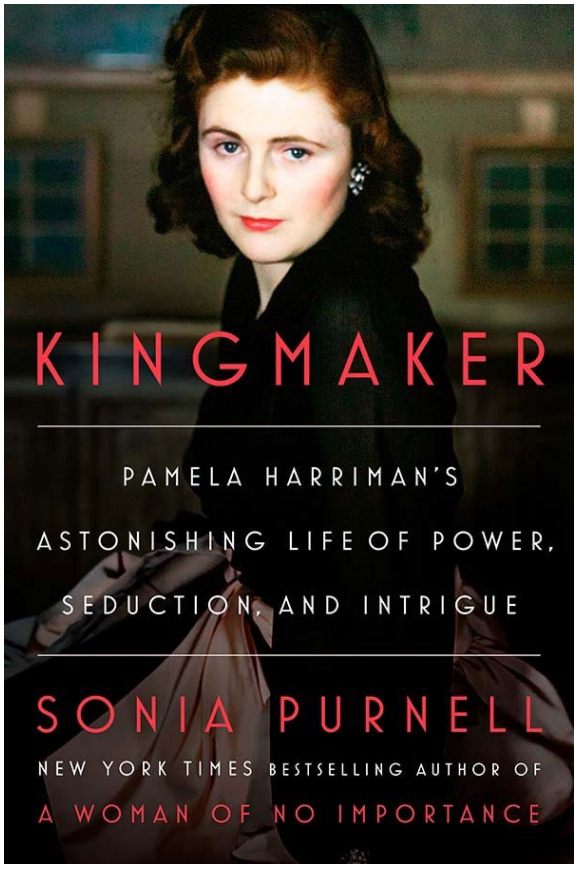
Martin County Library System Book Discussion Guide:

Kingmaker: Pamela Harriman's Astonishing Life of Power, Seduction, and Intrigue by Sonia Purnell

Included in the Kit:

- Book summary
- Author biography
- Discussion questions
- Recipe suggestions



Book summary

When Pamela Churchill Harriman died in 1997, the obituaries that followed were predictably scathing – and many were downright sexist.

Written off as a mere courtesan and social climber, her true legacy was overshadowed by a glamorous social life and her infamous erotic adventures. Much of what she did behind the scenes – on both sides of the Atlantic - remained invisible and secret. That is, until now: with a wealth of fresh research, interviews and newly discovered sources, Sonia Purnell unveils for the first time the full, spectacular story of how she left an indelible mark on the world today.

At age 20 Churchill's beloved daughter-in-law became a "secret weapon" during World War II, strategically wining, dining, and seducing diplomats and generals to help win

over American sentiment (and secrets) to the British cause against Hitler. After the war, she helped to transform Fiat heir Gianni Agnelli into Italy's 'uncrowned king' on the international stage and after moving to the US brought a struggling Democratic party back to life, hand-picking Bill Clinton from obscurity and vaulting him to the presidency.

Picked as Ambassador to France, she deployed her legendary subtle powers to charm world leaders and help efforts to bring peace to Bosnia, playing her part in what was arguably the high-water mark of American global supremacy.

There are few at any time who have operated as close to the center of power over five decades and two continents, and there is practically no one in 20th Century politics, culture, and fashion whose lives she did not touch, including the Kennedys, Truman Capote, Aly Khan, Kay Graham, Gloria Steinem, Ed Murrow, and Frank Sinatra. Written with the novelistic richness and investigative rigor that only Sonia Purnell could bring to this story full of sex, politics, yachts, palaces and fabulous clothes, Kingmaker re-asserts Harriman's rightful place at the heart of history.

(Source: https://bookbrowse.com/bb_briefs/detail/index.cfm/ezine_preview_number/19381/kingmaker)

Meet the Author

Sonia Purnell is a bestselling and prize-winning author celebrated for her lively writing style and meticulous research with a growing readership across the world. Her work has been optioned by several leading filmmakers, won fans from all walks of life from presidents to physicians and been translated into more than twenty languages. Readers write to her regularly on how they have drawn inspiration from her books, which have sold more than a million copies.



(Source: https://www.soniapurnell.com/kingmaker-us)

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by Sonia Purnell

Discussion Questions

1. What was your initial impression of Pamela Harriman? Did your opinion of her evolve as you read the book?
2. How does the book challenge or reinforce traditional notions of female power and influence in the 20th century?
3. Purnell argues that Pamela Harriman is a significant historical figure who deserves a central place in history. Do you agree? Why or why not?
4. What were some of the key societal constraints Pamela faced as an ambitious woman during her lifetime? How did she navigate these limitations?
5. How would you describe Pamela Harriman's personality? What were her most prominent strengths and weaknesses?
6. How did her personal experiences, particularly in her early life and marriages, shape her ambitions and drive?
7. Some describe her as a ruthless social climber and unsatisfactory mother, while others highlight her strategic brilliance and political effectiveness. How do you reconcile these contrasting views?
8. Do you think Pamela Harriman genuinely sought power for its own sake, or was it a means to achieve specific goals?

Source: Google AI Mode

Recipes

Spinach Puffs



Ingredients:

- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- 4 cups chopped fresh spinach, packed
- ½ cup Parmesan cheese
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 (17.3-ounce) package frozen puff pastry, thawed (2 sheets)
- 2 Tablespoons butter, melted
- 5 strips bacon, cooked and crumbled (about 1/3 cup)

Directions:

Preheat your oven to 400°F. Spray 2 9-cup muffin pans with nonstick spray.

Combine filling. In a microwave-safe bowl, microwave 8-ounce cream cheese 10 seconds at a time until softened and melted but not steaming. Stir in 2 eggs, 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning, 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder and 1/8 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper until well combined. Add 4 cups spinach, 1/2 cup parmesan and 5 strips bacon. Using a fork, mix in the cream cheese mixture.

Roll out puff pastry. Lightly dust flour on a work surface. Unfold 1 puff pastry sheet onto the flour. Roll a couple times each way with a rolling pin to smooth it out. Using a knife or pizza cutter, slice into 9 squares. Repeat with the remaining puff pastry sheet.

Assemble puffs. Press the pastry squares into the bottom of the muffin cups. Evenly divide the spinach mixture among the cups. Using your fingers, pull the 4 pastry points on one cup over the filling and then press them together. Repeat with remaining puffs. Lightly brush with the melted butter.

Bake 20 minutes, or until puffed and golden brown. Cool 10 minutes. Run a knife around the edges to loosen from the pan.

(Source: https://iheartnaptime.net/spinach-puffs/)

Recipes Continuation

Jalapeño Poppers Recipe



Ingredients:

- 10 jalapeños
- ½ cup cream cheese (softened)
- ½ cup shredded cheddar cheese
- ¼ teaspoon onion powder
- 10 slices thin bacon

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400ºF. Line a baking sheet with foil and set aside. Place a wire rack on top if you want the poppers to be crispy.

Cut the jalapeños in half lengthwise and then remove the seeds and membranes.

Combine 1/2 cup cream cheese, 1/2 cup cheddar cheese and 1/4 teaspoon onion powder in a small bowl. Mix until combined. Add a dash of salt and pepper if desired. Then fill each jalapeno half with cream cheese and place on the baking sheet.

Cut the bacon in half and then wrap it around the center of the jalapeño. Secure with a toothpick.

Bake for 15-20 minutes, or until the bacon is crispy. Serve while hot.

(Source: https://iheartnaptime.net/jalapeno-poppers/)