

Editorial Review by D. Donovan, Sr. Reviewer, *Midwest Book Review*

The Weight of Snow and Regret tells of twelve residents at the Sheldon Poor Farm in Vermont who face eviction and relocation.

It's 1968, and these destitute residents are slated for institutionalization elsewhere, their stories certain to be lost. Sheldon Poor Farm manager Hazel and her husband have run the farm for twenty years. While her husband has bowed to the inevitable, Hazel refuses to believe these residents and her connection to them will soon vanish forever.

It takes stranger Claire, who comes to the Farm because of a temporary emergency, to spark in Hazel the ability to confront the real changes and influences underlying her decisions to help others for all these years.

References to "the weight of snow and regret" emerge from the beginning as the snowy Vermont setting permeates lives that are teetering on the brink of change and overwhelm.

History moves back into the late 1920s and 1940s as Hazel's life unfolds in contrast to the 1960s milieu she now navigates. This back-and-forth ebb and flow of time creates interesting contrasts between influence, purpose, and place as Hazel's life becomes more understandable.

The constant movement of snow and wind and the sense that things aren't quite right permeate growth processes and memories which bring Hazel newfound revelations and insights. The history is delivered with more than a light dose of poetic license that embraces music, social justice issues, and psychological evolution alike.

These elements drive a meaningful, compelling story of disparate lives, poverty, and efforts to help which offers intriguing topics of discussion for book clubs and reading groups.

Libraries can consider *The Weight of Snow and Regret* an important study in changing times, poorhouse history, and a woman who chooses to run away from family obligations.

Replete with touches of regret, new understanding, and social consciousness, *The Weight of Snow and Regret* is a powerful rendering of psychic and social force that is hard to put down and not easily forgotten. It's highly recommended reading for those who seek novels steeped in old regrets and new possibilities.