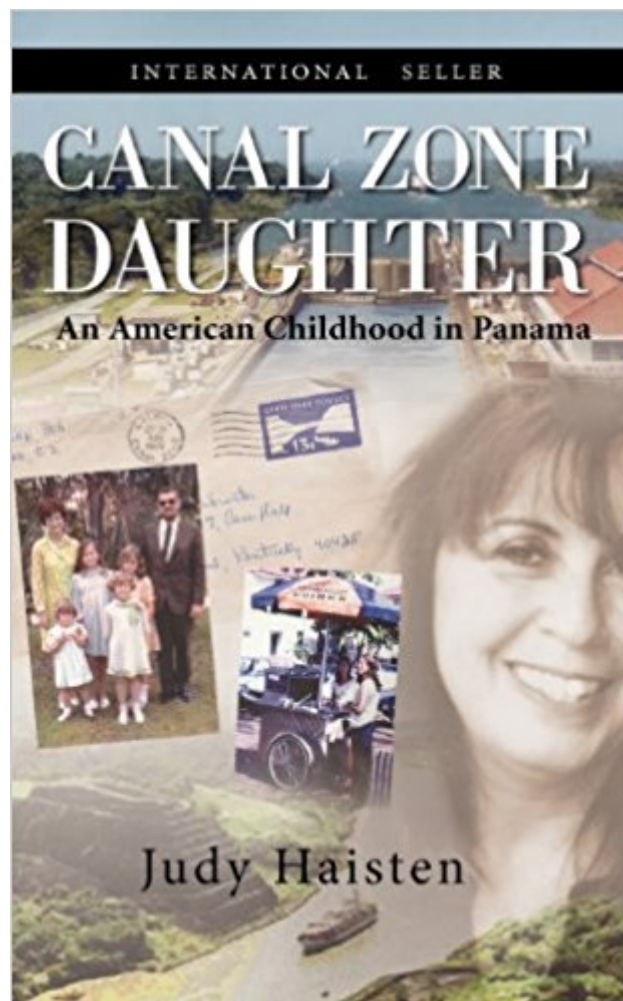




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Canal Zone Daughter, An American Childhood In Panama



Synopsis

In 1964, Edwin and Jean Armbruster left their home in the United States to raise their family on the Panama Canal Zone, a little known American territory in the Central American country of Panama. In *Canal Zone Daughter*, Judy (Armbruster) Haisten chronicles her unique childhood culminating to the crushing loss when former President Jimmy Carter signs treaties that effectively eliminates her -and fellow U.S. citizens' -former home. Charming, funny, and poignant, the author captures her remarkable American story in an exotic place and time. canalzoneddaughter.com Winner of International Book Awards for U.S. history and multi-cultural nonfiction; Mom's Choice Award, and finalist in USA Book News for narrative non-fiction.

Book Information

Paperback: 290 pages

Publisher: The Peppertree Press (January 4, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1614930856

ISBN-13: 978-1614930853

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.6 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars 40 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,441,925 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #63 in [Books > History > Americas > Central America > Panama](#) #645 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Latin America](#) #35655 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Memoirs](#)

Customer Reviews

Judy (Armbruster) Haisten was raised in the Canal Zone, Panama, where her family lived for twenty-five years. She has a Ph.D. in higher education and is an award-winning college professor. Her greatest joys come from spending time with her family.

As one of the thousands of young Americans that grew up in the Canal Zone, it was with great pleasure to see our experiences given an authentic voice through the work of Ms. Haisten. She chronicles a unique experience that profoundly affected all our lives. Of the many documents written about the Panama Canal Zone, few capture the experience in a manner that those who were there say "Yes, that was how it was!" Ms. Haisten joins that very small cadre of writers along with Herbert and Mary Knapp's *Red, White and Blue Paradise: The Canal Zone in Panama* that, through

ethnographic detail, correctly capture the diversity and uniqueness of the American experience in the Canal Zone. As the Canal Zone fades into the historical landscape overcome, in part, by geopolitical "correctness" it seems fitting that the experience should be interpreted through the eyes of a young woman coming of age within a time of great social transformation. Although the Canal Zone, as a American territory, is no more ... those of us who grew up there, now scattered throughout the world, understand and appreciate all the words written in and between the lines of her personal tribute to this unique chapter of American history.

