

Lesley Hazleton's *Jezebel: The Untold Story of the Bible's Harlot Queen* is AROHO's second offering for our Book Club. Hazelton is well known for her craft, her research, and the careful unclenching of character that draws the reader into the center of an unknown world and into mindstep with her unlikely heroine. This is a book that appeals to us as members of the AROHO community. We are women who have committed acts of audacity, who have been scorned, misunderstood, who have written and read in attics, in cellars; we have been the woman who is thrown to the dogs. We believe that our story is a good story, that like Jezebel, when the old man says, no one will know your name, he will be wrong. Our name will be sung; our story will be immortal.

— Kate Gale, AROHO Board Member, author, publisher

#### Conversation with Lesley Hazleton, September 24, 2007

Lesley Hazleton and Marsha Pincus first met at A Room of Her Own Foundation's 2007 Retreat for Women Writers at Ghost Ranch in New Mexico. At the Retreat, Marsha studied with Lesley as Lesley led a week-long workshop, "The Creative Nonfiction Playground."

Lesley Hazleton is the author of eight books, including three acclaimed books about the Middle East—*Israeli Women*, *Where Mountains Roar*, and *Jerusalem, Jerusalem*. Her most recent book prior to *Jezebel* is *Mary: A Flesh-and-Blood Biography of the Virgin Mother*. A former psychologist, Lesley reported from Israel for *Time Magazine*, and has written on Middle East politics for *The New York Times*, *Esquire*, *Vanity Fair*, *The Nation*, *The New Republic*, *The New York Review of Books*, and other publications. She lives in Seattle, Washington.

Marsha Pincus has taught high school English in the School District of Philadelphia since 1974. Marsha is a 2005 Carnegie Fellow in the Quest Teacher Scholars Program. The School District of Philadelphia twice named Marsha "Teacher of the Year." She has also served as Executive Director of

the Philadelphia Young Playwrights Festival. Her work has been published in several education-oriented anthologies and websites. Marsha is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Pennsylvania and is also writing a series of stories about working with inner city youth.

**Marsha Pincus:** Lesley, I've just completed *Jezebel* and I must say, it was an exhilarating read! So much was happening in the narrative, on so many different levels. There is simultaneously a sense of history and a sense of immediacy. I was struck by the opening scene in the introduction in which a man you describe as suffering from the "Jerusalem syndrome" chases you down, yelling, "Jezebel, Jezebel, fornicating under the walls of God's holy city." It's as if the past and the present had been conflated. Does it feel like that often in Israel today?

**Lesley Hazleton:** God, yes! In the whole of the Middle East. In a sense, there *is* no history in the Middle East, that most history-soaked of areas, because all of history is so present.

**Marsha:** So this sense of the present-ness of the past is what Jonathan Raban has called your "non-fiction magical realism." What do you think of that description of your work? Does it feel right to you?

**Lesley:** I love that phrase! Who wouldn't if it were said about her work? And yes it does feel right. There's a kind of alchemy of time just waiting to be tapped into when you've lived in Jerusalem (I lived there thirteen years, from 1966 to 1979). Past and present conflate and intermingle in weird and wonderful ways. You can sit on the threshold of a house that was built three thousand years ago. Or a kid can offer you a two thousand year old coin he's just dug out of a hillside. Or a madman can accost you as you walk peaceably along Mount Zion, screaming that you're Jezebel.

**Marsha:** For me, as a reader, nowhere is that more evident than in the terrifying scene at Tel Mar Elias where you and your guide are attacked by a pack of feral wolf-dogs. Were you thinking about Jezebel and her gruesome death at that moment?

**Lesley:** Ah, yes, those dogs. When it happened—and it did happen just as I wrote it—my first thought (once I'd stopped shaking and could actually think again) was "Oh no, that was just too perfect—I'll never be able to put that in the book, because nobody will believe me." And then, to my surprise, it did work in the book after all. But yes, right after it happened, the association between those feral wolf dogs and the dogs that ate Jezebel was immediate.

**Marsha:** Almost like a warning from Elijah himself!

**Lesley:** Like a warning from Elijah? No, I didn't take it that way. But he was so fierce and zealous and territorial, those wolfdogs seemed entirely in place on the hill where he was born. And no, if the next question is 'Did I feel like I was Jezebel?' The answer is no—I think you need to be able to identify with your subject, but not to that extent.

