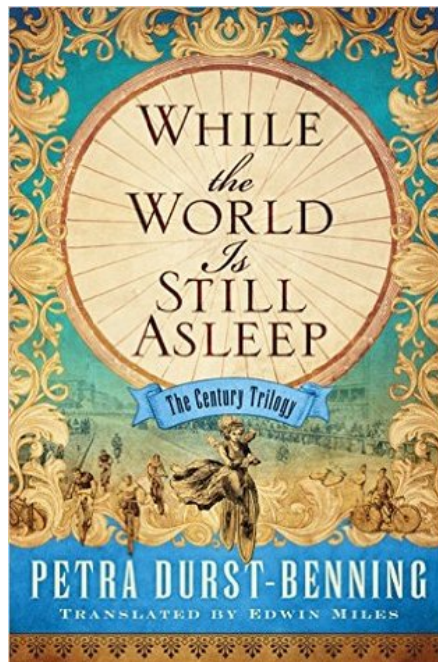




While the World Is Still Asleep

Petra Durst-Benning , Edwin Miles (Translator)

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It isn't easy for a woman to cut loose in 1890s Berlin. But the winds of change are blowing, and nothing can stop Josephine from pursuing her dreams.

After the tragic death of her little brother, Josephine travels to the Black Forest to heal. There she discovers a feeling of freedom astride a brand-new invention called the "velocipede." The very idea of a woman on a bicycle is beyond taboo—it is indecent and even illegal—but Josephine will not be deterred. She simply needs to find a way to ride without provoking a scandal. Back home, Josephine has the brilliant idea of riding under cover of night, while the world is still asleep. But Berlin's streets are dangerous, especially on a bicycle.

Can Josephine's fighting heart help her overcome the obstacles in her path? Will the passion she feels for this new adventure lead her toward true love?

While the World Is Still Asleep Details

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From Reader Review While the World Is Still Asleep for online ebook

Chris says

I enjoyed learning about the advent of cycling in Germany!

Louise says

I don't like giving bad reviews to books (though some are so sloppily written and full of plot holes they deserve them) in cases like this, where it's about my tastes and not the writing.

I just found this book incredibly dull.

I struggled to three quarters of the way through and then gave up...as I wasn't retaining any of it.

It may well be a fantastic read to others, just not for me.

Catherine says

Set in the late 1800s in Germany, *While the World is Still Asleep* is a historical fiction featuring Josephine and her friends as they become enamored with a new invention - the bicycle. German society is appalled by the idea of women's cycling, whether for sport, transport or leisure, with doctors even going so far as to claim that cycling can impact women's health negatively (...of course, they also claim no such detriment befalls a man who wishes to ride a bicycle *eternal side-eye*). Despite the hostility, Jo and her friends pursue their passion, even dressing as men in order to ride the streets of Berlin at night. There is a wonderfully strong cast of female characters in this book, women who would look the status quo in the eye and say, "There is nothing women can't do." A great read for Women's History Month.

georgia says

2016 434 pages

the title refers to the women of Berlin-per and during war-riding bicycles in the early morning as only men were allowed to ride bikes during the day time.

I liked this book because it kept my interest. I had a few out loud laughs as the women figured out how to fix their skirt so they would not get caught in the bike chain. So the story follows 4 girls as become young ladies, learn how to secretly ride bikes in dad's back yard and eventually develop a Woman Bicycling Club that met at the same place the men's club did.

All the girls have their vulnerability yet seem to go forward learning new aspects of their world and all it contains. fathers, husbands, children, bike competitions, and friendship

Jeanette Sander says

I loved the idea of this book, a woman seeking freedom and Independence during a time when that was just not an option. I had never considered how empowering and controversial a bicycle was and the impact it's invention and availability were on society. After a few chapters the writing began to feel rushed and I was annoyed by having to read over and over about her wanting to ride a bike.

Sayra says

Heartbreak to healing to triumph

I loved this book from the moment I started it. I was immediately invest in Josephine's life. Her heartbreak, challenges, misunderstandings and the way she learned from them is profound. I love a story of triumph and of course a love story makes it all worth it!

Liviu says

proto-feminism and strong young women in Germany and Berlin (and other countries as the book goes on in the 1880's and 1890's; very interesting fresco of a time and society and strong characters kept me going but the two main drawbacks - flat prose (or maybe flat translation) that generally lacks excitement and the page turning qualities of the best in this quite popular and crowded subgenre and a fairly predictable plot - kept me from fully enjoying this one especially compared with other recent works like *The Invitation* or *The Muse*

still interested in book 2 though and will try it hoping for an improvement especially in narrative power

Elizabeth Camden says

What a wonderful novel! I feel like I've just struck gold....a new-to-me author who has a huge backlist I can plow through. Petra Durst-Benning writes the kind of novels I love... a vibrant historical setting, intelligent leading women, daring storylines, and lots of heart. Oh, and a happy ending. I loved it! I also loved learning about late 19th century Germany. Makes me want to visit!

