

Discussion Questions for *The Boys in the Boat*

1. Which parts of the book did you enjoy the most? Which parts did you enjoy the least? Why?
2. Were you aware that rowing was as popular as it was in the twenties and thirties? Why do you think it's not as popular today?
3. Do you think that the author did a good job of situating the events depicted in the book in an historical context? Why or why not?
4. Did you think that the quotation from George Yeoman Pocock at the beginning of each chapter were helpful? Why or why not?
5. Pocock seemed to think there was a spiritual side to rowing. Do you agree with his assessment? Why or why not?
6. Do you think that part of the appeal of the book was the way it depicted the story of the Washington team as underdogs? Why or why not?
7. The author spent a great deal of time discussing the 1936 Olympics and Hitler's plans to portray the Olympics as a sign of Aryan superiority. Did you enjoy this section of the book? Why or why not?
8. Who was the hero/heroine of the book? Why?
9. When Bobby Moch learned that he was of Jewish descent, he was not ashamed or upset for himself, but was more concerned for his father. Why was he more concerned with his father's reaction than his own? Do you think it was fitting that Bobby Moch was the first of the crew to receive his medal at the Olympic Games?
10. After reading about Leni Riefenstahl and her elaborate plans to promote not only the Olympic Games, but the philosophy of Nazism in general, do you believe her claims that she was not a part of Hitler's war apparatus?