As another Canal Zone Daughter, I thoroughly enjoyed reliving many of Judy's experiences growing up in this remarkable place. The author was skilled in giving the reader a glimpse of daily life in the Canal Zone (bugs and all), highlights of the canal itself, as well as many historical points of interest. I laughed and cried over some of her episodes so close to my own experiences in that "jungle/manicured country club" strip. It was very touching to share her account of the transference of the Canal Zone (where I was born) back to Panama. Growing up there we knew it would happen someday, but I ached with the author as she wrote about that time period. Some current writers have condemned the American lifestyle there as segregationist and empirealist but segregation was acceptable in the US at this time period and with the US sanitation services, trade, and the Canal, Panama benefited and excelled as no other Central American country. Tourists now cruising the Canal get glimpses of a Panama skyline of modern high rises or quaint Indian village islands, but the real story of the Panama Canal Zone is in this book.

As I read this book, I wondered "how can a perfect stranger have so many of the same childhood memories that I have?" It made me realize what a small but special place the Canal Zone was. I lived there my first fourteen years and left in 1974 when my father retired. Reading Judy Haisten's book reawakened so many memories that it was almost like being there again. Both of my parents (who spent 30 years in the Canal Zone) have passed away and I don't have any brothers or sisters to share memories of the Zone. Thus, I will probably reread this book every year or two from now on because it is the closest I can get to stepping into a time-machine and returning to my wonderful Canal Zone childhood. Thank you, Judy, for this gift.

I was taken back to my days growing up in the Canal Zone. Judy brought those wonderful memories exploding onto the pages of the "Daughter" Even though she was growing up in a different Canal town, we all shared in those wonderful days as we all shared in our feeling of being part of this

Canal. We really did feel like we went to work with our Dad every day - and when we sat down at dinner each night, we would be just as interested in "how his day went" as he was in our day at the pool on sliding down the hill on palm fronds. Judy is to be commended highly for her insightful look at our growing up days in our Panama Canal Zone.

I was there during that time. This book brought back so many memories. It made me laugh and made me cry. It was a fun read. I didn't want it to end. I have bought another four books to give out to my kids. I want them to try and understand how it was where I grew up.

As soon as I began reading Judy's book, I was whisked away on an adventure to a magical place filled with innocence and frivolity, while the historical accounts of a world with which I was most unfamiliar aroused my hunger for more. Needless to say, I did not want to return to reality, hence, I finished it in basically one sitting. When the journey came to its end, I felt saddened as when anyone experiences the end of innocence, one feels a sense of loss and melancholy. Yet, from an educational standpoint, my knowledge of the Panama Canal was certainly broadened. Judy's use of colorful and emotionally incensed description pulls the reader immediately down the rabbit hole filled with exotic creatures! To think that this was the author's reality during her childhood cannot but incite envy of the best kind. I do hope that the author endeavors to create yet another thrilling and endearing novel that once again captures all ages as this one has to then catapult all into another wonderful and fantastical realm. A must read for all!

Having spent time in the former Canal Zone, it truly was a unique place to live. Seeing life thru a child's eye as it existed there and sharing those experiences is a real treasure. It is a very enjoyable read, hard to put down and I highly recommend young and old.

Since I know the author's family, this was a fun read for me. I have lived in the canal zone with my family for several years during the great days before the changes that took place in government, I can remember many of the events and know what daily life was like: a true paradise for the families who made it their permanent home. Too bad it doesn't exist today!! It was great to read it from the perspective of an innocent child who lived a wonderful childhood. The news reports at the time of the relinquishing of the zone to Panama were not exactly correct; it is good for the truth to be revealed, even if it is many years following the events.

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