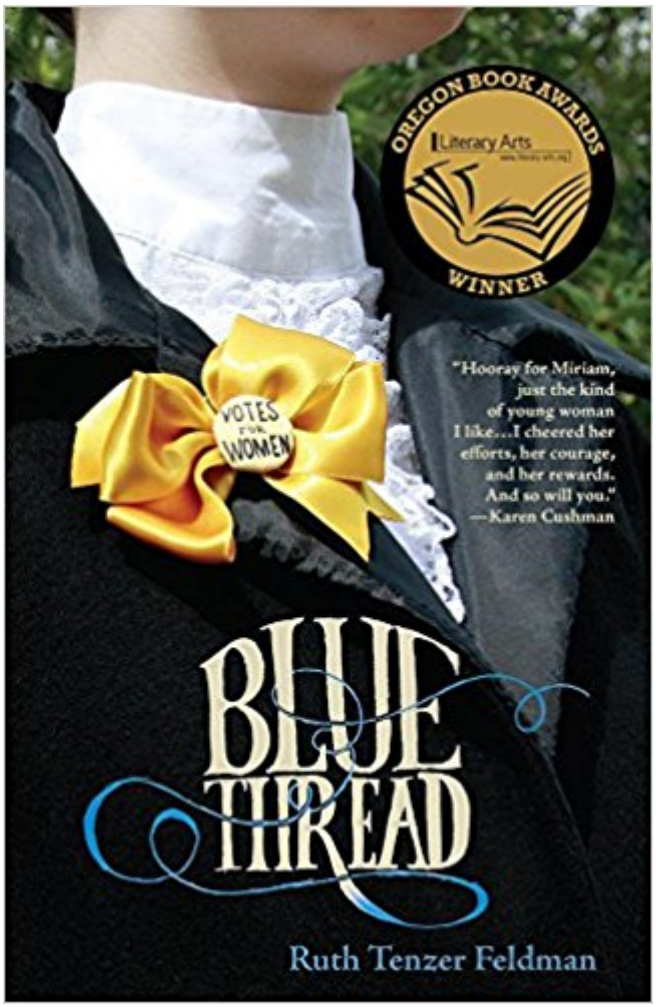
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Blue Thread (The Blue Thread Saga)



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Synopsis

The womenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s suffrage movement is in full swing in 1912 Portland, OregonÃ¢â ¬â •the last holdout state on the West Coast. Miriam desperately wants to work at her fatherÃ¢â ¬â„¢s printing shop, but when he refuses she decides to dedicate herself to the suffrage movement, demanding rights for women and a different life for herself. Amidst the uncertainty of her future, MiriamÃ¢â ¬â„¢s attention is diverted by the mysterious Serakh, whose sudden, unexplained appearances and insistent questions lead Miriam to her grandmotherÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Jewish prayer shawlÃ¢â ¬â •and to her destiny. With this shawl, Miriam is taken back in time to inspire the Daughters of Zelophehad, the first women in Biblical history to own land. Miriam brings the strength and courage of these women with her forward in time, emboldening her own struggles and illuminating what it means to be an independent woman.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 15 years

Grade Level: 4 - 11

Customer Reviews

"Like Miriam herself, Blue Thread interweaves elements of faith, history, and politics, but what I loved most about this young adult novel was the even more powerful element of family. From the dominant conflict and connection between Miriam and her father to the more fantastical tie between the women of the Josefsohn family, Ruth Tenzer Feldman does a beautiful job peering into the

bonds that bring us together, tear us apart, and allow us to travel beyond ourselves." Ã¢â ¬â •Anne Osterlund Swan, author of Academy 7"Hooray for Miriam, just the kind of young woman I likeÃ¢â ¬â •curious, compassionate, intelligent, independent, and determined. Her story is told in Blue Thread, a wonderfully written novel about her struggle to be herself, to be honest, and to be just. In an intriguing blend of fantasy and historical fiction, Miriam finds the battles of the past informing her present and inspiring her future. I cheered her efforts, her courage, and her rewards. And so will you." Ã¢â ¬â •Karen Cushman, author of The Midwife's Apprentice

Ruth Tenzer Feldman is the author of numerous historical and political nonfiction books for children and young adults, including "The Fall of Constantinople," "Thurgood Marshall," "Don't Whistle in School: The History of America's Public Schools," and" How Congress Works." She holds degrees in both law and international relations, and has spent time working as a legislative attorney for the U.S. Department of Education. Ruth is an active member of local Jewish organizations and historical societies. She has spent countless hours researching Jewish history, women's suffrage, and early twentieth century printing techniques to bring historical accuracy to "Blue Thread," her first young adult novel.

