

The Women of the Copper Country by Mary Doria Russell

Book club 4/27/22 at 6 PM and 4/30/22 at 10:30 AM

Discussion Questions

1) Before beginning to read, what did you think the book was going to be about? Did you have any prior knowledge about the topic?

2) James McNaughton is thinking about industry changes as workers demand better treatment, (p. 16). Does this remind you of Occupy Wall Street, the Great Resignation, or other modern labor issues?

3) McNaughton is proud of the progressive benefits he has provided employees of Calumet & Hecla, such as housing and matching contributions to the medical fund (p. 12). What do you think of his attitude?

4) What is Annie's role in the town in the beginning of the book? How do other characters perceive her?

5) Why is there a fixation on Annie's size?

6) Major Van Den Broek meets with McNaughton to discuss using the Michigan Guard to maintain order in Calumet (p. 99-101), and the Major stands up to

McNaughton. Why do he think he opposed McNaughton? Was he inspired by Annie?

7) Does McNaughton have any redeeming qualities?

8) What did you think about Annie's husband Joe? What was their relationship like?

9) passage on p. 129

Do you think that Eva and Jack remind Annie of herself and Joe?

10) On p. 164, Thomas Fisher bashes immigrants while he sells his services to McNaughton. Do you think that the two men are united in their condemnation of immigrants?

11) At dinner at the Kivisto home, Eva pictures her future with Jack (p. 226) and by the end of the night realizes that she doesn't feel anything for him anymore (p. 228). How has Eva changed since becoming involved with the Women's Auxiliary? What has made her rethink her future?

12)

After Sol Kivisto's death, Annie wants to take action. "And in the silence, she comes to a decision. Somebody has to do something, she thinks, and that means it's up to me," (42).

After returning from prison, and before the Christmas party, Annie reflects: "All her life, people have looked up to her, as children do to adults. All her life, she has risen to the demands on her and she became the woman others needed her to be. I can't, she thinks. I just can't. Not anymore," (259).

Father Horvat speaks to Annie as she prepares to leave town with Mike. " 'You've done all you can. You've done more than anyone could ask of you. It's our turn now. Let someone else carry the flag,' " (322).

How do we see Annie change as the fight continues and ultimately ends? What do you think about the differences between these passages?

13) What did you think of the conclusion? How did you feel not knowing what became of Annie and Michael?

14) How would you describe this book? Would you recommend it?

15) Did this book make you want to read anything else by this author, or learn more about the topic?

16) Do you have any other thoughts or questions that you would like to share?