



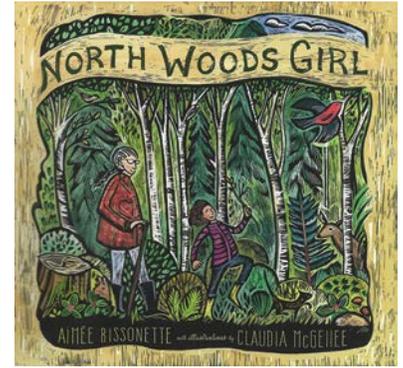
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Celebrating the North Woods with a Grandma “not like other grandmas”

September 2015 – Aimée Bissonette’s new picture book, *North Woods Girl* (Minnesota Historical Society Press, October 2015), explores the rich relationship between a grandmother and granddaughter, and their shared relationship with the North Woods. Bissonette’s story illuminates the value for children in having the time to explore the small moments that key relationships are built upon – whether with a significant person or a particular place.

“It’s a book that celebrates life’s simple, quiet pleasures – from canning summer vegetables to savoring the smell of pine – as well as the importance of sharing them with like-minded souls of any age. – *Publishers Weekly*



Along with the story’s young narrator, readers will enjoy returning to walk the paths through the woods via Claudia McGehee’s vibrant illustrations, searching for familiar landmarks turned mysterious through the magic of the changing seasons:

“Grandma and I bundle up and make our way through the snowy woods.
The bright moon above the trees throws inky shadows across our path.
We talk in whispers, our boots crunching and squeaking in the cold snow.”

Bissonette, who regularly retreats to Lake Superior or the nature center near her Minneapolis home, has a deep belief in the benefits of exploring the natural environment. “A walk in the woods or a day at the beach is science and art and movement all in one,” she says. She points to the research backing Richard Louv’s concept of “nature deficit disorder,” linked to problems associated with how little time today’s children spend outdoors. And she references research showing that simple outdoor water features have a positive effect on nursing home patients.

Bissonette’s story also winds in a message about the importance older adults can play in children’s lives, modeling the different alternatives for living a full life. Bissonette’s young narrator glories in the fact that her grandmother is “not like other grandmas.” As the author says, “Children need to believe in possibilities and options. No one should think there is one ‘right’ way to look, act, think, dream – particularly not children.”

Aimée Bissonette was born in Pennsylvania, the sixth of seven children. Her family moved so often that she attended eight different schools before graduating from high school. A University of Minnesota Law School graduate, she works with numerous children’s book authors and illustrators in her legal practice. Her picture books include *North Woods Girl* (Minnesota Historical Society Press, October 2015) and the forthcoming *Miss Colfax’s Light* (Sleeping Bear Press, January 2016). Bissonette has also published a book for K-12 educators on the legal issues surrounding technology in the schools. She lives with her family and dogs in Minneapolis.

North Woods Girl ❖ ISBN 978-0-873511-966-3 ❖ written by Aimée Bissonette (aimeebissonette.com)
illustrated by Claudia McGehee (claudia-mcgehee.com) ❖ Minnesota Historical Society Press (mnhs.org/mnhspress)