



1106 Grand Boulevard

Betty Dravis

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EDGE-OF-YOUR-SEAT SUSPENSE! "Edge-of-your-seat suspense. Dravis grabs the reader up front. A pageturner story that tugs the emotional heart strings." -- David E. Meadows, author of the best-selling Joint Task Force and Sixth Fleet series OUTSTANDING LITERARY SKILLS! "1106 Grand Boulevard is one of those stories that I could sit down and read straight through. It was hard for me to put this book down! It is captivating and yet so true to life. It is a story of a young woman's (Billie Jean's) search for life, love and a stability in her life that always seems to elude her. This is truly a story of this woman's search along with so many other women's search for inner peace and strength. Betty Dravis is a dynamic writer who leaves you wanting more! We are proud of her outstanding literary skills as well as her being a Hamilton, Ohio native." -- Katherine A. Becker, Hamilton City Councilperson YOU THINK LIZ TAYLOR HAD AN EXCITING LIFE ...? "You think that Liz Taylor had an exciting life of marriages, glamour, and tragedy? Well, the dramatized, fictional story of the author's sister in 1106 Grand Boulevard wins the prize for the most hair-raising soap opera that I have ever read. The sixty-four-year-spanning story reads like Harold Robbins's The Carpetbaggers, but with a beautiful woman in the lead, taking us from one glamorous location and wealthy man to another with hypnotic speed in order to cram in the entire tale of lust, power, money, and the search for true love." -- Paul Kyriazi, Hollywood movie director (Omega Cop), author of How to Live the James Bond Lifestyle, Hard Rock Lovers INSIGHTFUL SOCIAL OBSERVATIONS ... A FASCINATING STORY ... "Betty Dravis has done it again! In her novelform she weaves not only an edge-of-the-seat thriller/romance, she also manages to ferret out the social maladies of the past few generations in the guise of her main character. Few writers rival Dravis's ability to make insightful social observations while leading the reader through a fascinating story. She knows her craft as a storyteller, while she shares her intuition as a significant journalist. 1106 Grand Boulevard is a fascinating journey well worth taking!" -- Grady Harp, author of War Songs and essays on the arts ENDEARING TRIBUTE TO THE AUTHOR'S BEAUTIFUL SISTER! "Betty Dravis has written a beautiful love story of epic proportions; although fictitious, it's an endearing tribute to her beautiful sister, her family, and their childhood home in Hamilton, Ohio. It's the perfect book for my Ohio publishing house, and I predict a big winner." -- Janet Sue Terry, publisher/CEO, Just My Best Publishing Inc., author of Set Me Free series: Possibilities and Resolutions and others

1106 Grand Boulevard Details

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From Reader Review 1106 Grand Boulevard for online ebook

Christy says

Author Betty Dravis has written an intriguing "faction" as she calls it, eloquently weaving fiction with her own personal history. The end result is a powerful peek into family dynamics and relationships.

When 16-year-old Billie Jean Sloane elopes with Cal Taylor, the Sloane family is taken aback. But when Billie Jean flees from an abusive Cal to the sanctum of her family's home at 1106 Grand Boulevard, the family gathers around her in an effort to be supportive. Pregnant and depressed, Billie Jean is taken by her Aunt Tommie to Arizona, where she learns a thing or two about the male species. But always in the back of Billie Jean's mind is her former husband Cal, the man with whom she feels a strong connection. After several failed marriages and numerous relationships, Billie Jean eventually returns to the family fold and embraces her siblings. Through them, she learns some pretty important life lessons, one being the subliminal impetus that drove her to marry an abusive man.

"1106 Grand Boulevard" is a fascinating read, reminding this reviewer of the very popular, iconic "Peyton Place" and other books (as well as movies and TV series) of like nature. What better way to spend time than to become absorbed in one woman's life journey and the lessons she learns along the way? Filled with great characterization and an enticing story, this is a must-read, can't-put-down.

Melinda says

A great read. A real page turner. Very interesting to know that the story is loosely based on Ms. Dravis' older sister's life.

Jennifer (JC-S) says

'Without the crooked turns and twists our lives took, we wouldn't be the people we are today.'

This is a story about the life and times of Billie Jean Sloan, about 1106 Grand Boulevard - the place she identified most strongly as home, and about family. It's a work of fiction based on fact: I wonder how the real Billie Jean herself enjoyed it?

The novel opens in 1933, in Hamilton (Ohio), with the 16 year old Billie Jean running from her young, violent husband. This marks the end of Billie Jean's first marriage: she will marry six more times over the next forty-five years. Billie Jean is part of a large and caring family: her parents, her siblings and her Aunt Tommie are all an important part of her life. But Billie Jean is in search of an enduring love and makes some hasty (and foolish) choices along the way.