**Marsha:** This makes me wonder about the different voices that you used in this book. You were writing in your own personal voice, and you were also writing in a more traditional non-fiction voice. Were you writing in Jezebel's voice as well?

**Lesley:** In her voice? Almost. I mean, large parts are written from Jezebel's point of view, which strictly speaking means they're fictional, since Jezebel is not around to tell me her POV any longer. But I think of them as non-fiction—as a re-creation of her POV (and part of her POV is of course her voice). That is, they are the result of intensive historical research, and of applying what the new historians call "the historical imagination"—that is, re-creating what happened, based on intensive research. As I see it, none of this is made up. It *is* re-created, yes. Imagined, yes. But made up out of my own imagination? No.

**Marsha:** So is this the way in which your work is different from Anita Diamont's *The Red Tent*, a re-imagining of the Bible from a woman's point of view. It's possible that some people just seeing the cover might think it's the same kind of book.

**Lesley:** Oh God, that certainly wasn't the intention. I enjoyed *The Red Tent*, though I think my

publishers' description of *Jezebel* as equal parts Elaine Pagels and Antonia Fraser is closer to the mark. But the fact is I wasn't thinking of any of these while I was writing. Actually I was thinking of *Mary*. I was focused on re-creating a real woman, on uncovering the real woman behind the legend. The thing with *The Red Tent* is that it really is made up from Anita D's own imagination, as she herself says, because it all happened pre-history. History really only starts just about Jezebel's time, in the ninth century BC, which is the earliest we have reliable archeological records—inscriptions, writings, etc. As I see it, I was writing biography—i.e. history—and if some of the technique was fictional, that was purely in order to bridge that gap of almost 3000 years, to bring the reader into the mind, the place, the time. I think I wrote somewhere in the book that we tend to view what we quaintly call "antiquity" as though through a telescope the wrong way round, making everything smaller instead of larger. I wanted to counter that. I wanted to get through to the fact that people then were just as intelligent and sophisticated and complex as we are now. Sometimes, I suspect, more so.

**Marsha:** I was most fascinated by the passages in the book where you talked about the language and the ways in which meanings of words would be changed in translation. It helped, I am sure, that you are fluent in Hebrew. What surprised you the most in your close reading of biblical texts?

**Lesley:** The grittiness of them! I mean, the curses! God, but those people knew how to curse. Today, when we seem to be limited to repeated applications of the same four-letter word, our cursing is incredibly impoverished. In the bible, when they curse, they go at it—street language, to the gut—in fact, to the groin. Thus that thing about "I will cut down every one that pisses against the wall." That goes straight to what you use to piss against a wall with—if you happen to be male, of course. And that hurts.

**Marsha:** And all of that word play!

**Lesley:** Isn't it glorious! We forget that what we call the Bible was once a living thing. That it was told, not read. That it was the product of an oral society—from one person's lips to another's ears, and on that way. So things *had* to be vivid. They had to be memorable. They had to entertain. This whole thing we have now that the Bible is to instruct is so damn dull by comparison. Some of the time, the King James is magnificent—sometimes even more poetic than the original. But other times, you can practically hear William Tyndale saying to himself, "You can't say that—this is the Bible, for God's sake!" and so softening his translation, using euphemisms, etc.

**Marsha:** You call your book *Jezebel: The Untold Story of the Bible's Harlot Queen*. Why do you think her story has not been told in this way before?

**Lesley:** The truth is, I don't know. I detest the idea of claiming exceptionality, but it could be that I happen to possess just the right combination of attributes to write this book: a woman who cannot conceive of *not* being a feminist; a non-practicing Jew who defines herself as a gnostic agnostic; a former Israeli now living in the misty Pacific Northwest. With both Mary and Jez (yes, I call her Jez for short), delving into their stories, trying to find out who they really were, was a way for me to get back to the Middle East, a particularly satisfying way intellectually—because that's a connection that you can never shake, no matter how hard you try. And I did try, hard. For years. And then with relief, I came back to it through this kind of historical biography.

**Marsha:** Did you actually return to the Middle East while you were writing the books?

**Lesley:** Oh yes. I mean, what a perfect way to do it—for me, at least. To be back there but not to be involved, as I was when I was a reporter there, in the day-to-day politics, which only seem to get worse and worse. But of course I was involved. So inevitably, perhaps, I played on the echoes, on the resonance between then and now—the political resonance, the

strange feeling that *plus ça change*. . . . Which takes us back to that first question, of past and present.

