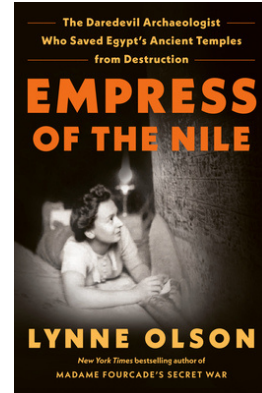


Empress of the Nile

by
Lynne Olson



Discussion Questions

1. At the time Christiane Desroches was growing up, women in France were expected to confine themselves to their domestic roles as wives and mothers. Christiane refused to go along with such restrictions. What role did her upbringing play in that rebellion?
2. In the book, Christiane is described as a real-life version of Indiana Jones. Do you agree with that comparison? What about her is like that movie character?
3. What obstacles did Christiane face in establishing her career? How did she overcome them?
4. Who were her biggest supporters/mentors? How were they able to help her? How important were they to her success?
5. How did Christiane navigate the traditional male Middle Eastern culture in which she operated? How successful was she in doing it?
6. What effect did international rivalries and politics have on Christiane's career? (For example, the stress between English and French archeologists, colonialism, the Suez Crisis, the rise of Egyptian nationalism.)
7. What tactics did Christiane use in her efforts to save Egyptian antiquities from flooding in the Nile basin? How important was her intervention to the effort? Was the way she operated the same as or different than that of her colleagues?
8. How did Christiane balance her career and her family? Was she successful at doing so?
9. Why are the stories of the roles that Christiane Desroches-Noblecourt and Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis played in saving Egyptian antiquities so littleknown? Why didn't these two women know about the contribution the other had made?
10. Did your opinion of Jackie Kennedy change after you read about her efforts to save the Egyptian temples?
11. What is Christiane's greatest achievement? Her greatest failure?
12. If Christiane were to begin her career today, do you think she would face the same obstacles? If not, what obstacles would she face, if any? How has her chosen profession changed?