I confess: I came close to closing the book on Billie Jean a couple of times, but I was caught up in the story by then and needed to know how it would end. Ms Dravis does a fine job of portraying Billie Jean's

strengths and weaknesses, and it's difficult to dislike someone who learns from the past and whose optimism keeps them focussed on a brighter future.

The novel spans a period of Billie Jean's life from 1933 to 1997. Towards the end, Billie Jean tells her husband: 'Betty owns her own small newspaper now and when she retires, plans on writing a story about my life.'

Well done, Betty Dravis! I like the way the novel addresses a number of themes, and resolves some of the issues raised during Billie Jean's matrimonial adventures and misadventures. I'm glad I didn't read the ending first – it wouldn't have felt 'right' before reading the complete story.

Jennifer Cameron-Smith

Laurel-Rain says

Billie Jean Sloane was created for life's dramatic moments. Nothing she does is "beige"...she is washed in vivid colors from Day One.

She brings to mind another such colorful character...Scarlett O'Hara! Except that Billie Jean actually does have her "happy ending". It's a long time coming, and she has to go through several "rehearsals" first, but in the end, she not only finds her first love again, but she has a long overdue talk with her mother in which she sorts out some of the emotional baggage between them. She begins to understand her drive for acceptance and love.

So not only does Billie Jean's quest for love find fruition, but she has an epiphany. She finally understands herself.

I could not put this book down, taking it everywhere until I reached the last page. And then I wanted a sequel!

Good read, Betty Dravis!

Thomas says

This gem of a book is not just another romantic story based on a real character. In fact I think it is the most powerful and touching novel that I have ever read.

Billy Jean, a very beautiful and vivacious but slightly vain and naive young girl is shot by her husband Cal, in a fit of jealous anger. Cal is madly in love with Billy Jean but he carries deep emotional scars from his childhood that makes it difficult for him to control his anger. Billy Jean is deeply in love with Cal despite his abuse and his violent temper. Billy Jean's parents send her away to live with her aunt Tommie in an attempt to protect their daughter. Thus begins the drama filled adventures of Billy Jean.

Billy Jean's life will be filled with tragedy and yearning for a lost love, but also many moments of happiness. Billy Jean is widowed twice, divorced four times, almost dies in childbirth, is taken for a ride by the mafia, and that is just a very small sample of what she will experience. There are many heart wrenching moments in this novel, but also many heart warming moments.

The story is action packed and full of unexpected twists and turns, and still it is mostly about love, family, and 1106 Grand Boulevard, the home that Billy Jean departed from, but that never left her. 1106 Grand Boulevard was the place she would return to for healing and eventually wholeness.

The author uses descriptive phrases and words with such skill and precision that the story comes alive and grabs the reader. The tumultuous and gripping adventures of Billy Jean are described with such wisdom, and deep insight that it is clear that what is described must have been both self experienced and deeply contemplated.

I will always remember the time and the place where I was when I read Chapter 41. Chapter 41 is where everything in Billy Jean's life will come together with such beauty and power that it transcends our imagination and our dreams. If you can read Chapter 41 without being deeply touched then you can also swim without water and sail without wind.

This is a beautiful book that will leave you with something that you can carry with you for the rest of your life. The story of Billy Jean is not just a great story, but an ode to the beauty of life. How lucky we are that it is Betty Dravis who is telling us this story, because no one else could do it like her. I am expecting a Hollywood production based on this book sometime in the future.

C.C. Cole says

"1106 Grand Boulevard" by Betty Dravis is a biographical account of Billie Jean, a lovely girl married young during the Depression, and the reader travels her life with her, as she experiences early domestic violence, loss, family support, and a trail of heartbreak and broken hearts, while at the same time a hearty dose of laughter. Billie Jean isn't perfect and doesn't pretend to be, and like many of us, it takes a lifetime of experiences to figure out what she really wants in life; but that's the message; the journey is what life is all about. This is a wonderful read with almost every issue especially important to women: Marriage, children, divorce, independence, domestic disturbances, and forgiveness fully addressed leaving the reader with a smile. Five Stars!

Dixie Goode says

When a book begins with a 16 year old wife being shot by the husband she married for love, and follows her through six more marriages and a lifetime of drama, it has to be written either with judgement or compassion. The fact that the author of this book, is the "baby sister" of the protagonist is not an automatic guarantee that the story will show sympathy and caring for a life so outside the bounds of what was normal in her day. So I wondered when I began, if Billie Jean would be another, trampy, heartless bimbo. I shouldn't have worried, though from the outside she may look confused and out of control, Betty Dravis presents Billie Jean's story in such a way that we see her with laughter, love and a touch of exasperation. At times I wanted

to shake her and make her wake up and see what she was doing, but then I realized that that is a normal reaction to a big sister who keeps repeating the same problems in her life. Betty Dravis writes in such a way that we too, see her sister as human, fallible and yet loving and funny and intensely dramatic. We get glimpses of the other members of the family, but always the strong personality of this firebrand of a sister, is the focus and driving force. You never doubt for a moment the magnetic fascination this wild and exotic sister held for her youngest sister. Betty's writing first captivated me in the young adult adventure in Toon land, which she wrote in a spirit of fun, *The Toonies Invade Silicon Valley*. Here, there is a much different voice, but a similar love of youthful energy and a passion for living and experiencing everything, full steam ahead. Billie Jean wonders if she is just in love with love - but her passionate energy makes everyone fall in love with Billie Jean.

