is a murder mystery with famous names and people involved. That much I really enjoyed. The plot is intricate and the suspects are many. The investigator relies upon the skills of Abigail Adams to detangle the clues at great risk to her personal safety.

I am not sure why this took me so long to read, but if you like a challenge then I encourage you to try it and see for yourself if you can follow the plot and not get hopelessly distracted by the time and place.

I borrowed a copy from the public library.

Mary Ronan Drew says

Abigail Adams is the amateur detective in this first book in a new series that takes place in 1773 Boston. The author doesn't insult the reader and since Abigail is very well educated there are untranslated Latin phrases and references to the Bible and Greek mythology. And a finely crafted mystery, some interesting characters, and a real sense of the smells and the cold and the sound of bells.

Maddy says

This is the first book in this series of 3 and it's setting take place during the event that will led to the American Revolution. It is 1773 and we are in Boston where the colony started to fight for its freedom. A mutder and a disappearance take place around the Same night. I recommend this books to people who likes mystery and historical events.

Connie says

"The Ninth Daughter" is the first book in a historical mystery series featuring Abigail Adams. She is the wife of John Adams, one of the leaders of the Sons of Liberty who want to break ties with the English Crown. She finds a murdered woman when she visits the home of her friend Rebecca who has also been working for the patriot cause. Rebecca has gone missing, and John Adams has been charged with the murder of the other woman. Abigail searches for her missing friend, and works to find the real killer.

The book transports us back to 1773 around the time of the Boston Tea Party. The characters of Abigail, John, and the other famous patriots seem very well drawn. It's obvious that a lot of historical research had gone into setting the scenes in the homes of both poor and affluent, patriots and loyalists. I enjoyed the historical aspect of the book more than the cozy mystery which did not get very suspenseful until the last hundred pages.

Cecilia says

A new mystery series set in revolutionary Boston and featuring Abigail Adams as the sleuth written by Barbara Hamilton. It is a fun story with lots of historical detail describing the politics, atmosphere, culture, and complexity of the place and time.

Abigail works tirelessly to unravel a brutal murder and at times must partner with the enemy in the form of the British military stationed in the city. I look forward to the next book in the series.

Anne says

There are a lot of mysteries out there with an historical figure as the detective: Benjamin Franklin, Eleanor Roosevelt, Oscar Wilde,... Some are better than others and I think this is one of the better ones. I think the other attempts are interesting in theory but it's in the writing of the book that things can be kind of slow or off somehow. This one I found intriguing as the author made Abigail Adams to be as independent minded as I've read she was like, put it into a definite historical time frame and didn't let it drag on for more than about 2 weeks, and talked about life in Boston of 1773 in a more readable fashion than history books.

Jacqie says

I believe that Barbara Hamilton is a pseudonym for Barbara Hambly, one of my favorite authors. I love her fantasy series and her Benjamin January mystery series. Her degree in History serves her well in writing in-depth backgrounds and settings for her books. Her latest projects have been historical fiction on presidents' wives, and maybe this book was an offshoot of her fascination with Abigail Adams.

I was not drawn into this book the way I normally am. The writing style was a bit more stilted and not as descriptive, with none of the dark humor that I've enjoyed from the author in the past. As I got deeper into the book, the writing relaxed a bit and seemed to flow better. But I didn't get transported to colonial America as I had hoped.

I don't read mystery books for the mystery as much as I do for character and setting, so can't speak to how good of a mystery it was.

Tamora Pierce says

This is the first Abigail Adams mystery by Barbara Hamilton, a pseudonym for my favorite fantasy and mystery writer, Barbara Hambly. It begins shortly after the Boston Massacre, when Abigail finds a woman's corpse in the house of a friend who left her wealthy husband. Caught between her friend's unraveling marriage to a loyalist and her friend's work for the Sons of Liberty, Abigail tries to uncover who may have killed her, knowing her own husband John is suspected of the murder.

