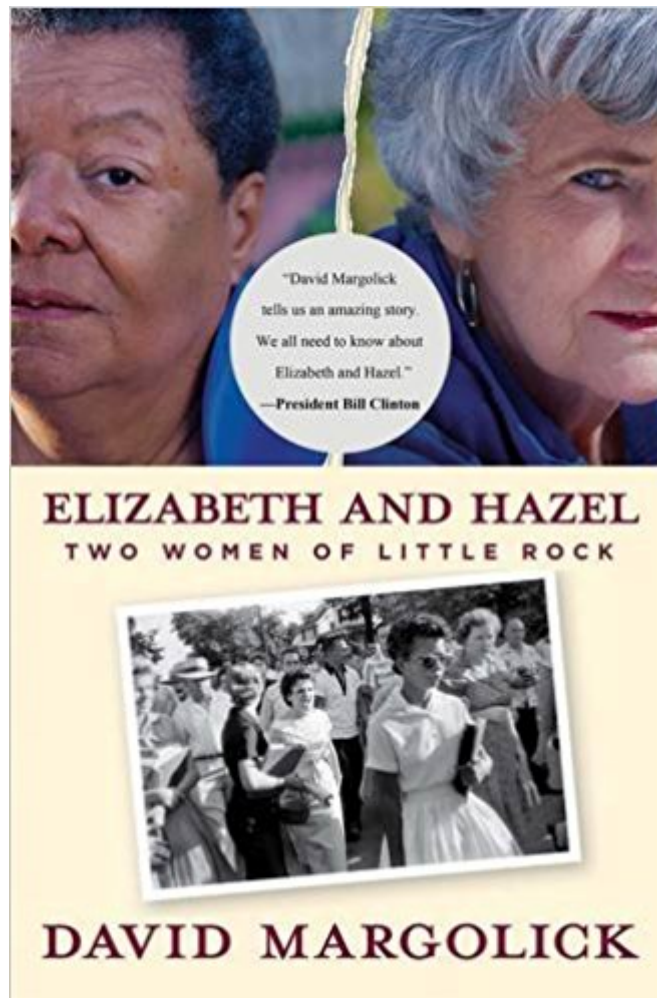


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# Elizabeth And Hazel: Two Women Of Little Rock



## Synopsis

The names Elizabeth Eckford and Hazel Bryan Massery may not be well known, but the image of them from September 1957 surely is: a black high school girl, dressed in white, walking stoically in front of Little Rock Central High School, and a white girl standing directly behind her, face twisted in hate, screaming racial epithets. This famous photograph captures the full anguish of desegregation in Little Rock and throughout the South and an epic moment in the civil rights movement. In this gripping book, David Margolick tells the remarkable story of two separate lives unexpectedly braided together. He explores how the haunting picture of Elizabeth and Hazel came to be taken, its significance in the wider world, and why, for the next half-century, neither woman has ever escaped from its long shadow. He recounts Elizabeth's struggle to overcome the trauma of her hate-filled school experience, and Hazel's long efforts to atone for a fateful, horrible mistake. The book follows the painful journey of the two as they progress from apology to forgiveness to reconciliation and, amazingly, to friendship. This friendship foundered, then collapsed perhaps inevitably over the same fissures and misunderstandings that continue to permeate American race relations more than half a century after the unforgettable photograph at Little Rock. And yet, as Margolick explains, a bond between Elizabeth and Hazel, silent but complex, endures.

## Book Information

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Yale University Press; Reprint edition (September 4, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0300187920

ISBN-13: 978-0300187922

Product Dimensions: 5.6 x 1.1 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 77 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #160,229 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #66 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Regional U.S. > South #777 in Books > History > World > Women in History #917 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Sociology > Race Relations > Discrimination & Racism

## Customer Reviews

"[Margolick] tells a story that is almost novelistic in its complexity. . . . Someday Elizabeth and Hazel will be a textbook. Long before, on the civil rights bookshelf, it will be considered a

classic." — Jesse Kornbluth, Headbutler.com, Huffington Post "The remarkable story of a historic civil-rights photograph and the intertwined lives of its subjects."