Pat Roberts says

Three stars is too much, two not quite enough. While the premise of the book is interesting, that is, women wanting to ride bicycles at the turn of the century in Germany, the writing style is just plain corny and simplistic. The story morphed into a romance, and I happen to hate romance novels of any sort.

Kristina says

While the World is Still Asleep by Petra Durst-Benning is the first book in The Century Trilogy. Josephine “Jo” is telling her story. We start out with her in an accident and in trouble with the law (I know. It makes no sense.) Jo ends up in prison for 3 and a half years. Jo then goes back to tell us about the death of her brother, Freddie?? He was twelve years old and fascinated with fire. One Sunday Jo was ordered to watch him while her parents went off for the day to visit relatives. Jo watched him for a while and then went to visit friends. Freddie found the key to the barn where their father had his smithy. Freddie was told he was not allowed in the there. He went in and found matches. As you can imagine he started setting fire to paper. Sparks from the burning paper flew into the hay and soon the whole barn is one fire. Jo tried to rescue him, but Freddie had locked the doors. Jo was unable to break the doors down. She was found unconscious in front of the barn. Freddie died in the fire. Her parents blame her for the boy’s death and treat her like a pariah. Jo developed a horrible cough from the smoke inhalation that would not go away. A neighbor, ?? convinces Jo’s parents to send her to a sanatorium in the Black Forest (the neighbor had to pay for it). Jo found a friend named Lilo (also a relative of neighbors). She introduced Jo to the velocipede (pedal bicycle). Jo loved it and her cough went away (the writer makes it out to be psychosomatic—in her head). Jo becomes obsessed with riding bicycles. Women were not supposed to be on bicycles. They were deemed too much for the “weaker sex” (it is also considered indecent and illegal). Jo returns home to her hateful parents who insist she work from dawn to way past dusk in the smithy for no pay. Jo discovers that Isabelle’s (a girl from school) father has a bicycle. This becomes Jo’s obsession. Jo wants to ride and this leads to her biggest mistake. It is unfortunate for Jo that cycling is a men’s sport and bicycles are extremely expensive (all made by hand in Germany). Come see what Jo does While the World is Still Asleep!

While the World is Still Asleep is one slow paced novel that is way, way too long. It contains good writing, but (I’m sorry) it’s boring (alright just plain dull). Basically, you get to see what Jo goes through to enjoy cycling (some of the information was interesting). It was interesting to find out that cycles were handmade in Germany while the United States automated the process. And, of course, it was a male dominated sport at the time. This is just the first book in the series. This story could have easily been finished in one novel. I give While the World is Still Asleep 3 out of 5 stars. The book just needed something to liven it up and keep the readers interest. It is way too long for it to be unfinished (can you imagine two more books on this subject).

I received a complimentary copy of While the World is Still Asleep from NetGalley in exchange for an honest evaluation of the novel.

Betty says

Rather a different read for me, but I quite liked it. Well done and interesting period in Germany's history.

Jessica Leigh says

While The World Is Still Asleep by Petra Durst-Benning is a historical fiction novel set in 19th century Berlin. It describes a new mode of transportation called the "velocipede" and the wealthy men who can afford to flash such a luxury around town and the strong-willed women who would just like to be accepted as equals.

Although I loved Petra Durst-Benning's Glassblower Trilogy, I found this book a bit difficult to get through. It's well written (as is her other series), however, this novel simply didn't pique my interest as much as I wish it would have.

This book would be fantastic for an avid cyclist or a history buff as it is centered around the adoption of bicycles into society.

** I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review **

Sayra says

From start to finish, I was completely enthralled with these women, specifically Josephine the main character. Their confidence and relentlessness is influential and stirs emotions of all kinds. Heartbreak comes to each in it's own form and some more harsh than others, her it only strengthens them individually. Friendships that last through all the trials and a sweet love story make this book a must read. It is written in a way that keeps you interested and invested in all the characters, I could not put it down.

Rochelle says

A really good piece of historical fiction...told not from the point of any great historical happening, but from the point of the gentle but firm changes women caused for themselves in 1890's Germany. I love that this book is to be part of a Trilogy.....with the second book being published in Germany later this year...hopefully translated by early next year!

Samantha says

This book was excruciatingly dull and was only made worse by horrible audio narration. The story takes place in Berlin, but only a few people have thick German accents, while the main characters sound more American than I do. Odd anachronisms and two-dimensional characters didn't help the slow plot along either.
