

BOOK CLUB IN A BOX

INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOST

BEFORE YOUR DISCUSSION

- Email an invitation to your book group members
- The following bookstores are offering 10% off the purchase of this book:
 - *King's English Bookshop in Salt Lake City*
 - *The Book Bungalow in St. George*
- **Beehive Spirits** (30 min) is available to stream at pbsutah.org/beeivespirits
- Join the Facebook Group "Book Club in a Box Discussion Group" to find ideas, helpful links, etc.
- During your discussion:
 - Make PBS Utah materials in the box available to the group
 - Show clips from the film
 - Take photos to share with PBS Utah and Facebook group

AFTER YOUR DISCUSSION

- Encourage your book club participants to fill out the survey
- Share your photos and ideas with others on the Facebook Group
- Invite your book club members to join the Facebook Group via email
- Complete host survey
(Link will be emailed to you after your discussion)



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BOOK CLUB IN A BOX | **GET INVOLVED!**

You chose this box because you are interested in these stories and issues. Learn more about the history of women and brewing and distilleries in Utah by visiting these organizations' websites:

- **This is Her Place Podcast - thisisherplace.org**
Episode 7: Home on the Range features the story of Josie Bassett, a Utah bootlegger, rancher, and renegade
- **Utah Ale Trail - utahaletrail.com**
- **Pink Boots Society - pinkbootssociety.org**
- **highproofcreative.com/distilling-womxn**



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FILM SYNOPSIS



BEEHIVE SPIRITS

For a state chided as being one of the driest in the nation, Utah has a remarkable history of pouring a drink...and serving as home to some remarkable pioneers. Beehive Spirits takes a look at drinking and the pioneering spirit in Utah as it offers up a serving of this humor-filled documentary on one of Utah's oldest controversies: alcohol.

Contrary to popular belief, Utah has been far from dry, historically. In the 1800s, the state was home to some of the biggest breweries in the nation, but Prohibition drained the state. Since the repeal of Prohibition – the deciding vote of which was cast by Utah – liquor has been tightly regulated in the Beehive State, but the last few decades have brought some change, with the help of three modern-day Utah pioneers. With music by Tom Maxwell, former front man for the platinum-selling band Squirrel Nut Zippers, narration by Radio West's Doug Fabrizio, and explanations from local newsman/historian Rod Decker and author/tavern owner Del Vance, this co-production is perfectly blended to create a well-aged story.

TYLER MEASOM & JENNILYN MERTEN Filmmakers

The 30-minute piece is directed by filmmakers Tyler Measom and Jennilyn Merten, whose award-winning documentary *Sons of Perdition* captured the plight of FLDS exiles. In tackling the story of alcohol in Utah, the directors tried to avoid getting bogged down in politics. "We didn't want to get embroiled in the battle over individual laws or with changing public sentiment," explains Measom. "We wanted to tell a timeless story about character and craft that is at the heart of Utah's history."

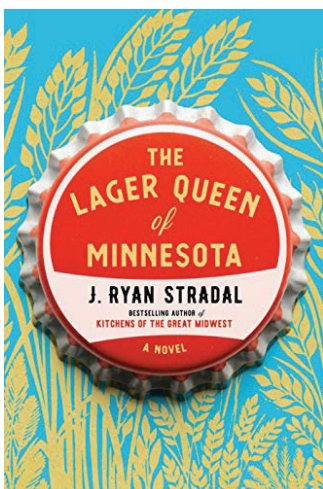


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BOOK SYNOPSIS



THE LAGER QUEEN OF MINNESOTA

A family is split when their father leaves their shared inheritance entirely to Helen, his younger daughter. Despite baking award-winning pies at the local nursing home, her older sister, Edith, struggles to make a living. So, she cannot help wondering what her life would have been like with even a portion of the farm money her sister kept for herself. With the proceeds from the farm, Helen builds one of the most successful light breweries in the country and makes their company motto ubiquitous: "Drink lots. It's Blotz." Where Edith has a heart as big as Minnesota, Helen's is as rigid as a steel keg. Yet one day, Helen will find she needs some help herself, and she could find a potential savior close to home. Meanwhile, Edith's granddaughter, Diana, grows up knowing that the real world requires a tougher constitution than her grandmother possesses. She earns a shot at learning the IPA business from the ground up. Will that change their fortunes forever, and perhaps reunite her splintered family? In *The Lager Queen of Minnesota*, we meet a cast of lovable and funny characters eager to make their mark in a world that's often stacked against them.