— The Daily Beast "A patient and evenhanded account of their messy relationship over the decades. . . . Margolick proposes no fairy-tale resolutions to such moral impasses. To his credit, he spares us none of the unruly facts as his subjects, still wrestling with history, wander off message."

— Amy Finnerty, The New York Times Book Review "A patient and evenhanded account. . . . Margolick proposes no fairytale solutions. . . . To his credit, he spares us none of the unruly facts as his subjects, still wrestling with history, wander off message."

— New York Times Book Review "Surprising, disturbing, occasionally inspiring, often baffling, and ultimately sad. . . Elizabeth and Hazel represents, in microcosm, the debilitating power of race that remains powerful 50 years after that photo. . . . An amazing story, told with brio."

— Boston Globe "For Elizabeth and Hazel, it would have been simple enough to turn their stories into a 'where are they now' piece. But Margolick is after something bigger. Through Eckford and Bryan's tangled lives, he hopes to capture the complexity of race, forgiveness, and reconciliation in modern America."

— Kevin Boyle, Washington Post "Margolick, rather than sanitizing it, captures the full fraught sweep of history — with wounds so deep that friendship may never be possible."

— Elizabeth Taylor, Chicago Tribune "Elizabeth and Hazel documents not only a poisonous moment in American race relations, but what happened to the two central characters in that famous photograph after the shutter had clicked. It is, at first glance, a thing premise -- but David Margolick's reporting develops this small idea into a small triumph . . . he allows us to see [Elizabeth] Eckford and [Hazel] Bryan not as figurines, but as they really are: two flawed misunderstood women who were caught in a moment that outgrew them."

— Ed Caesar, Sunday Times "Utterly engrossing, for it touches on a variety of thorny, provocative themes: the power of race, the nature of friendship, the role of personality, the capacity for brutality and for forgiveness."

— Publishers Weekly "There are volumes of scholarly works on the Civil Rights Movement, but this book is different. By tracing the two women's journeys, . . . often in their own words, Margolick artfully lays bare [their] emotional and mental wounds and struggles, [and] also places the women in the context of the wider civil rights era and beyond. . . . This work is simply a must-read."

— Library Journal, starred review "A very nuanced analysis of how Elizabeth and Hazel were affected by the scene that made them famous . . . A complex look at two women at the center of a historic moment."

— Booklist, starred review "Margolick's unforgettable new book, Elizabeth and Hazel: Two Women of Little Rock, takes as its touchstone a famous civil rights-era photograph. . . . eloquently chronicl[ing] their

lives since that iconic photo was taken." — Kate Tuttle, TheAtlantic.com "Riveting reportage of an injustice that still resonates with sociological significance." — Kirkus Reviews "A marvelous example of bringing history to life through individual stories, . . . [and] a fascinating story of race, relationships, and the struggle to forgive." — Marjorie Kehe, Christian Science Monitor, "Fall Books: 20 Nonfiction Titles You Don't Want to Miss" "An amazingly intimate portrait. . . . The lesson of Elizabeth and Hazel may be that we shouldn't define other people's lives by one single moment. — Instead, we can use their actions to define other lives — our own." — Christian Science Monitor "The iconic image of Elizabeth and Hazel at age fifteen showed us the terrible burden that nine young Americans had to shoulder to claim our nation's promise of equal opportunity. The pain it caused was deeply personal. David Margolick now tells us the amazing story of how Elizabeth and Hazel, as adults, struggled to find each other across the racial divide and in so doing, end their pain and find a measure of peace. We all need to know about Elizabeth and Hazel." — President Bill Clinton "David Margolick's dual biography of an iconic photograph is a narrative tour de force that leaves us to grapple with a disturbing perennial — that forgiveness doesn't always follow from understanding. I read Elizabeth and Hazel straight through in one sitting." — David Levering Lewis, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of W. E. B. Du Bois "The iconic photograph of Hazel Bryan and Elizabeth Eckford has now riveted us for more than fifty years. David Margolick's effort to bring the photo to life is equally riveting. It makes for a deeply compelling story of race and our ongoing efforts at understanding." — Julian Bond, Chairman Emeritus, NAACP "Elizabeth and Hazel — is a story that has been crying out to be told ever since two teenaged girls stumbled into history on a street in Little Rock, more than a half-century ago. Once again, Margolick, one of our best reporters, reveals his remarkable gift for uncovering intimate disputes that illuminate an epoch." — Diane McWhorter, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of — Carry Me Home: Birmingham, Alabama; The Climactic Battle of the Civil Rights Revolution "The story of Elizabeth Eckford, the heroic poster child of the struggle to desegregate Little Rock's Central High, which so many have forgotten, and her tormentor, Hazel Bryan, which so few ever knew, needed to be told. David Margolick has done so masterfully, in a narrative so gripping that one has difficulty putting down his book before arriving at the last page. His Elizabeth and Hazel is required reading for every American who wants to understand why the wounds inflicted by the heritage of slavery and Jim Crow remain unhealed." — Louis Begley, author of Why the Dreyfus Affair Matters "Margolick's unforgettable new book, Elizabeth and Hazel: Two Women of Little Rock, takes as its touchstone a famous civil rights-era photograph. . . . eloquently chronicl[ing] their