**Marsha:** And the clash between Jezebel and Elijah which you characterize as the "the founding template for the clash between pluralism and tolerance on the one hand and fundamentalist fanaticism on the other." Did you make that connection early in the process of the research and the writing?

**Lesley:** Yes, I think I did. At first, I just wanted to know who Jezebel was. But when I read the original story as told in Kings, the connection kind of sprang out at me. I had no idea of the fierceness of Elijah—or the amazing manipulations of his successor, Elisha—until I went back to the original story. And then I kept thinking, "How come nobody points this out? How come nobody reacts to this? How come all this is just sort of elided, overlooked? Exactly how did Jez become the bad guy and Elijah the good one?" Basically, "How come nobody counted the bodies in this story before?"

**Marsha:** Yes, it was extremely violent. The most shocking thing for me was the depiction of Elijah. I always thought of Elijah as the friendly prophet who drinks the wine left in the center of the table at the Passover seder.

**Lesley:** That's because Elijah in afterlife is almost the complete opposite of Elijah as he was. The legend overtakes the record. The same happened to Jez, of course, but in the opposite direction. Elijah the caring, the protecting, the solace, the guardian, only came into being with rabbinical Judaism, a millennium after he lived.

**Marsha:** Elijah isn't a very sympathetic person in this narrative. While Jezebel is seen as powerful and complex, Elijah is depicted as capable only of binary "either-or" kind of thinking.

**Lesley:** He strikes me truly as the prototype of the fire and brimstone prophet, as the forerunner of the radical fundamentalist—a man so passionate, so zealous, that the humanity is drained out of him.

**Marsha:** And what of Ahab who offers a hand to Ben Hadad instead of killing him after defeating him in battle?

**Lesley:** Yes, Ahab is quite extraordinary. The man Kings calls “the most evil of all the kings of Israel” is shown, right there in the Kings account, as what we would think of as wise and generous and magnanimous. And in fact the historical record bears this out. The Kingdom of Israel was at the height of its power not under David and Solomon, as received wisdom has it, but a century and a half later, under Ahab and Jezebel. The Kings account fudges that, which is what happens when your enemies get to write history.

**Marsha:** The Kings account was written 300 years after the death of Ahab and Jezebel. Are there accounts of their reign from the ninth century?

**Lesley:** No there are no direct accounts, but we do know from the archeological record how highly respected Israel was during their reign, and how far it fell once they were killed and overthrown. And we know more about Jezebel indirectly, through the history of the Phoenicians, and through her grand-niece Dido, who founded Carthage.

**Marsha:** It is Elijah who labels Jezebel a harlot. Is her original infidelity to Yahweh? Does Elijah sexualize that infidelity or does that come later?

**Lesley:** Actually it’s not him, but her assassin, Jehu, the man who orders her to be thrown down. And even then the accusation is indirect. The comment is addressed to her son, when Jehu says, “What peace, with your mother’s harlotries and sorceries?” Certainly Elijah thought of her as a harlot, because the word harlot was the word for an infidel, for anyone who “prostitutes themselves to false gods.” And Jez was the leading representative, the most visible representative, let’s say, of those “false gods” who were tremendously popular in Israel at the time. And for many hundreds of years to come. Elijah had his work cut out for him. His zealotry, his passion, his high dudgeon, his willingness to kill—all these were

the result of his absolute devotion to the one god, Yahweh. It’s the absolutism that I wanted to get across. The absolute refusal to tolerate anything but what he believed. The total conviction of righteousness. And of the evilness of those who disagree. All of which sounds very familiar today.

**Marsha:** Talk a bit about the “woman in the window” plaques found in Samaria—and your contention that the woman framed by the window is (using the other meaning of the word) literally framed. Is Jezebel unique in this regard as the only woman in the Bible who is “framed” by the writers of the Bible as a harlot?

