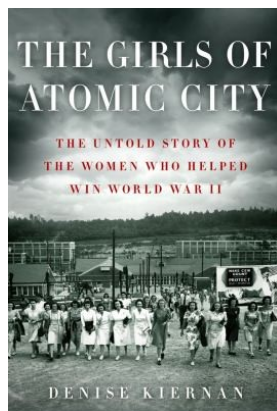


Lillie M. Evans Library District Book Club

October 30, 2017

Biography:



Denise Kiernan has been working as a writer for more than 20 years. Her work has been published in *The New York Times*, *Reader's Digest*, *Discover* and many more publications. She has also worked in television, serving as head writer for ABC's "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" during its Emmy award-winning first season and has produced for media outlets such as *ESPN* and *MSNBC*. She has co-authored several popular history titles including *Signing Their Lives Away*, *Signing Their Rights Away*, and *Stuff Every American Should Know*. Her book, *The Girls of Atomic City* was named as one of Amazon's "Top 100 Best Books of 2013." It was also awarded the 2014 American Political Science Association Woodrow Wilson Foundation Award for the best book published in the United States on government, politics, or international affairs. Throughout her career, Kiernan has been a featured guest on many radio and television shows, including *NPR's "Weekend Edition," PBS NewsHour, MSNBC, Morning Joe, and The Daily Show with Jon Stewart.* (Adapted from www.denisekiernan.com)

Similar Resources:



Discussion Questions:

1. How does the book manage to recreate the workers' experience of months-long ignorance, and the shock of finding out what they were working on?
2. What were some of the sacrifices that families and individuals made in their efforts to end the war? How do these losses compare to the gains of salary, solidarity, and peace?
3. Do you think Americans today would be willing or able to make the same sacrifices – including top-secret jobs, deployment overseas, rationed goods, and strict censorship – that families of that era made? Why or why not?
4. Helen was recruited to spy on her neighbors at home and at work. Was it fair, necessary, or wise to ask ordinary workers to spy? Why do you think Helen never mailed any of the top-secret envelopes she was given?
5. Consider the legacy of President Truman. How do Americans seem to regard Truman's decision today? How does Truman's legacy compare to other wartime presidents?
6. Kiernan sets *The Girls of Atomic City* entirely in the past. How would this book have differed if the interviews from the present day were included? Does Kiernan succeed in immersing us in the era of World War II?
7. Among the workers at Oak Ridge, whose story did you find most fascinating? Which of these women do you think Kiernan brought to life most vividly, and how? (Questions from publisher)