lives since that iconic photo was taken." — Kate Tuttle, TheAtlantic.com (Kate Tuttle TheAtlantic.com)"A patient and evenhanded account of their messy relationship over the decades. . . . Margolick proposes no fairy-tale resolutions to such moral impasses. To his credit, he spares us none of the unruly facts as his subjects, still wrestling with history, wander off message." — Amy Finnerty, The New York Times Book Review (Amy Finnerty The New York Times Book Review)"The iconic image of Elizabeth and Hazel at age fifteen showed us the terrible burden that nine young Americans had to shoulder to claim our nation's promise of equal opportunity. The pain it caused was deeply personal. David Margolick now tells us the amazing story of how Elizabeth and Hazel, as adults, struggled to find each other across the racial divide and in so doing, end their pain and find a measure of peace. We all need to know about Elizabeth and Hazel." — President Bill Clinton (President Bill Clinton)"As David Margolick's brilliantly layered exposition reveals, plumbing the depths of the depths of race and racism is a most complex exercise. And as I plumbed the depths of his narrative, I found it at once painful, as well as elevating, and unlike anything I've ever read on the subject. It should be required reading for a nation still struggling with what Margolick refers to as the thicket of race." — Charlayne Hunter-Gault, author of In My Place (Charlayne Hunter-Gault)"Surprising, disturbing, occasionally inspiring, often baffling, and ultimately sad. . . . Elizabeth and Hazel represents, in microcosm, the debilitating power of race that remains powerful 50 years after that photo. . . . An amazing story, told with brio." — Boston Globe (Boston Globe)"An amazingly intimate portrait. . . . The lesson of Elizabeth and Hazel may be that we shouldn't define other people's lives by one single moment. Instead, we can use their actions to define other lives — our own." — Christian Science Monitor (Christian Science Monitor)"In his engrossing new book Elizabeth and Hazel, David Margolick expands the frame to consider the difficult lives of its two central figures, their attempt at reconciliation, and the fact that they don't speak now. . . . Elizabeth and Hazel raises the specter that some damage doesn't heal. It is a notion profoundly unsettling to the story we Americans tell about ourselves." — Karen R. Long, Cleveland Plain-Dealer (Karen R. Long Cleveland Plain-Dealer)"Intricately woven and deeply affecting. . . . [Margolick's] choice to broaden and complicate the narrative - to include the larger minefield of race matters and honest discourse - is what makes this book salient, not sentimental. Elizabeth and Hazel's winding, rocky relationship, then, is a much more fitting and accurate metaphor for the country; this book, an attempt at a different, lasting after-image - this time in words." — Lynell George, Los Angeles Times (Lynell George Los Angeles Times)"Judicious and bittersweet. . . . Margolick excels at