**Lesley:** Well, all of Jerusalem is called a harlot by later prophets. All of Israel, in fact. Which makes it crystal clear that they’re using the word as a metaphor, not as a literal description. This is the trouble with reading the bible literally—it wasn’t written that way. It was written by people with a very developed sense of metaphor, and heard by people with an equally developed sense of metaphor. Our sense of metaphor has become so degraded that we actually need a linguist like George Lakoff to point out to us how it permeates our language and our thought. Nobody needed a Lakoff back then. Metaphor was second nature. It was part of the poetry of language and life. And religion. Now, those woman at the window plaques . . . Jezebel faces her assassin on her balcony, framed by the window behind her. And this was clearly intended to reflect the image, very popular at the time, of the goddess Astarte. It was a direct reference, and the people who heard the story knew it. It wasn’t just the overthrow of Jezebel—and how oddly literal that overthrow was, with her being thrown down by her eunuchs—it was intended to be the overthrow of Astarte, and with Astarte, of all “false gods.”

**Marsha:** In the chapter called “Babylon” there is a brilliant passage about the way the text was substituted for the land after Israel and Judea fell. You contend, “By writing, an uprooted people gained not just a past but also a future.”

**Lesley:** Aha. Yes, most of what we now call the Bible was written in exile, in Babylon. The people who wrote it were uprooted from the land. And Yahweh was very much a national god, a god of that particular land. That's why that general goes to Damascus with a donkeyload of soil from Israel, so that he can worship Yahweh on his (Yahweh's) own soil. Yahweh was a territorial god. And in the absence of the territory, what then happens? The territory is gone. Imagine the existential dilemma. The despair. If the territory is gone, the land is gone, and then what of Yahweh? Has he deserted his people? Was he, after all, just another false god? Then look at the extraordinary thing these writers accomplished—they changed Yahweh. Yes, they changed God! Essentially, Yahweh *became* God at that point. No longer called Yahweh, even, but Elohim (literally, that's the plural of El, who was the great father god of the Phoenician pantheon). What they did in exile was create a universal god instead of merely a territorial one. They made the idea of God larger, expanded it, and at the same time, of necessity, abstracted it. Amazing. The past was tied to the land; the future, with a universal god, could be anywhere. And so the text *had* to substitute for the land. As they wrote, in essence, they created a new form of religion, one in which the text was central.

**Marsha:** And this text, among other things, made Jezebel the "fall girl."

**Lesley:** Yes. Basically, they were claiming a victory that in fact would take hundreds more years to achieve—that of monotheism over polytheism. She was the embodiment of polytheism—a.k.a. harlotry. It was supposed to have died with her, but of course it didn't, as is clear when you read the later prophets, who rail so much against worship of "false gods" that you realize how incredibly popular they were. The other gods, I mean, not the prophets. Prophets are rarely popular at any time or in any place.

**Marsha:** So, of course, I need to ask a question about the relationship between Jezebel and Mary in your mind.

**Lesley:** Here you have two women, both reduced to mere ciphers in our minds. Both have been forced into the binary mode of good or evil, when in fact everything human—everything that makes life interesting, complex, intriguing, vital—takes place somewhere in between those two poles. So: one was stereotyped to one pole, the other to the opposite pole. But I felt the strong need, with both women, to look behind the image, behind the legend, and ask who they really were—the flesh-and-blood Mary, deprived of her flesh and blood by virginity literalists, and equally, the mind and intellect of Jezebel, deprived of her personhood and turned into a sexpot of too much flesh and blood. I sensed there had to be far more to both women, and set out to discover it. I know it may sound like heresy to some, to put Mary and Jezebel in the same boat, but I think they have indeed both been deprived of their humanity and complexity by legend and history and stereotype. And that if we can discover their real stories, we'll be far richer for that—both as women and as human beings.

**Marsha:** It's as if you've created a new genre—a sub-genre under the umbrella of creative non-fiction.

**Lesley:** You know, I was actually aware of that when I was working on *Mary*. That's why it took me so long—four years for *Mary*, only two and a half for *Jezebel*, because by then I knew what I was doing. It's a new way of writing biography—and one I had to think long and hard about. I had a few models. There's a wonderful book by Ann Wroe on Pontius Pilate, mixing fictional technique and reportorial and the personal. And there is, way earlier, an amazing book-length essay by Norman Mailer—yes, Norman Mailer!—on Marilyn Monroe—called "Marilyn" and written as text to go along with previously unpublished photos of her. In it, Mailer explores the whole notion of what he calls speculative biography, and of the need to wend your way through the massed accumulations of "factoids" (he invented the word), where everyone has an interest, a claim, in seeing her this way or that.

