

What Teacher's Are Saying About *Alice Bliss*



"In her recent work, *The War That Killed Achilles*, Caroline Alexander raises a timeless question, "In giving his life for his country, does a warrior betray his family?" A close reading and discussion of Laura Harrington's *Alice Bliss* provides an opportunity for students of war both young and old to gain insight into this question from the perspective of a young girl and the nuclear family that surrounds her as they look for answers. It is an invaluable aide to any teacher looking to stimulate a meaningful discussion about war itself in an age when most Americans are almost wholly detached from introspective consideration of such questions." William Britton, Saint John's Prep High School, Danvers, MA; *War & Peace in a Dangerous World*

"*Alice Bliss* opened my students' eyes to the collateral damage afflicting families back on the home front. The book also surfaced important discussions about the benefits vs. risks of enlisting to defend our country. Months after we discussed the book in class, my students still refer to Alice Bliss in discussion of topics ranging from heroism to psychological challenges to high school relationships."Eric Kimble, English Teacher, St. John's Prep High School, Danvers, MA

"I really do believe *Alice Bliss* to be a classic of modern day war related literature." William Britton, Saint John's Prep

"My students took to *Alice Bliss* like no other novel they've read in my class. They were quick to relate to the characters, eager to voice their opinions about the themes explored, and determined to understand what it is like for those dealing with such a moving subject matter. They gained a new perspective on growing up in a world that is always challenging – even in ways they never imagined possible." Jim Valente, Malden High School, Malden, MA

"In *Alice Bliss*, Laura Harrington creates a captivating portrait of a family and a town infused with unexpressed grief from losses in war, conveyed with precision through Alice's own adolescent perspective. Middle and high school students will connect to Alice's realistic portrayal of strength, confusion, passion and love in this timeless local and global setting. *Alice Bliss* is the ideal anchor book for interdisciplinary studies, grades 6 through 12." Ann Mechem Ziergiebel, Adolescent Education and Leadership Department, Salem State University

"Our school adopted *Alice Bliss* as the All-School Read last summer because of its female protagonist, its relevance to current social and political issues, and its sensitivity to the travails of contemporary families."

Tim Averill, Waring School, Beverly, MA

"I wanted my students to read *Alice Bliss* because I was so impressed with Harrington's writing. I also wanted to find a book where the central character is a teenage girl. My students loved the book. They think I should teach it every year. It is a great book for creative writing classes or English classes. In my classroom, we talked about everything from how to write dialogue to why America went to war with Iraq. Harrington engages readers at the same time that she has so much to

teach all of us."Charlotte Gordon, Endicott College, Beverly, MA, author of *Romantic Outlaws*, *Mistress Bradstreet* and *The Woman Who Named God*

"My students immediately fell in love with Alice Bliss and her entire family; they are relatable, comical, and welcoming. This is the first text they have read that focuses on those left behind during war, an experience so close to them, as many know someone in the military or have relatives serving. *Alice Bliss* allowed my students to explore another perspective on war, a family's perspective, one that is also important, but often left out. Alice Bliss fosters insightful, real world classroom discussions. The story is immersed with rich literary devices, allowing students to develop their critical thinking skills. Often, it is difficult to emotionally engage both male and female students; however, the story does just that."Robin Doherty, Malden High School, Malden, MA

"What I liked best about teaching *Alice Bliss* was that it was a mirror that allowed my students to look at their own lives, their relations with their parents and peers, as well as with all the issues of growing up, in a real way. The book is close enough to their own experiences to resonate and also just far enough away to give them both perspective and safety."James Watras, Waring School, Beverly, MA