

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*Spoiler Alert! These questions will give away portions of the storyline.*

1. Why hasn't Helena told Stephen about her past? Is she wrong to have kept it from him? Has she endangered her family by keeping it a secret?

2. Is Helena a good wife?

3. Why do you think the author sets Helena's story alongside the fable of The Marsh King's Daughter? In what ways are these two stories similar? How does the fable shape your understanding of Helena's character?

4. Does Jacob love Helena? Does he deserve her love? If The Hunter's appearance hadn't revealed Jacob's dark side, would Helena ever have broken with her father?

5. Was Helena's mother wrong for not saving her? Does Helena do enough to help her mother? How does Helena's relationship with her mother change over time? Is Helena a good daughter?

6. While it's clear Helena loves her two daughters, is she a good mother? In what ways does her own upbringing affect the way she raises Mari and Iris?

7. Is Helena better for being part of society? Is she truly healthier at the story's end? Will she ever be okay?

8. Does Helena see her responsibilities within her
- own family differently at the end of the novel?

9. What does Helena mean at the end when she says "our story" (p. 291)? How has her life changed during the course of the novel?

10. In the end, Helena thinks, "I am no longer my father's shadow" (p. 302). What does she mean by this? How has her idea of her father changed?

11. How does Helena's relationship with nature shape her view of the world, and does this relationship change once she leaves the cabin? How do the beliefs of the Ojibwa people shape her values? In what ways do these values suit her in the world she discovers outside the marsh, and in what ways do they hinder her?

12. How does place inform this story? What would the story lose if the setting were changed? Might another setting suit the book, even if it were to change it?

13. Why are we fascinated by stories about survivors of abduction like Helena, whether in fiction or nonfiction?


*Source: [www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/550562/the-marsh-kings-daughter-by-karen-dionne/9780735213012/](http://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/550562/the-marsh-kings-daughter-by-karen-dionne/9780735213012/)*

# WHERE TO GET THE BOOK

The 2019 One Book One County Montcalm selection, "The Marsh King's Daughter" by Karen Dionne, is available for checkout at the following libraries.

- Carson City Public Library
- Crystal Community Library
- Flat River Community Library in Greenville
- Home Township Library in Edmore
- Timothy C. Hauenstein Reynolds Township Library in Howard City
- Tamarack District Library in Lakeview
- Montcalm Community College Library on the college's Sidney campus
- Richland Township Library in Vestaburg
- White Pine District Library in Stanton


The book is also available for purchase at the kickoff on May 16 at a 10 percent discount, payment by cash or check only at the kickoff. The book will continue to be available for purchase at the Montcalm Community College Bookstore, operated by Barnes & Noble, on the college's Sidney campus, at its regular price throughout the course of the One Book program.



Karen Dionne

MEET THE  
AUTHOR AT THE  
**Closing Event**

**September 17**  
at 6 p.m. in rooms D303-305 in  
the Beatrice E. Doser Building  
on MCC's Sidney campus.



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Visit [www.montcalm.edu/one-book](http://www.montcalm.edu/one-book) or  
call 989-328-1261 for more information.



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THE BOOK EVERYONE IS READING IN 2019!



INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER


"Sensationally good psychological suspense."  
—LEE CHILD

THE  
MARSH  
KING'S  
DAUGHTER

How long can you outrun  
your darkest secret?

KAREN DIONNE

"BRILLIANT... AS GOOD AS A THRILLER CAN BE." —The New York Times Book Review



ATTEND ONE OF THE  
MANY BOOK DISCUSSIONS.  
MEET THE AUTHOR **SEPTEMBER 17, 2019.**

Visit [www.montcalm.edu/one-book](http://www.montcalm.edu/one-book) or call 989-328-1261 for details.

ONE BOOK ONE COUNTY MONTCALM is sponsored by Stafford Media Solutions, Montcalm Community College, the MCC Foundation and the public libraries of Montcalm County.

# BOOK DISCUSSIONS & EVENTS

Karen Dionne is the cofounder of the online writers community Backspace, the organizer of the Salt Cay Writers Retreat, and a member of the International Thriller Writers, where she served on the board of directors. She has been honored by the Michigan Humanities Council as a Humanities Scholar, and lives with her husband in Detroit’s north suburbs.

