

# Visionary Women

by Andrea Barnet

Martin County Library System Book Club Kit:

## *Visionary Women: How Rachel Carson, Jane Jacobs, Jane Goodall, and Alice Waters Changed Our World* by Andrea Barnet

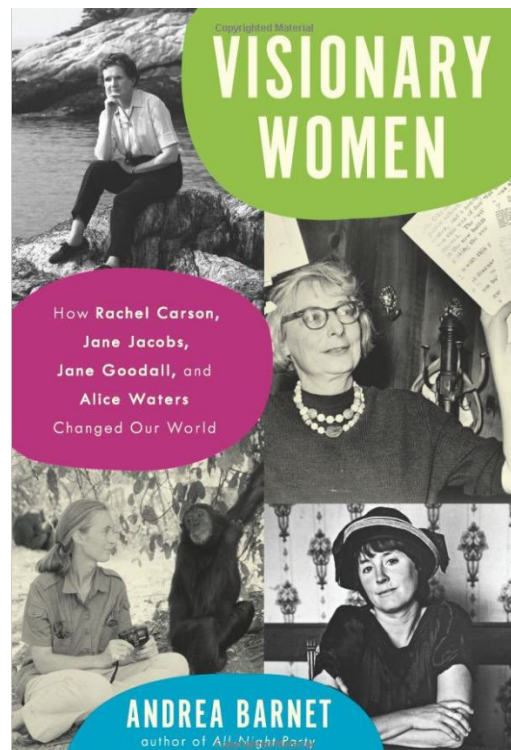
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### Book summary

Four influential women we thought we knew well—Jane Jacobs, Rachel Carson, Jane Goodall, and Alice Waters—and how they spearheaded the modern progressive movement.

This is the story of four visionaries who profoundly shaped the world we live in today. Together, these women—linked not by friendship or field, but by their choice to break with convention—showed what one person speaking truth to power can do. Jane Jacobs fought for livable cities and strong communities; Rachel Carson warned us about poisoning the environment; Jane Goodall demonstrated the indelible kinship



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between humans and animals; and Alice Waters urged us to reconsider what and how we eat.

With a keen eye for historical detail, Andrea Barnet traces the arc of each woman's career and explores how their work collectively changed the course of history. While they hailed from different generations, Carson, Jacobs, Goodall, and Waters found their voices in the early sixties. At a time of enormous upheaval, all four stood as bulwarks against 1950s corporate culture and its war on nature. Consummate outsiders, each prevailed against powerful and mostly male adversaries while also anticipating the disaffections of the emerging counterculture.

All told, their efforts ignited a transformative progressive movement while offering people a new way to think about the world and a more positive way of living in it.

Source: Author's website. (<https://www.andreabarnet.com/>)



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## Meet the Author

Andrea Barnet was a regular contributor to the *New York Times Book Review* for twenty-five years, where she wrote primarily on the arts and culture, with a special concentration on biographies of early twentieth century artistic and literary figures. She is the author of *All-Night Party: The Women of Bohemian Greenwich Village and Harlem, 1913-1930*, which was a finalist for the 2004 Lambda Literary Awards and *Visionary Women, How Rachel Carson, Jane Jacobs, Jane Goodall and Alice Waters Changed our World*, a finalist for the 2019 PEN/ Bograd Weld Award for biography. Her journalism has appeared in *Smithsonian Magazine*, the *New York Times*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Elle* and *The Toronto Globe and Mail*, among other publications. In 1999 her profile of the Boys Choir of Harlem for *Smithsonian* was nominated for the Community Action Network Service Award. In 2010 she was a director's guest in writing at Civitella Ranieri in Italy. She splits her time between the Hudson Valley and New York City, where she lives with her husband, the painter Kit White.



Source: Author's website. (<https://www.andreabarnet.com/>)



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## Discussion Questions

1. What simple questions started each visionary woman's actions?
2. Why do you think the author used the term "visionary"?
3. How are public and private spaces gendered? Are spaces, public and private, expected to be more comfortable for different genders? How do these women challenge this view?
4. How would the inclusion of women of color opened up this history?
5. What ideas do these women's lives make for how we build communities?
6. Are you inspired to change your behaviors by these visionary women?

Source: MCLS staff.



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## Recipes

### Alice Water's Baked Goat Cheese with Spring Lettuce Salad

- 12 ounces fresh, mild goat cheese (such as Haystack's Boulder Chèvre)
- Leaves from 4 sprigs thyme, chopped
- Leaves from 1 small sprig rosemary, chopped
- 1 1/2 cups extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup panko
- 1/2 baguette loaf, cut into eight 1/4-inch-thick slices
- 1 teaspoon sherry vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon coarse kosher or sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 1/2 tablespoons walnut or extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 pound baby lettuces or salad mix, washed and dried
- 1/2 cup toasted walnuts, coarsely chopped



Shape the goat cheese into eight 1-inch-thick disks and put in a container just big enough to hold them in one layer. Sprinkle cheese with herbs and pour on olive oil. Cover and chill at least 12 hours and up to a week. One hour before baking, pop them in the freezer to firm up.

Preheat oven to 400°F. Remove cheese from marinade and roll all sides in panko, pressing gently so the crumbs adhere. Arrange on a large baking sheet and bake until golden, about 15 minutes, turning over halfway through. Add baguette slices for last 5 minutes of baking.

Whisk together vinegar, salt, pepper, and walnut oil. Put lettuces in a large bowl, drizzle with just enough dressing to coat, and toss gently and thoroughly. Divide

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lettuces among 4 plates, sprinkle with walnuts, and to each plate add 2 goat-cheese disks and a baguette slice. Serve immediately.

Source: kitchn. (<https://www.thekitchn.com/recipe-alice-waters-baked-goat-cheese-with-spring-lettuce-salad-recipes-from-the-kitchn-218919>)

## Mint Tea

- 2 cups filtered water
- 15 fresh mint leaves (peppermint or spearmint)
- 1 to 2 teaspoons sugar (or honey), optional
- 1 cup ice, optional
- 2 lemon slices, optional
- Fresh lemon juice, optional



Gather the ingredients. Bring the water to a boil. Remove from the heat and add the fresh mint leaves. Steep for 3 to 5 minutes, depending on desired strength. Add optional sweetener. Start with 1 teaspoon per cup and add more as desired. If serving iced, fill tall glasses with ice and pour the tea over. If serving hot, pour the tea into mugs. Garnish with optional lemon slices and/or lemon juice to taste. Fresh mint tea with lemon wedge in a clear glass.

Source: spruce eats (<https://www.thespruceeats.com/easy-fresh-mint-tea-recipe-766391>)

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