Ruth Tenzer Feldman has mastered the art of connecting different time periods. In Blue Thread, Ruth intertwines events from OregonÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s womenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s suffrage movement with the daughters of ZelophehadÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s struggle for womenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s rights during biblical times. In her companion book, The Ninth Day, the Free Speech Movement of the 1960s is connected with 11th century Paris. In both books, the main characters (Miriam Josefsohn in Blue Thread and Hope Friis in The Ninth Day) are able to move back and forth through time by using a magical prayer shawl. One can be read without the other. I recommend both books.The prayer shawl has a unique blue thread that originated from the biblical Tribe of Levi. The thread has a special power that can carry a messenger across the olam (the universe). Since Miryam the biblical prophetess, did not have any children, she passed a thread onto TirzahÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s daughter, Miryam. Miriam Josefsohn traveled back to that point in time. Another thread miraculously survived until the Middle Ages and was embroidered into a prayer shawl by RashiÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s daughter.Most striking is the message that Ruth brings to her audience. She illustrates how women can use their voices and their deeds to make a difference. Sometimes the choices that the young women make run counter to public opinion. These risky endeavors are oftentimes filled with uncertain outcomes.. While Serakh is trying to calm Miriam after

their first time travel, she says ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â¦ But where you are or when you are is not of great importance. They form only a tiny dot in the olam, a spark in the universe. What matters most is who you are.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• (Page 67)Tidbits of history are sprinkled throughout. Readers learn about basic trends and ideas associated with the time periods. This historical information adds credence to the setting while also enriching the readers understanding of history. Jewish culture and historical events are an added bonus that may or may not appeal to a secular audience. Ruth provides an AuthorÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s Note that spells out where the line is drawn between fiction and non-fiction and also explains some Jewish terms.Both of Ruth's books are creative and engaging. Multiple twists and turns keep the reader engaged throughout. Ruth patiently introduces and develops the characters. The dialogue is relaxed and credible. Miriam and HopeÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s relationships with others highlight their personalities. Through these interactions, the reader is able to see the girlsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ strengths and weaknesses. By the end of the book, readers feel like they are walking hand-in-hand with the characters and joining them as they move through the olam. I am looking forward to future treks through the olam.

I would say that this book is aimed at teens, however it is an engaging story reminding me of Gore Vidal's use of fictional characters in historic circumstances. I ordered the book as its launch in Portland was held in the home the author imagined as the heroine's family home, and I was researching that house's history. It's wonderfully imaginative and gives a fascinating picture of two historic events separated by millennia.

I liked the historical setting and the topic, but wasn't really drawn into this fantasy novel about suffrage. The main character (a young adult) is spirited back into the time of Moses on more than one occasion. Maybe a young adult interested in suffrage might find this a bit more compelling.

My book club read it. We would recommend it for teen girls....not older adults like we are.

Nice characters, but silly premise (I don't like magical realism, so perhaps I should have known). End screams "Give me another book contract!" Bubble gum if you don't have something good waiting.

Jumping between the year 1912 and biblical times, Ruth Tenzer FeldmanÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s Blue Thread tells the story of Miriam, a teenage Jewish girl, tasked with time-traveling to the past to

encourage a group of women to stand up for their rights. Miriam travels through time with the help of a prayer shawl and a mysterious woman who seems to appear out of nowhere. While I greatly appreciate a strong, Jewish female protagonist, I struggled to immerse myself in the narrative. This may very well be due to the fact that I donÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t typically read YA, nor do I typically read science fiction, and as such this might not be an issue for other readers. It took a while, but by the end of the book I truly cared about Miriam and her unique mission. I believe this book is an excellent book for teen readers and other YA readers.

Ruth Tenzer Feldman does a beautiful job of joining together biblical times and 1910's Portland, Oregon. Miriam is a young woman just coming of age as Portland is taken into the women's suffrage movement. She finds herself drawn to the suffragists beliefs when she attempts to pursue her dream: a career in her father's print shop. Miriam proves that she will not be stopped and is determined to help others, even those from the past, achieve their dreams of equality as well. I loved the strength of Miriam's character and felt she was a great role model for young adult readers (especially if they happen have frizzy brown hair, a belief in feminism, and Jewish heritage). My favorite aspect of the novel was how well the events that took place in the past were interwoven in what was going on in Miriam's present. This keeps the reader engaged in both settings and creats a great flow to the novel.

I don't know if I've ever liked a main character as quickly as I fell in love with Miriam. That might be because she is a Jewish feminist with frizzy brown hair and hazel eyes who spent her adolescence in Portland, Oregon fighting for women's rights. Which is not unlike me.It isn't often that I'll see characters with so many similarities to me, especially in regards to Judaism. I feel like the most popular books with Jewish protagonists typically involve the Holocaust, and it was refreshing to read a story about a Jewish person where their Judaism didn't put them in danger. It's lovely to see positive representation, especially when you aren't expecting it.Miriam is tenacious, courageous, and utterly relatable. Both in her time and in the time of the Moabites, she stands up for her rights and the rights of those around her. She is strong and resilient, and everything I would hope for in a young adult protagonist. The conflict with her family is heartbreaking at times and identifiable, and her struggle to find her place and voice in 1912 America is at once relatable and essential.

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