Hamilton/Hambly brings the time period, and particularly the lives of women, to life here and in the subsequent books. Abigail is juggling her duties as the female head of household with several young children (she didn't know the word or the problems, but her oldest, Johnny, is recognizably gifted), the wife of a rising member of the Sons of Liberty and a sidereal member of that group herself, a member of a community of women which in its way has more efficient communication than officialdom, and an unofficial detective who can bridge relationships with the loyalists and the revolutionaries. She makes you live, breathe, and feel the textures of the time and place, as well as hear the many voices of the people who live then. And Abigail's peril is even greater for encroaching, very real, cold, ice, mud, and the sound of hostile voices in the distance.

Bookworm1858 says

Summary: In 1773, Abigail Adams finds a dead woman in her friend's house and that friend missing. Then her husband is accused of having committed the crime. So Abigail sets out to discover the real murderer and find her friend again.

Thoughts: I picked this up because I love American history and Abigail Adams is one of my favorite

historical figures. I didn't realize it was the first in a series until I got it home; I like to start with the first but for mysteries that isn't always necessary. But it didn't really feel like a first mystery to me because many of the characters (Abigail, John, and Sam Adams, Paul Revere) were already known to me and did not need to be introduced.

My biggest problem was the writing style as there were many times when I had to stop and reread sentences because either the sentence structure or the comma usage confused me. Because of that I'm not entirely sure I could explain all of the details of the murder. I also did not solve the mystery (*surprise*)

Pamela by Samuel Richardson is Abigail's favorite novel (historically accurate?) and its themes about women being used, maltreated, and generally considered unimportant were utilized to make parallels between the novel and the women Abigail sees.

I would have liked a historical note from the author explaining if the murders committed were inspired by a real life incident and also an examination of the Sons of Liberty's activities and the politics of the time. I also would have liked more interaction between Abigail and John because the scenes where they were together were so cute.

Overall: 3.5/5. I will keep in an eye out for other books in the series as I know the first book isn't always as good as the ones that follow.

Cover/Title: I honestly did not understand the title until I typed it today although it is explained.

Dar Henning says

Very well written

I found this book to be very entertaining. Of had a very good plot line. The historical side stories were interwoven with the plot line in such a way as to make the story believable. Although I did figure out the solution in advance that did not stop me from enjoying it to the very end.

Meredith says

Giving the cover art, I thought it was a young adult novel. Given the violent murder that opens the book, no. Definitely meant for an adult audience.

The writing is solid, but not extraordinary. The little details about life in the Boston Colony are great and my sense is that Hamilton's research is on point. Sometimes the details about life in the colony is more interesting than the plot itself. It isn't until the last 1/6th of the book that the plot moves quickly. Prior to that, it's setting and set up over plot.

Marie Mercer says

Reading Barbara Hamilton's Abigail Adams series is like stepping into a time machine. I can see the harbor, the redcoats, the houses, and feel the blast of a Boston winter. Reading, for me, is at its best when a book takes me out of my ordinary existence and puts me square into the life and time of someone or somewhere that fascinates me. I plan to read all of the Abigail Adams volumes.

Beth says

The Ninth Daughter surprised me. I expected an interesting cozy-style mystery with a fictionalized version of Abigail Adams, John Adams' wife. But this was an interesting balance between well-researched historical fiction, and serial killer murder mystery.

I did not figure out who did it before Abigail Adams did, which worked just fine since she solves this crime (and others, in this series, apparently) through curiosity, intelligence, and knowing her community. At a time when crimes (especially done to the lower classes) were ignored for the sake of the politics involved, this unlikely detective-type heroine fits perfectly.

But where this book truly shines is in its historical aspects. Hamilton has managed to bring to life the Puritan work ethic, the active role of Christianity in the lives of the folk of Boston (and the Protestant vs Catholic feelings of the time), the role and responsibilities of women (holy carp, I would never have lasted), and the tense political situation overlaying (and complicating) everything.

It never felt like a lecture, but neither did Abigail feel too distant from modern sensibilities to relate to. She's curious, compassionate, frustrated, and has a mounting pile of housework to do. She loses her patience, banters with her husband, tries to keep from gossiping, and recognizes that what is good isn't always what is right (and vice versa).

Also, Lieutenant Coldstone.

Overall, I really enjoyed this one and highly recommend it for fans of historical fiction, the late 1700's America (and events leading to the Revolutionary War, as told by first person perspective), murder mysteries, clever female protagonists, political commentary (I mean, truly, there are some then-and-now themes going on), and immersive writing.
