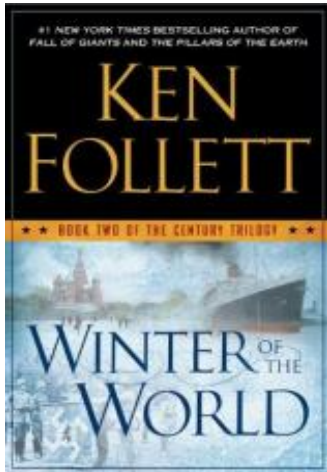


Winter of the World: Book Two of the Century Trilogy

by Ken Follett



About the Book

Ken Follett follows up his #1 *New York Times* bestseller *FALL OF GIANTS* with a brilliant, page-turning epic about the heroism and honor of World War II, and the dawn of the atomic age.

Ken Follett's *FALL OF GIANTS*, the first novel in his extraordinary new historical epic, *The Century Trilogy*, was an international sensation, acclaimed as "sweeping and fascinating, a book that will consume you for days or weeks" (*USA Today*) and "grippingly told and readable to the end" (*The New York Times Book Review*). "If the next two volumes are as lively and entertaining as *FALL OF GIANTS*," said *The Washington Post*, "they should be well worth waiting for."

WINTER OF THE WORLD picks up right where the first book left off, as its five interrelated families --- American, German, Russian, English, Welsh --- enter a time of enormous social, political, and economic turmoil, beginning with the rise of the Third Reich, through the Spanish Civil War and the great dramas of World War II, up to the explosions of the American and Soviet atomic bombs.

Carla von Ulrich, born of German and English parents, finds her life engulfed by the Nazi tide until she commits a deed of great courage and heartbreak...American brothers Woody and Chuck Dewar, each with a secret, take separate paths to momentous events, one in Washington, the other in the bloody jungles of the Pacific... English student Lloyd Williams discovers in the crucible of the Spanish Civil War that he must fight Communism just as hard as Fascism...Daisy Peshkov, a driven American social climber, cares only for popularity and the fast set, until the war transforms her life, not just once but twice, while her cousin Volodya carves out a position in Soviet intelligence that will affect not only this war --- but the war to come.

These characters and many others find their lives inextricably entangled as their experiences illuminate the cataclysms that marked the century. From the drawing rooms of the rich to the blood and smoke of battle, their lives intertwine, propelling the reader into dramas of ever-increasing complexity.

As always with Ken Follett, the historical background is brilliantly researched and rendered, the action fast-moving, the characters rich in nuance and emotion. With passion and the hand of a master, he brings us into a world we thought we knew, but now will never seem the same again.

Discussion Guide

- 1.** Before reading *WINTER OF THE WORLD* what did you know about World War II and the rise of fascism in Germany? Did you learn anything new upon finishing the novel?
- 2.** Why do you think Ken opened *WINTER OF THE WORLD* with that short period of a few days when Hitler came to absolute power? What does that do to draw you into the story?
- 3.** Do you think Ken accurately depicted his characters situations and feelings while Hitler rose to power? What is the best example of that?
- 4.** Ken's big scene about the Holocaust focuses on the extermination of the mentally handicapped. Why do you think he chose to do that?
- 5.** Which families and characters do you identify with the most? Why?
- 6.** Is there a custom or practice from the book's time period that you wish existed in our modern day? What would it be, and why do you think it should have a place in today's world?
- 7.** Talk about the historical figures that appear throughout *WINTER OF THE WORLD*. What did you think of Ken's depiction of them? Do you like seeing notable people such as these come alive in fiction, or do you prefer reading about them in a strictly historical context?
- 8.** Do you enjoy reading epic novels such as this one? What makes them so appealing to readers, in your opinion?
- 9.** Ken populates this novel with several strong female characters. Compare/contrast some of them; who was your favorite? Which one did you like least? Apply the same question to the book's male figures. When considering those of different backgrounds and social classes, were any of the male figures similar to one another?
- 10.** Discuss Woody and Chuck's relationship.
- 11.** Discuss Lloyd Williams and Boy Fitzherbert. How are they similar, despite their many differences?
- 12.** What did you think of Daisy Peshkov? Did your opinion of her change from your initial impression of her?

13. Think about the ways the main characters' lives intersected throughout the book. Were there any characters that didn't meet over the entirety of the novel that you wished did? Who, and why?

14. Consider the book's title. Does WINTER OF THE WORLD capture the atmosphere of the book?

15. What did you think of the book's ending? Did the author succeed in wrapping up the many threads and strands in WINTER OF THE WORLD?

16. Which of the characters in WINTER OF THE WORLD do you expect to be reading about in book three of *The Century Trilogy*?

Author Bio

Ken Follett is one of the world's best-loved authors, selling more than 188 million copies of his 36 books. Follett's first bestseller was EYE OF THE NEEDLE, a spy story set in the Second World War. In 1989, THE PILLARS OF THE EARTH was published and has since become Follett's most popular novel. It reached #1 on bestseller lists around the world and was an Oprah's Book Club pick. Its sequels, WORLD WITHOUT END and A COLUMN OF FIRE, and prequel THE EVENING AND THE MORNING, proved equally popular, and the *Kingsbridge* series has sold more than 50 million copies worldwide. Follett lives in Hertfordshire, England, with his wife, Barbara. Between them they have five children, six grandchildren and three Labradors.

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Publication Date: September 18, 2012

Genres: Fiction, Historical Fiction

Hardcover: 960 pages

Publisher: NAL Trade

ISBN-10: 0451419243

ISBN-13: 9780451419248