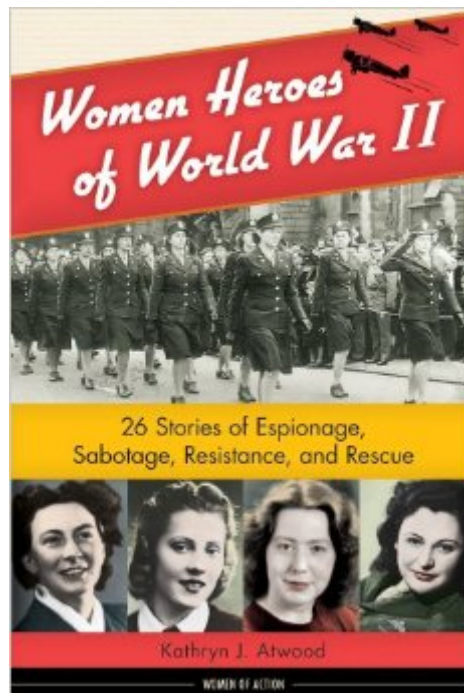


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# Women Heroes Of World War II: 26 Stories Of Espionage, Sabotage, Resistance, And Rescue (Women Of Action)



## Synopsis

An Amelia Bloomer List Recommended Title • A VOYA Nonfiction Honor List Selection • Noor Inayat Khan was the first female radio operator sent into occupied France and transferred crucial messages. Johtje Vos, a Dutch housewife, hid Jews in her home and repeatedly outsmarted the Gestapo. Law student Hannie Schaft became involved in the most dangerous resistance work--sabotage, weapons transference, and assassinations. In these pages, young readers will meet these and many other similarly courageous women and girls who risked their lives to help defeat the Nazis. Twenty-six engaging and suspense-filled stories unfold from across Germany, Poland, the Netherlands, France, Belgium, Denmark, Great Britain, and the United States, providing an inspiring reminder of women and girls' refusal to sit on the sidelines around the world and throughout history. An overview of World War II and summaries of each country's entrance and involvement in the war provide a framework for better understanding each woman's unique circumstances, and resources for further learning follow each profile. Women Heroes of World War II is an invaluable addition to any student's or history buff's bookshelf.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

I literally could not put this book down and have read it within a day of its arrival. I think what most drew me to it was the optimism about human nature that it encouraged. Here were 26 young women, who in one way or another, encountered directly or heard about, the massive, murderous injustices of the Nazi regime in their own or other countries and did something about it. I found extraordinary, the repeated instances where confronting an impossible moral dilemma between their own survival and saving others, so many chose to save others. I also liked how often an intuitive sense of danger or of what to do saved the day. Generally ordinary young women suddenly made extraordinary by appalling situations. Though I guess Marlene Dietrich, Martha Gellhorn, or Josephine Baker, who are included are a little less ordinary. The picture of Marlene Dietrich trapped behind the lines in the Ardennes in late 1944 is extraordinary. And as you look through the photographs of each of the 26, you see something they all seem to have in common: this moral courage, this ability to look profound evil in the eye and not flinch. Some of them died, and though I already knew something of the story of the White Rose German resistance group, the photo of one of its members Sophie Scholl is what really haunted me. Her seriousness and yet she was the one who in the midst of the monstrous Roland Freisler's tirade at her trial, where she was sentenced to death, she simply shouted: 'Somebody had to make a start! What we said and wrote are what many people are thinking. They just don't dare say it out loud!' And these 26 young women said or did it out loud. And while some were executed, many of them survived to pay testament to those who didn't, and keep up the idea of resistance to evil.

Disclaimer: Kathryn Atwood is a Goodreads friend. I've never met her in real life, and I brought this book. But she is a Goodreads Friend (was before this book was published). Just so you know. Billed as a young adult history book, Atwood's *Women Heroes of World War II* can easily be read by people of all ages. This is great because it is a book that helps to fill two large gaps in World War II history. The first gap is that of the helpers or rescuers of Jews in World War II. This is a gap, I can hear you wonder. Well, yes and know. Everyone knows the story of Miep Gies, but Anne Frank: *The Diary of a Young Girl* is pretty much the only piece of the rescuer story that is taught in schools. This book introduces the reader to more rescuers. Miep Gies is not mentioned, and this is not an oversight. It allows Atwood to focus on lesser known people. Atwood's book is split into sections. There is a general introduction, overview really, followed by sections about Germany, Poland, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Britain, and the United States. Each section includes, in addition to the stories of the heroes, a general overview of the country during World War II, with particular focuses on the role of women. While not all encompassing, the women Atwood focuses on could

easily be fit into all sections (Slovak, Irish, Indian) and cover all age groups and social classes. While younger predominates, there are older ladies as well. The importance of less known heroes is important. The best known three, at least in general, would be Irene Sendler, Joesphine Baker, and Marlene Dietech. While it is true that all of the women mentioned appear in books (some of have written books), very few appear in books that are used in schools.

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