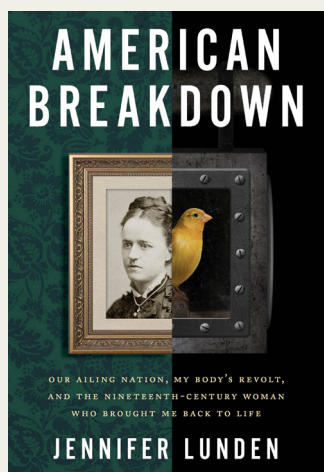




Read ME

AMERICAN BREAKDOWN

Jennifer Lunden



JENNIFER LUNDEN is the author of *American Breakdown: Our Ailing Nation, My Body's Revolt, and the Nineteenth-Century Woman Who Brought Me Back to Life* (Harper, 2023), which received a starred review from Booklist, was praised by The Washington Post and the LA Review of Books, and lauded by Hippocampus as “a genre-blending masterpiece.” A dual citizen, Lunden is the recipient of four grants from the Canada Council for the Arts as well as the Maine Arts Fellowship. In 2012, for her healthcare access advocacy work, she was named Maine’s Social Worker of the Year.

ONLINE AUTHOR TALK

TUESDAY | JULY 15, 2025 | 7PM

with **Gibson Fay-LeBlanc** of
Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance

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Read ME is a statewide summer reading program offered by the Maine Humanities Council, Maine State Library, and Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance that gets Maine’s adults all reading the same books—by Maine authors and recommended by Maine authors.



AMERICAN BREAKDOWN

Discussion Questions (provided by Jennifer Lunden!)

1. How does Lunden use the language of capitalism to frame her story?

2. Did Lunden's illness story remind you of any of your own experiences—good or bad—in America's healthcare system? If you were writing an essay, what would you want people to know about how those patient experiences made you feel? What image or sensory detail comes to mind that exemplifies your experience?

3. What was the most eye-opening thing you read in *American Breakdown*?

“The distinctive range, structure, and pacing seem to rise organically from the understanding that even individual survival is a collective undertaking, and that healing is rarely simple or linear.”

Recommending author
JULIA BOUWSMA

4. *American Breakdown* was published in 2023. In it, Lunden described the time we are in as another Gilded Age. How have things changed in the two years since the book came out, and what do you make of those changes in the context of Lunden's framework?

5. Is there anything you're considering doing differently in your life now as a result of reading *American Breakdown*? How has it changed your thinking?

6. Did *American Breakdown* change your relationship to hope? If not, why not? If so, how?