framing the intimate details of each woman's life with a half-century of social and cultural upheaval....The deeper motives and psyches of the protagonists remain as elusive as any resolution to their story—and, perhaps, just as tangled. Nonfiction, as with photographs, can only do so much—though in *Elizabeth and Hazel*, it does more than enough."—Gene Seymour, *Newsday* (Gene Seymour *Newsday*) "For *Elizabeth and Hazel*, it would have been simple enough to turn their stories into a 'where are they now' piece. But Margolick is after something bigger. Through Eckford and Bryan's tangled lives, he hopes to capture the complexity of race, forgiveness, and reconciliation in modern America."—Kevin Boyle, *Washington Post* (Kevin Boyle *Washington Post*)

Your previous book, *Beyond Glory*, was about the great boxing matches between Joe Louis and Max Schmeling. How did you get from there to *Little Rock, 1957*? Actually, I began the two projects at roughly the same time. While in Little Rock to do a Clinton-related magazine story in 1999, I visited the museum across from Central High School. Like so many others, I well knew the picture of Elizabeth and Hazel from 1957. So I was flabbergasted to see a poster there showing the two of them, now grown women, standing next to one another, smiling, apparently reconciled. How had that happened? It seemed inconceivable. So I began gathering material on it. The two projects share a lot, in addition to their racial themes; each focuses on a discrete event—the first, a fight lasting about two minutes, the second, an exposure lasting probably a sixtieth of a second—to reveal an era. Was it difficult to find Elizabeth and get her to speak with you? No, Elizabeth was in the same house she'd lived in the day the picture was taken. I had expected her to be resistant but she wasn't at all, particularly once we got going. Elizabeth has an enormous respect for history and the historical process. And Hazel? Hazel was much more reluctant. Though she left school at seventeen, she's read widely in the history of American race relations, and knew of the historic alliance between blacks and Jews. For that reason, among others, she feared that Elizabeth and I would gang up on her. I made a very poor impression on her in our first meeting, and as the fragile friendship she'd struck up with Elizabeth faltered, her position toward me hardened. It was only seven years later, after an early version of this story appeared in *Vanity Fair*, that she relented. Then she opened up to me, and I came to realize how remarkable a person she, too, is. Did you have any idea that their personal stories would intersect in such a fascinating way? I knew, from the poster, that they'd come together again. But only later did I learn that five years or so after the picture was taken, Hazel had called Elizabeth to apologize. That was enormously significant to me, a key to her character. It said to me that for all the skepticism and hostility Hazel

has encountered over the years, she in fact did the right thing in the right way: early on, when no cameras were rolling. The book took you twelve years to complete. Why so long? Well, apart from the multitasking that all journalists must do these days, the story turned out to be endlessly rich. I interviewed dozens of people, some repeatedly, including seven of the other eight of the Little Rock Nine. I shudder to think how many times I questioned Elizabeth; whenever I told her I was almost certainly done she laughed, because she knew there would be more questions. Hazel also put up with a lot of me. Can you tell us something about your most recent trip to Little Rock? Though my reporting was pretty much finished, I accompanied my friend Larry Schiller as he took portraits of the two women. We thought it essential to capture how two faces that are seared into the national memory had evolved with time and experience. Two of those photographs appear on the jacket of my book. Being with Elizabeth and Hazel one last time, and recording them once more for history, was very moving. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I read "Elizabeth and Hazel" last Friday in one sitting and found it to be an honest and highly compelling portrayal of both Little Rock Nine member, Elizabeth Eckford, and her iconic tormentor, Hazel Massery, in the years since the Little Rock desegregation crisis, a warts and all representation of the history. Margolick seemed particularly insightful in his analysis of how the Little Rock public was eager to cash in on their 1997 reconciliation, but which then made Massery vulnerable as the apology scape-goat of the entire community. You read this book hoping for a happy ending, but perhaps it is a more accurate reflection of the state of current American race relations that one is not forthcoming. It's quite amazing that Eckford and Massery they gave author David Margolick permission to write so candidly about such a presently painful subject for them. I also loved the chapter on Louis Armstrong and the "lathered-up" photo. My only small complaint is an academic one - I wished there were more extensive footnotes and a bibliography at the end.