J. RYAN STRADAL Author

J. Ryan Stradal grew up in the southern Minnesota town of Hastings, graduated from Northwestern University, and now lives and works in Los Angeles County. His second novel, *The Lager Queen of Minnesota*, received starred reviews from Kirkus, Booklist, and BookPage. It became a national bestseller its first week of release, and was named one of the best books of the year by NPR, USA Today, Booklist, and Paste. The TV rights for *Lager Queen* are presently being negotiated. In 2020, *The Lager Queen of Minnesota* was named the winner of the WILLA Literary Award (by Women Writing the West, to honor the best in literature, featuring women's or girls' stories set in the West that are published each year) and was a finalist for the Heartland Booksellers Award. Stradal is also the author of many short stories, was a contributing editor of *Taste* magazine, and co-produces the literary/culinary series "Hot Dish." He has often worked in television, story editing or producing shows for VH-1, MTV, ABC, FOX, TLC, A&E, Discovery, and History. He volunteers for & is on the advisory board of the educational non-profit 826LA and likes books, wine, sports, root beer, craft beer, and peas.



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BOOK CLUB IN A BOX

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS by Dr. Naomi Watkins

Beehive Spirits portrays a male-dominated world of brewing and spirits in Utah, while *The Lager Queen of Minnesota* explores a family of women who reunite because of beer. If you are familiar with the brewing business today, you would know that the majority of micro and macro breweries and distilleries are owned and run by men. However, women's involvement with brewing beer has been documented back to 4,000 years ago in Mesopotamia, and in the 18th century, a good portion of brewers were women as it was viewed as a domestic task. But as alcohol became more profitable and viewed sinful by many religions, women were cut out of or they left the brewing profession. *The Lager Queen of Minnesota* illustrates a resurgence of contemporary women playing a greater role in the alcohol beverage industry – a trend we also see in Utah.

1. What history was the most surprising to you from **Beehive Spirits**, and why? What parallels in that history do you see play out in *The Lager Queen of Minnesota*?
2. From her very first taste, Helen instantly loves beer and decides she wants to become a brewer. Diana stumbles upon brewing as a kind of second chance, and many of the men featured in **Beehive Spirits** came to make beer and spirits as later careers. How would you characterize their ambition? If you imbibe, what were your first reactions to tasting beer? What stood out to you about the women (from the documentary and the novel) in this male-dominated industry? Describe the obstacles that all of the players had to overcome.
3. The history of big breweries putting smaller breweries out of business and the more recent resurgence of local breweries and distilleries plays out in both the documentary and the novel. How did this history affect the women in the novel? And how do you see it affecting the alcohol industry in Utah?
4. Who do you think is the “Lager Queen of Minnesota”? Also consider Millie Pullman, the woman brew master with an all-female brewing staff at Wasatch Brewery, the lone woman discussed in *Beehive Spirits*. She had no brewing experience but a degree in engineering. What did you think of her story and the role she played at Wasatch Brewery? Do you see any parallels between her story and the women in *The Lager Queen of Minnesota*?
5. In *The Lager Queen of Minnesota* all of the women in the novel experience great loss. How are they different in how they experience grief? How are they similar?
6. Beer reunites the women in *The Lager Queen of Minnesota*, and saloons and brewpubs are still gathering places for people. However, one of the reasons many favored prohibition was because of the darker effects of alcohol. Laws and regulations are used to temper and restrict these effects. Some find these laws and regulations, especially in Utah, to be particularly restrictive. Where do you think this balance lies?
7. A theme of crafting food and drink that tastes good and is especially memorable and distinct runs throughout the novel and documentary. Describe a meal, dessert or drink that stands out to as memorable. Why does it stick with you?
8. If you were to suggest an update to **Beehive Spirits**, whose or what stories would you like included? Or if there was one more chapter after the final scene in *The Lager Queen of Minnesota*, what do you imagine might happen?



