

ANIMAL DREAMS, By Barbara Kingsolver. HarperCollins, 1990.

Grace, Arizona is a fictional town whose river and orchards face possible extinction by the Black Mountain Mining Company. Codi Noline grew up in Grace and has returned home to look after her father, the aging town doctor, who is showing signs of Alzheimer's disease.

Codi's younger sister, Hallie, has gone to Nicaragua to work among peasant farmers, and in due time is captured by the U.S.-supported contra. Codi admires Hallie as the brave one in the family, but she also fights her own brave battle against the mining company which is waging war on the environment at home.

Codi reconnects with an old high school friend, Lloyd, who is half Apache and half Pueblo. He drives her around neighboring reservations and ancient Pueblo villages where she discovers the environmental threats to Grace. She teams up with the town's matriarchs, who make up the community's sewing circle, fondly called the Stitch and Bitch club, and together they take on the mining company to save the community.

Barbara Kingsolver's *Animal Dreams* is an affecting feminist consideration of the environmental crisis. It is about a subtle sibling rivalry and caring for an aging parent. It is about the political choices we make. Given the weight of too much agenda aside, *Animal Dreams*, more than anything else, is a novel about a person trying to find herself at home in her hometown. Kingsolver holds in tension the cultural, political, and spiritual relationships that make up the community of character of Grace.

NOTE

- ¹ Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., "Reading and Preaching," *Perspectives* (May, 1989).