We as a society have long had an interest in seeing Jez as the evil seductress. I now have an interest in seeing her as a powerful woman, as a force for good instead of evil. Who is “right?” Nothing here is absolutely provable beyond any shadow of doubt. Neither is any story on the front page of your newspaper this morning. We all come to a subject with our desires, preconceptions, etc. Jez has been approached with a very clear set of these for three thousand years. It’s way past time for somebody—in the event, me—to redress the outrageous imbalance, and present her in a very different light.

**Marsha:** And you’ve done it so beautifully and artfully! The book is a joy to read, filled with thrilling moments of insight and revelation. What’s next? Or should I say, who’s next?

**Lesley:** Thank you thank you thank you! What’s next? Well, we’ve worked together at AROHO, so you

know me, and you won’t be at all surprised to hear that it’s something even more difficult. . . . What I’m working on now is the foundation story of the Shia-Sunni split—a wonderful narrative, a multigenerational saga of Gabriel Garcia Marquez proportions (no surprise, since his inspiration was Middle Eastern literature—*1001 Nights*). A narrative that seems to be all but unknown here in the west, but that’s known to every Sunni in the Muslim world, and practically engraved on the heart of every Shia. In short, another story that, for me, simply begs to be told well, which means with passion, with compassion, and with insight.

**Marsha:** Best of luck with this new book, Lesley.

**Lesley:** Thanks so much, Marsha—and thanks to AROHO, from both me and Jezebel.

## Discussion Guide for Readers of Lesley Hazleton’s *Jezebel*

In *Jezebel*, Lesley Hazleton weaves together her knowledge of the Middle East, biblical scholarship, deft narrative skills, and keen journalistic style to create a fascinating biography of Queen Jezebel—possibly the most misunderstood figure in the Bible, if not world culture. Hazleton’s portrait of this biblical anti-heroine contains many themes perfect for discussion and debate. The questions below are designed to guide your reading group’s conversation about this rich, absorbing biography.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Hazleton writes on page 2, “There is a magic in names.” What connotation did the name “Jezebel” hold for you prior to reading the book? Has this new vision of the “harlot queen” changed this understanding?
2. “Strip away the seven veils, and what we find is a startlingly contemporary story,”

(page 10). In what ways can Jezebel’s story be considered modern?

3. Hazleton incorporates vivid descriptions of the modern-day Middle East into her account of Jezebel’s life and death. Which locales stood out for you? Why?
4. “The two women, Jezebel and Lady Macbeth, are almost twin images; indeed it is quite likely that Shakespeare took his cue for *Macbeth* from Kings,” (page 113). Can you think of other women in myth or literature who share similarities with Jezebel?
5. Hazleton describes Jezebel’s rise to power and ultimate murder as “the foundation story of modern radical fundamentalism,” (page 6). What parallels can be drawn between Jezebel’s story and radicalized religion in our age?
6. Proposing that if Jezebel hadn’t been persecuted and killed, the path of Israelite

history would have been completely altered, Hazleton writes, "Whether this is a matter of irony or justice I leave to the reader to decide."(page 13). What do you think? Was the aftermath of Jezebel's death a cruel twist of fate, or was it the inevitable result?

7. Discuss prominent historical male figures in Jezebel's story. How did they help or hinder her?
8. Hazleton periodically employs "the historical imagination" (page 13) in her re-creation of Jezebel's point of view. What did you think of

this device? Did it enhance your understanding of Jezebel's perspective?

9. Discuss the violent nature of Jezebel's death, as well as other instances of violence that the author notes in the book. Does the cruelty exhibited to Jezebel come as a surprise to you? Why or why not?
10. What defines a feminist to you in today's era? Would you consider Jezebel one?

Written by Lindsay Mergens.

## Study Guide of Lesley Hazleton's *Jezebel* by Meredith Hall

Meredith Hall's memoir, titled *Without a Map*, was published by Beacon Press in 2007. Hall is the 2004 recipient of the Gift of Freedom Award from A Room of Her Own Foundation. Hall won the 2005 Pushcart Prize with her first essay, which was also a "Notable Essay" in *The Best American Essays 2005*. Her work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Good Housekeeping*, *The Southern Review*, *Fourth Genre*, *Five Points* and many other journals and anthologies. She is memoirist-in-residence at the University of New Hampshire.

