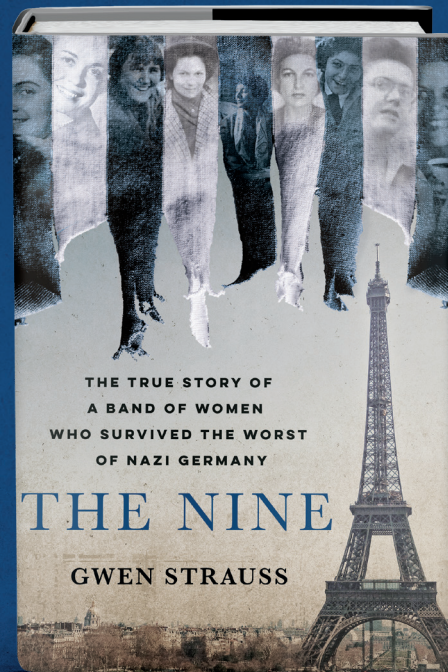


THE NINE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. *The Nine* opens with the moment of escape, and with each chapter that follows, the author focuses on one of the women. Occasionally, the reader learns about the author's research and detective work to uncover the story. How do the different storylines work together to tell a complete story? How important was each thread to building that picture?
2. Each woman played a role in the group's survival. What were their different roles?
3. Sixty years later, Nicole wrote, "Once again, I am convinced of the strength of the ties uniting us and of our shared force." What was their shared force?
4. What role do you think youth and womanhood played in how and why these nine women joined the Résistance?
5. Fellow prisoner Juliette Bes wrote about solidarity in the camp: "Charity is when you give what you can give; solidarity is giving when you have nothing to give." There were many examples of female solidarity in the camp. How can solidarity play a role in survival?
6. The women took pride in making gifts for each other and their families, even when they risked being punished for it, and even when, strictly speaking, these items were not necessary for survival. Why were these items so important?
7. Because women's narratives in large part were not considered important and have not been part of the historical record, the author had to imagine or speculate as to some parts in order to make the record whole. How do we tell the stories of people whose lives were in the margins of recorded history?



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8. What is the importance of memory for our understanding of history? Who decides what gets remembered and how?
9. What should we do with the statues of people (slavers, Confederate generals, and so on) who we now know committed terrible acts? How do we adapt to our evolving understanding of the historical record?
10. The book tells of various encounters with hospitable and helpful Germans, as well as hostile and potentially deadly episodes. Did you believe it when Annelise and Ernst Reitzer claimed they had not known how bad the camps were?
11. Among the heroes in the book were the archivists, such as Odette Pilpoul, who at great risk to her own life kept the record for future generations. Why is her contribution to recording historically marginalized voices so important, not just then but even more so now?
12. After the war, the struggle to survive, and finally finding the American soldiers, why was going home so difficult? How was the women's situation different from that of a soldier returning from war? How was it the same?
13. The author learns from the families of the nine women that trauma does not end with the person who first experienced it. Can trauma be intergenerational? If so, how is that idea showcased in the book?
14. The legal status of women in France changed after the war. For example, they got the right to vote largely because of the role women played in the Résistance. How do you feel these women changed the world?
15. Most of the women chose not to speak to their children about their experiences during the war. Parts of their story were known but many parts were kept secret. Why? How and when did they finally tell their stories?