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DR. NAOMI WATKINS

Dr. Naomi Watkins is an educational leader, women's advocate, community builder, and the co-host of *This is Her Place*, a podcast that tells the stories of Utah women past and present. She authored *Champions of Change: 25 Women Who Made History*, a book written with Katherine Kitterman and illustrated by Brooke Smart as part of her work for Better Days 2020, a non-profit dedicated to popularizing Utah women's history through art, education, and legislation. An expert in teacher education and literacy pedagogy, Naomi earned her Ph.D. from the University of Utah, resides and hikes in the mountains of Salt Lake City, and is a fan of Mountain West Cider.



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BOOK CLUB IN A BOX

CLASSIC APPLE PIE from America's Test Kitchen



In *The Lager Queen of Minnesota*, Edith Magnusson's pies are famous in the Twin Cities — they were named the third-best in the state of Minnesota. This apple pie recipe from America's Test Kitchen will impress your book group, and connect them to the characters in the book.

In the test kitchen, we have found that it's difficult to produce a homemade apple pie with a filling that is tart as well as sweet and juicy. We wanted to develop a classic apple pie recipe — one with the clean, bright taste of apples that could be made year-round, based on apple types that are always available in the supermarket. To arrive at the tartness and texture we were after, we had to use two kinds of apples in our pie, Granny Smith and McIntosh. The Grannies could be counted on for tartness and for keeping their shape during cooking; the Macs added flavor, and their otherwise frustrating tendency to become mushy was a virtue, providing a nice, juicy base for the harder Grannies. While many bakers add butter to their apple pie fillings, we found that it dulled the fresh taste of the apples and so did without it. Lemon juice, however, was essential, counterbalancing the sweetness of the apples. To give the apples the upper hand, we settled on quite modest amounts of cinnamon, nutmeg, and allspice.

Feel free to use a one crust pie or a double crust pie. Make your dough from scratch, or make your life easier and buy refrigerated pie dough.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tbsp flour
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup + 1 T sugar (save 1 Tbsp to sprinkle over pie at the end)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp table salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground nutmeg
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground cinnamon
- Dash allspice
- 2 pounds firm McIntosh apples (about 4 large), peeled, cored, and sliced $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds Granny Smith apples (about 3 large), peeled, cored, and sliced $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick
- 1 tsp grated lemon zest plus 1 Tbsp juice from one lemon
- 1 large egg white, lightly beaten

INSTRUCTIONS

1. If using homemade dough, roll one disk into a 12-inch circle on a lightly floured surface, then fit it into a 9-inch pie plate, letting the excess dough hang over the edge; cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes. Roll the other disk of dough into a 12-inch circle on a lightly floured work surface, then transfer to a parchment lined baking sheet; cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

2. Adjust an oven rack to the lowest position and heat the oven to 425 degrees
3. Slice, peel, and core your apples and sprinkle with lemon zest and juice
4. Mix the first seven ingredients (everything but the apples, lemon, and egg white) in a large bowl. Add the lemon juice and apples and toss until combined. Spread the apples with their juice into the dough lined pie plate, mounding them slightly in the middle.
5. If making a double crust, loosely roll the second piece of dough around the rolling pin and gently roll over the pie. Trim, fold, and crimp the edges. Cut four vent holes in the top. Brush the dough with the egg white and sprinkle with 1 Tbsp sugar.
6. Place pie on rimmed baking sheet and bake until the crust is golden, about 25 minutes.
7. Reduce oven temperature to 375, rotate the baking sheet, and continue to bake until the juices are bubbling and the crust is a deep golden brown. About 35 minutes.
8. Cool the pie on a wire rack at room temperature before serving – about 3 hours.



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