1. Lesley Hazleton tells us in her Introduction, "How a story is told is as important as the content of the story itself." She clearly understands this in her own telling of Jezebel's story. Hazleton crosses many boundaries in that telling. At times—as in the present-tense segment at the beginning of Chapter One—she uses "the historical imagination" to re-create Jezebel's restless wanderings on the night before her marriage to Ahab. This book is deeply researched history, yet it does not sound scholarly, in part because Hazleton dares to conjecture freely. This is historical biography, but Hazleton asks us, through strong statements about modern political and religious conflicts, to re-examine our understandings

of current global tensions. In what ways does this fluid move across the boundaries of genre excite and challenge the reader? What are the risks and rewards for a writer of "breaking the rules"?

2. A glance at the Notes, Bibliography and Index convinces us immediately that Hazleton has done extraordinary research, from translating *Kings* from the original to feeling the ancient wind blow across the land as she visits barely visible ruins in remote areas. Her scholarly research conveys great authority over her complex subject. Yet this is highly accessible history (announced with the gorgeous book jacket). Clearly, Hazleton has identified her audience and written to that audience with clear purpose. What is the role of research in nonfiction texts? How much is enough? At what point do we gain our reader's confidence as authorities? Hazleton moves from ancient to current events in nearly every chapter. Is her profound grasp of those historical events necessary to earning our trust as she explores modern global politics?

3. Hazleton tells us the outcome of the book in the Introduction; we know from the start that Jezebel is indicted by the monotheists to a violent death and desecration by dogs. Yet the tension is maintained throughout the book. Why do writers sometimes choose this structure? What strategies does Hazleton

employ to make this structure work? In what ways does she address the risks associated with this structure?

4. This is a study of memory, and the power of words to change the truths of cultural memory. Written over centuries as political and religious realities shifted, the Bible's multiple authors were able to alter the memories passed down through time. Hazleton, in turn, peels away those alterations in an effort to move backward into the memory shared by an ancient culture. Can writers preserve memory? How does a writer identify the "truth" carried in memory? As she rescues Jezebel from the condemnation of centuries, does Hazleton succeed in resurrecting memory?

5. It must have been tempting to Hazleton to reduce Jezebel to a heroic "good woman wronged," but she refuses to do that. Instead, we are allowed to see Jezebel's arrogance and political sang-froid, even as we admire her great courage and enlightened beliefs—her "pragmatism and pluralism." We sympathize with Jezebel, and hope that she prevails over the zealously militant prophets, Elijah and Elisha. And we know she is doomed, both to die a terrible death and to come down through history as the personification of wickedness and infidelity. In the original biblical account, we are not privileged to move inside her thoughts; we cannot know her private motivations, hopes, ambitions, capacity for love and loyalty. How does Hazleton actually create this full and human character, resurrecting her from the biblical story and causing us to care enough to hope that somehow history will be undone, that there will be no assassinated husband, son and grandson, no wall and no dogs?

6. Hazleton makes frequent reference to literature (Fraser's *The Golden Bough*, Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*;) and the arts (Phoenician ivory panels, Hirst's modern installations). What effect do these references have on the text? In what ways do they enhance or deepen our understandings of these ancient antagonisms and dramas?

7. Is it necessary to define this literary genre? If so, what would you call it? Historical scholarship? Fictionalized biography? Feminist narrative? Are there limits to the ways in which we might blur the boundaries between forms? What might be gained by those blurrings?

8. The voice in this book is informal, accessible, and even conversational at times. It never sounds "scholarly." Do you think this was an intuitive move for Hazleton, or a conscious decision? To what extent does this voice determine the reader's response to the book? How does this voice affect our response to Hazleton's (perhaps controversial) observations of current political and cultural conflicts?

9. Hazleton is dazzling in her explorations of language in the biblical texts; she delights us with her explications of the clever but often derogatory word play so common in the Bible. We learn that Jezebel was actually named Itha-Baal, "woman of the Lord." She became I-zevel — "woman of dung"— in Hebrew, and then, in Greek and hence English, Jezebel. As the writers of the biblical texts work to construct Jezebel as a murderer of the priests of Yahweh, "karat"— cut off, or cut out—suddenly becomes "harag," killed. How does Hazleton transition back and forth between these linguistic studies and the narrative of the struggle between Elijah and Jezebel for power and followers?