is not always an option, even after 50 years. David Margolik's study of one of American history's most iconic photographs, taken during the desegregation of Little Rock Central High School, reunites the two women in picture, Elizabeth Eckford and Hazel Bryan. Eckford, the 15 year old black girl who was carefully chosen by civil rights leaders in 1957 to be one of nine black students to first integrate the school. She is pictured enduring a gauntlet of screaming whites as she tries to walk towards the school. Her main tormenter, also a 15 year old girl, the white Bryan, is immortalised as a swearing, hateful figure right behind her. Several photographers were present and all took pictures of that moment in history. But history didn't end after the snapshot was taken.

Both Eckford and Bryan went through life changes as they moved from the people they had been in 1957 to older, more mature women. Bryan, who transferred away from Little Rock Central, married young and began to look at herself and reconsider her core beliefs. Eckford, who stayed a year or so at the high school, was scarred by her time in the spotlight as one of the "Little Rock Nine". Determined later to be suffering from a form of PTSD from those traumatic days, combined with a depressive nature, Eckford rather drifted through life as a loner, holding jobs and raising two sons, and coming out occasionally to tell the history of the desegregation of the high school. Bryan also was a loner, despite having an active family life, and a few years after the incident at the high school, she called Eckford and apologised for her hateful actions. The years passed and Hazel Bryan became a "searcher" for her role in life. She and Elizabeth Eckford got together and actually became friends for a while, working together on race relation workshops. They traveled around together telling "their story", how the victim and the tormenter were able to bond and heal their wounds. But were they really able to do that? Certainly Eckford was suspicious of Bryan's "conversion" and of her "apology". Was it sincere? It seemed to me - the reader - that Hazel Bryan truly did have a life changing journey, but I am not Elizabeth Eckford and I did not suffer the indignities she did. David Margolick looks at both Elizabeth Eckford and Hazel Bryan and examines both their lives and the milieu both came from. Fifty years after "Little Rock" the wounds haven't healed completely. Margolick's book is a very good picture of a famous snapshot.

I greatly enjoyed David Margolick's well-crafted recounting of Elizabeth Eckford and Hazel Bryan Massery's parallel - and twice intersecting - lives. It's a history lesson and compelling personal narrative wrapped into one. Margolick's book begins from a standing start from Will Counts' iconic photo capturing Eckford's stoic, solitary walk to Little Rock Central High School on September 4th, 1957. The genius of Counts' photo is that it finds the trees in the forest. It depicts a 1-on-1 encounter between the-then Hazel Bryan - light literally shining on her - spewing venom in the background, and Eckford, head unbowed. Margolick's dissection of that photo - what led to it, breaking down the photo itself, and the history of the two women from that moment - steer the narrative of the book. Eckford - wounded, brittle but ultimately triumphant - emerges from these pages as a true American hero. The surprise is Massery. Only 15 years old when the photo was snapped, Margolick's book captures the maturation and personal growth of a complex woman. It's worth noting that the words often adorning Counts' photo - "A life is more than a moment" - are Massery's, not Eckford's. I purchased Tantor Media's Audio CD version of this book. Narrator Carrington MacDuffie's lush southern drawl is a perfect match for this story. Her voice seems to lend



the account an additional level of authenticity. I love the way 'school' comes out as 'skeul'...and I smiled every time 'rapprochement' came elegantly tumbling out her lips. You could do worse than to spend eight hours in her company. I love Tantor's one MP3-CD approach. To be able to listen to eight hours without once having to manage a CD change is a pleasure.

This is a very special book that hallmarks a particular event, yet makes it come alive in so many ways through the years. Who we are as teenagers does not define who we become but there are times captured that can change even who we want to be. So very thought provoking on so many levels; haunting in it's definition of America's character in the late 50's, captivating for the human side (of perception, perspective, error and emotion), eye opening and timely for the not so subtle differences in how people are treated, and illuminating for all things are possible if we are willing to be the change.

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