Richard says

What a great read, Betty! 1106 Grand Boulevard did not disappoint. It just shows the versatility of this extraordinary writer. Betty has shown her skill over a wide swath of genres: V.O. comes to mind; see my review on that one. 1106 is a page turner. I was immediately caught up in the exciting life of the protagonist, Billy Jean. Betty's descriptive words and phrases provide an easy read that keeps ones eyes glued to the scenes as they unfold; making snow angels, a near fatal encounter with an enraged spouse. I could go on, but I refuse to spoil the grip this book will have on each person who picks it up. Suffice it to say you the reader will not be let down.

Richard Neal Huffman

Jay Douglass says

This book belongs in the hybrid fiction category as it is roughly similar to the author's own personal experiences mixed in with fictional characters.

It cuts right to the chase with its melodramatic content.

The author is a gifted writer and while the subject matter is heavy, for the lack of a better word, because she poignantly tells a story that is compelling and enduring.

Yet it is also a romantic tale that has many nice parts to it.

Therefore the genre is a melodramatic love story. The author skillfully weaves these two subjects together seamlessly.

Elizabeth Robbins says

1106 Grand Boulevard is a marginally fictionalized chronicle of the life and loves of Billie Jean Sloan, the author's big sister. The story begins when Billie Jean, as a tender young teen, runs away to Kentucky to marry the love of her life, Cal, who is seven years her senior. Even though they love each other

wholeheartedly, their vast age gap makes communication difficult, and Cal becomes abusive. After he draws a gun to threaten her and it goes off, wounding her, she ends up in the hospital. Her parents refuse to let him near her, and begin legal proceedings to annul the marriage. This all happens right at the beginning of the book!

What Ms. Dravis has done, with 1106 Grand Boulevard, is to take the extraordinary life of her sister, embellish and spin her magic on it, and make it a wonderful story of hardship, suffering, family, passion, deceit, and wonder. Whether you believe any or all of it is irrelevant, this book is truly an amazing journey of growth, which ultimately made me alternately want to BE the main character, then thank God that I'm not.

Wendy Dingwall says

Well-written, epic love story. I followed with expectancy, Billie Jean through her rocky marriages, complicated family relations and her connection, as she is drawn time and again, back to her childhood home 1106 Grand Boulevard, and cried when in the end she found happiness with her one true love.

Collette Scott says

This story was semi-autobiographical, and Ms. Dravis cleverly included little tidbits of friends and family as she wrote. Nevertheless, the story belongs to Billie Jean. It was first and foremost our flawed but brave heroine. The story begins with Billie Jean a teen in the 30's, a young wife of an abusive husband who is forced to give up her young husband due to her family's concern over her welfare. Though Billie Jean never forgets her first love Cal, she moves forward with life and loves. Eventually marrying a total of six times before finally finding her true love again, Billie Jean's story travels over decades of pain, heartbreak, joy and triumph until her glorious reuniting with her one and only.

Ms. Dravis tells a grand tale of how the times have changed over the years. Interwoven through her tale is society and how the times change gradually yet inevitably. Family grows and siblings make their own way through the world. In addition, some are lost to age and time, sometimes even accidents. But the overall message of this book is the power of love. By the time Cal and Billie Jean reunite, they have grown and changed into almost totally different people. However, they never forgot their love, and throughout the tale it was the love that turned them into who they were as they aged.

A truly beautiful story.

Linda Bulger says

Do you believe in second chances?

Some books grab you with an action-packed opening and hook you right in from the first paragraph. Other books reveal the richness of their story a layer at a time.

Betty Dravis' "1106 Grand Boulevard" does both. Firmly rooted in small-town America, it ranges through more than sixty years and across the country from Ohio to Arizona, Nevada and California. Sixteen-year-old Billie Jean Sloane takes center stage as she runs screaming from her young husband's jealous rage, headlong

into an amazing matrimonial career. Billie Jean's family, already disapproving of her marriage to Cal, shield her from his remorse and entrust her to the care of her Aunt Tommie where she learns a more calculating approach to relationships -- without losing her sometimes naive desire to marry for love.