10. Bring to mind Jezebel's appearance on the afternoon of her death, or the view to Mount Hermon from her palace tower, or the dust and spare landscape of Samaria. Hazleton uses concrete detail brilliantly and richly, conveying place and historical moment with great imagination. How does she integrate this aspect of narrative writing into an historical text?

**Lesley Hazleton**

Born in England in 1945, Lesley Hazleton lived in Jerusalem from 1966 to 1979, and in New York from 1979 to 1992, when she moved to Seattle. She became a United States citizen in 1994.

She took a BA Honors in psychology at England's Manchester University in 1963-66, and an MA in psychology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1969-71.

Her books include:

*Jezebel: The Untold Story of the Bible's Harlot Queen*  
Doubleday, 2007

*Mary: A Flesh-and-Blood Biography*  
Bloomsbury, 2004  
Washington State Book Award winner

*Driving to Detroit: An Automotive Odyssey*  
Free Press, 1998  
"an exceptional writer at the top of her game" —*Kirkus*

*Confessions of a Fast Woman*  
Addison-Wesley, 1992  
"a gem"—*The New York Times*

*England, Bloody England*  
Atlantic Monthly Press, 1990  
"an expatriate's return"

*Jerusalem, Jerusalem*  
Atlantic Monthly Press, 1986  
American Jewish Committee Book Award winner

*Where Mountains Roar: A Personal Report from the Negev and Sinai Desert*  
Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980  
"a first-rate book" *The New Yorker*

*Israeli Women: The Reality Behind the Myths*  
Simon and Schuster, 1978

*The New York Times* Best-Books-of-the-Year list, Current Affairs

## Our first **Book Club** selection:

I was awarded the Gift of Freedom from AROHO and every aspect of my life and my sense of myself changed. Suddenly the moment was exactly right for me to discover this release. AROHO carved out a doorway in space for me, and I walked through. Now this is my life. Now I am here, a writer.

—Meredith Hall

We are extremely proud to inaugurate our Book Club with Meredith Hall's *Without a Map*, a book "which would not be if it were not for the Gift of Freedom Award I received from AROHO. I am profoundly grateful for AROHO's extraordinary financial support, encouragement, and friendship." (Meredith in *WaM*) **We know you will love it as much as we do.**

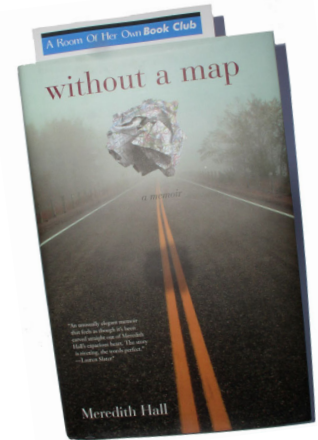
—Darlene Chandler Bassett, founder and president of AROHO

*Without a Map* tells an important and perceptive story about loss, about aloneness and isolation in a time of great need, about a life slowly coming back into focus and the calm that finally emerges. Meredith Hall is a brave new writer who earns our attention."

—Annie Dillard

**Available on**  
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*autographed copies*  
*author interviews*  
*discussion*  
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Since its beginning A Room of Her Own Foundation (AROHO) has given almost \$500,000 to creative women through our \$50,000 Gift of Freedom awards, scholarships, retreats, public readings, the AROHO Book Club, and our customized web-based resource center.

AROHO has hosted over 200 women writers at our unique retreats which feature a world-class faculty, and we have sponsored approximately \$50,000 in scholarships for women writers to attend our retreats as well as other intensive writing programs.

AROHO promotes the interests of our community of women writers by sponsoring and supporting national writing programs and journals, including the National Poetry Slam and the AWP National Conference, the American Academy of Poetry, Poets and Writers, and Creative Nonfiction.

Dedicated to furthering the vision of writer Virginia Woolf, AROHO continues to change the lives of creative women by rewarding and showcasing their important voices to our own community as well as the marketplace. AROHO is committed to bridging the often fatal gap between a woman's economic reality and her artistic creation.

A Room of Her Own Foundation  
PO Box 778  
Placitas, NM 87043  
www.aroomofherownfoundation.org