## 2019 ONE BOOK DISCUSSIONS

A total of 10 book discussions are offered for the One Book One County Montcalm selection, “The Marsh King’s Daughter,” by Karen Dionne. Dates, times, locations and discussion questions include the following:

- **Tuesday, June 11 – Noon,**  
**Montcalm Community College Library in the lower level**  
**of the Donald C. Burns Administration/Library Building**  
**on the college’s Sidney campus.**
- **Monday, June 17 - 6:30 p.m.,**  
**Crystal Community Library**
- **Thursday, June 27 – 5 p.m.,**  
**Tamarack District Library, Lakeview**
- **Monday, July 1 – 7 p.m.,**  
**Tamarack District Library, Lakeview**
- **Tuesday, July 2 – 10 a.m.,**  
**Home Township Library, Edmore**
- **Wednesday, July 17 – 6:45 p.m.,**  
**White Pine District Library, Stanton**
- **Tuesday, Aug. 6 – 6 p.m.,**  
**Carson City Public Library**
- **Tuesday, Aug. 6 – 6 p.m.,**  
**Flat River Community Library, Greenville**
- **Friday, Aug. 23 – 11 a.m.,**  
**Richland Township Library, Vestaburg**
- **Monday, Sept. 9 – 10 a.m.,**  
**Timothy C. Hauenstein Reynolds Township**  
**Library in Howard City**



## EVENTS

*Admission is free for all events.*

### One Book Kickoff

Thursday, May 16, 1 p.m., room G129 in the Stanley and Blanche Ash Technology and Learning Center (Ash TLC) on Montcalm Community College’s Greenville campus

Learn the title of the 2019 book selection and discover upcoming One Book events. Attendees also will enjoy “101 Things that Happened on the Mackinac Bridge” presented by author Mike Fornes. Light refreshments will be provided. *No RSVP is necessary.*

### One Book Closing

Tuesday, Sept. 17, 6 p.m., rooms D303-305 in the Beatrice E. Doser Building on MCC’s Sidney campus

Enjoy an evening with One Book author Karen Dionne. She will share her story of becoming an author, including how she generates ideas, how she develops characters and how she approaches writing her books. In addition, she will talk about meeting readers across the country and discuss “The Marsh King’s Daughter.” Dionne will have time for questions from the audience and will end the evening by autographing copies of her book. Light refreshments will be provided. *No RSVP is necessary.*

## BOOK REVIEWS

“Dionne’s breathtaking psychological thriller is a fairy tale writ large... the suspense in the plotting and the cold distance Helena’s voice projects [hold readers] entranced until the stunning climax.”  
—*Minneapolis Star Tribune*

“Spine-tingling.”— *People*

“First-rate plotting builds the tension with psychological suspense and action sequences....The story is at once both horrific and fascinating.”—*RT Book Reviews*

“Exceptional ... Helena’s conflicting emotions about her father and her own identity elevate this powerful story.”  
— *Publisher’s Weekly* (starred review)

“A sensitive and clever book ... Emotionally and intellectually thrilling.”— *Sunday Express (UK)*

*Source: www.penguinrandomhouse.com*

# READ-ALIKES

*If you enjoyed “The Marsh King’s Daughter,” check out the read-alike titles listed below:*

## FICTION

“**Room**” by Emma Donoghue

“**The End of Everything**” by Megan Abbott

“**Where the Crawdads Sing**” by Delia Owens

“**Stolen**” by Lucy Christopher

“**The Good Girl**” by Mary Kubica

“**Girl, Stolen**” by April Henry

“**Still Missing**” by Chevy Stevens

“**The Way North: Collected Upper Peninsula New Works**”  
editor Ron Riecki

books by Joseph Heywood

books by Steve Hamilton

books by Jim Harrison

## NONFICTION

“**My Story**” by Elizabeth Smart

“**Where There’s Hope: Healing, Moving Forward, and Never Giving Up**” by Elizabeth Smart

“**Hope: A Memoir of Survival in Cleveland**”  
by Amanda Berry and Gina DeJesus

“**Finding Me: A Decade of Darkness, a Life Reclaimed: A Memoir of the Cleveland Kidnappings**”  
by Michelle Knight

“**A Stolen Life**” by Jaycee Dugard





# Helena's

## BLUEBERRY JAM BUTTER COOKIES

### Ingredients

- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup white sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- $1\frac{3}{4}$  cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup blueberry jam

### Directions

- Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.
- In a medium bowl, cream together the butter, white sugar, and egg yolks. Mix in flour a little bit at a time, until soft dough forms.
- Roll the dough into 1-inch balls. If the dough is too soft, refrigerate for 15 to 20 minutes.
- Place the balls 2 inches apart onto ungreased cookie sheets. Use your finger or an instrument of similar size to make a well in the center of each cookie.
- Fill each hole with  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon blueberry jam.
- Bake for 8 to 10 minutes, until golden-brown on the bottom. Remove from cookie sheets to cool on wire racks.

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# HELENA'S GUIDE TO THE UPPER PENINSULA



**1 • TAHQUAMENON RIVER**

The river near the cabin where Helena fished as a child. The Ojibwa call it “river where the whitefish are found.”

**2 • TAHQUAMENON FALLS**

The waterfall where Helena sees another family for the first time

**3 • GREAT MANISTIQUE SWAMP**

The area Jacob escapes to after he kills the guard

**4 • FOX RIVER**

Where Helena's father is heading to get to Canada

**5 • MARQUETTE**

Marquette Branch Prison and Luce County courthouse

**6 • MACKINAC BRIDGE**

Connects the Upper and Lower Peninsulas

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