Fortunate in the love of her large family, Billie Jean is not so fortunate in her marriages. Time after time she marries in haste only to be disappointed in her search for the lasting "love of her life," yet her energy and optimism shine through the author's words. Billie Jean's parents, sisters and brothers circle through her story in a way that made me appreciate the importance in my life of my own family.

This book is fiction based on fact, and how I'd like to meet the author's sister (the "real" Billie Jean) and the rest of the family. What a great bunch! Betty Dravis portrays all of her characters lovingly but doesn't sugar-coat them, and their personalities are never overshadowed by the events of the story. They could be your next-door neighbors.

This book reminded me of "Standing in the Rainbow" by Southern author Fannie Flagg, having a similar span of time, small-town focus, and entrancing, strong-minded woman as a central character. Billie Jean's personality is very different from that of Flagg's Neighbor Dorothy, but both women live their lives with a consistency and honesty that has the ring of truth -- both are people you'd like to know. Both claim the attention of everyone in their sphere and work hard for everything they achieve.

I love a story that somehow comes full circle, referencing and resolving the themes that run through it. This book certainly does that (read it for yourself to find out how!) and it's that resolution that lifts the story, and the telling of it, out of the ordinary. To see the pattern and context in a long, vivid life is a gift, and "1106 Grand Boulevard" gives us that.

If it were a movie -- and it should be, with the lead played by somebody easy to like, Sandra Bullock for instance -- I'd be there with a box of tissues in my lap, expecting some tears and lots of smiles. A great story, interesting characters, costumes and interiors from the thirties through the seventies -- what could be better?

Betty Dravis' beautifully paced book kept me reading late into the night, fingers crossed that the irrepressible Billie Jean would find the true, satisfying love we all yearn for. If you believe in second chances, you will love this book!

Ashley Fontainne says

Betty Dravis, prolific author/interviewer/reviewer, not only weaves a "faction" tale that draws you into the life of Billie Jean, but does so with magical strokes on the page.

Each chapter, each sentence, is full of a colorful descriptions, vividly painted pictures and topped with an obvious amount of love and awe as Betty describes the incredible life and trials of her sister. This beautifully written novel is full of hope through faith and family, sadness at past tragedies that will make you cringe and laughter at the joyfulness that never left Billie Jean's huge heart.

Some may wonder why this delightful woman made the choices she did in life and question her motives for never really getting past her "first love." One must remember while reading the treasure of literature that this book is that times were different for those growing up in the 1930's, and loyalty and values were much more immersed in our society than they are today.

Once again, Betty Dravis has penned a novel that will keep you enthralled by her breathtaking ability to combine words on paper. Come, experience the world that Betty creates and take a journey to home--where the heart truly is.

Deb Hockenberry says

Let's travel back in time to the 1930's. It's evening and an argument has just broken and Billie Jean accidentally gets shot in the shoulder by her husband, Cal. Running for her life she hides from her husband in the bushes. Naturally, she goes back to her childhood home...1106 Grand Boulevard. This is one woman's story of her search for true love during and after the turbulent World War II years.

At her childhood home, she is welcomed with open arms by her family. Naturally, her parents admit her to the hospital where the doctors repair her shoulder.

Now that sixteen-year-old Billie Jean is married, can she stay at her childhood home or will her stern mother make her go back to her manic husband?

Aunt Tommie enters the story here. She believes in marrying rich and having the best of everything. She takes Billie Jean to Arizona to live with her and her uncle. Billie Jean is schooled in the proper way to get a rich husband. Aunt Tommie teaches her how to walk, talk and behave like a lady around the 'right' people. At her coming out party, Billie meets a handsome man in his twenties named Jackson. Of course, Jackson is struck by Billie Jean's beauty and wants to marry her.

By this time, Billie Jean is used to the high life and the attention shown to her by men. She flits from man to man searching for someone who can take Cal's place. She marries several of these men. Each time she marries, Billie Jean is sure she is in love. But is she?

Six times she goes home to 1106 Grand Boulevard where her sister helps her drown her sorrows by going shopping. She goes back to 1106 Grand Boulevard each time a husband dies or when Billie Jean goes through a divorce. Once she went back when her then husband went off to fight in World War II. Will there be a seventh homecoming for Billie? Will Billie Jean ever find true love or will she keep flitting from man to man like a bee flits from flower to flower?

There are a couple of ways to find out more about the author of this love story. You can go to Ms. Dravis' website at: <http://www.bettydravis.com> and click on the 'Bio' tab. You can also surf here to read more about her: [http://kindlenationdaily.com/2011/08/....](http://kindlenationdaily.com/2011/08/)

You can find out more about 1106 Grand Boulevard by going to her website at: <http://www.bettydravis.com>. Just click on the 'Books and Stories' tab.

Chase Von says

I've interviewed the wonderful author of this book so it's on my list to read!!

