

***The Blackout Book Club* by Amy Lynn Green**

Derby, Maine in 1942 is a community filled with older men and many women. The younger men are off fighting—all except for Avis' husband, whose asthma has kept him in Derby. It's almost more than he can bear, but Avis secretly feels it's best he stays nearby. Her mother has told her what men who go away to war do, and Avis doesn't want Russell tempted that way. When her brother is called to war however, Avis finds herself in the uncomfortable position of needing to take on his role as the local librarian during his absence. While it's not a socially acceptable position for a married woman, wartime norms will allow her to take the job, as long as her husband comes first.

Avis reads every article on being a good housewife, and tries every suggestion. She soon finds out she can't control Russell's desire to serve his country as Russell finds a way to sign up for a three-month tour watching for German boats off the east coast of Maine. Her job as a librarian is also threatened when the library benefactor, Louise Cavendish, determines the library space would be better utilized as a daycare to help the working woman in the community. In a rash decision, Avis tells Miss Cavendish she is starting a book club, and has already begun to invite women. A compromise is made allowing the book club to continue while plans are drawn up for the daycare. Miss Cavendish will join the book club herself, (perhaps just to be sure it's really going to happen?)

The chapters describe the events happening to the different book club members, as well as their families and the community of Derby. Throughout the book there is an ongoing theme of secrets, some from the past and some happening to protect the community and the children during the present war situation. I enjoyed the book a great deal, and I found the information about the dangers of war coming to a Maine community very informative.