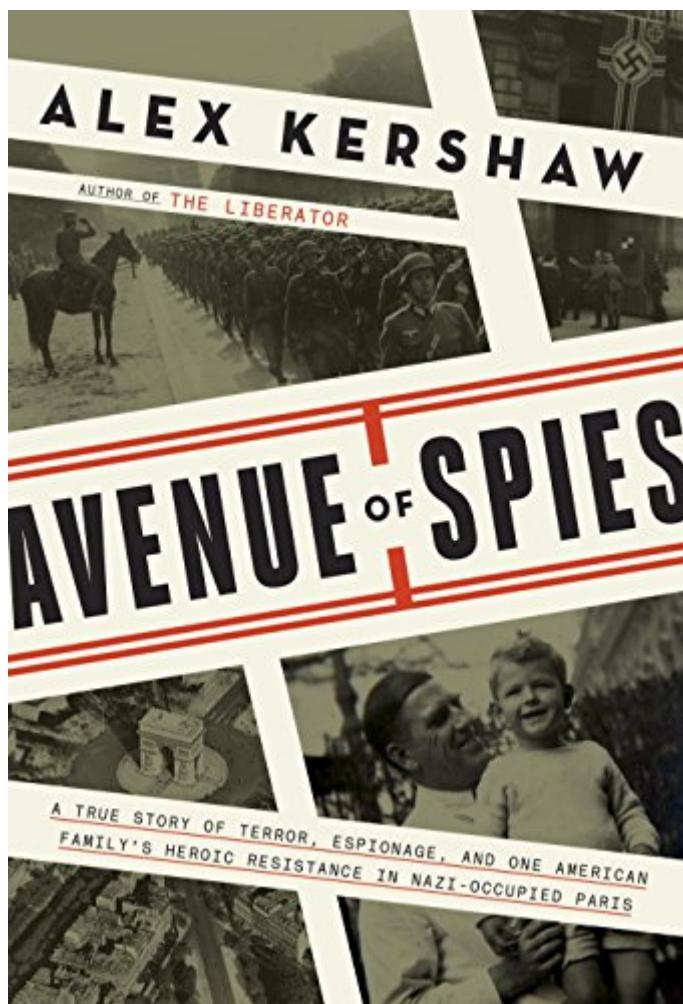


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# Avenue Of Spies: A True Story Of Terror, Espionage, And One American Family's Heroic Resistance In Nazi-Occupied Paris



## Synopsis

The best-selling author of *The Liberator* brings to life the incredible true story of an American doctor in Paris, and his heroic espionage efforts during World War II. The leafy Avenue Foch, one of the most exclusive residential streets in Nazi-occupied France, was Paris's hotbed of daring spies, murderous secret police, amoral informers, and Vichy collaborators. So when American physician Sumner Jackson, who lived with his wife and young son Phillip at Number 11, found himself drawn into the Liberation network of the French resistance, he knew the stakes were impossibly high. Just down the road at Number 31 was the "mad sadist" Theodor Dannecker, an Eichmann protégé charged with deporting French Jews to concentration camps. And Number 84 housed the Parisian headquarters of the Gestapo, run by the most effective spy hunter in Nazi Germany. From his office at the American Hospital, itself an epicenter of Allied and Axis intrigue, Jackson smuggled fallen Allied fighter pilots safely out of France, a job complicated by the hospital director's close ties to collaborationist Vichy. After witnessing the brutal round-up of his Jewish friends, Jackson invited Liberation to officially operate out of his home at Number 11--but the noose soon began to tighten. When his secret life was discovered by his Nazi neighbors, he and his family were forced to undertake a journey into the dark heart of the war-torn continent from which there was little chance of return. Drawing upon a wealth of primary source material and extensive interviews with Phillip Jackson, Alex Kershaw recreates the City of Light during its darkest days. The untold story of the Jackson family anchors the suspenseful narrative, and Kershaw dazzles readers with the vivid immediacy of the best spy thrillers. Awash with the tense atmosphere of World War II's Europe, *Avenue of Spies* introduces us to the brave doctor who risked everything to defy Hitler. From the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## **Customer Reviews**

If you want to read at least one great book this summer, I strongly suggest you pick this one. I feel as though I was transported to Paris, to Avenue Foch from the beginning of the German Occupation and stayed until the liberation-though in reality, it was only a two day stay. From the second I began to peruse the first page as I usually do when I get a new book, I could hardly put this down. Avenue Of Spies by Alex Kershaw has it all: guts and glory, horror, bravery, cowardice, greed, atrocity and heartbreak all with a backdrop of love, kindness and most of all, bravery. Alex Kershaw's writing style is spectacularly simple but gives the reader an acute understanding of what is happening which is rare when I read history, and is a sure sign of a good writer-I have read quite a few books about WWII this year, and this book by far is my favorite-but it's not even the history that is riveting in the pages of this book-it's the story of heroes. In this tale, Kershaw recreates the German Occupation in the City Of Lights. His subject is an American, Dr. Sumner Jackson, who lived on the posh Avenue Foch with his wife, Toquette, and their boy, Phillip. Dr. Sumner was the head doctor at the American Hospital in Paris and if that wasn't enough, he chose to help in the resistance against the Nazis as did Toquette and Phillip. Even when they could have gotten out, they stayed. Even when things got perilously close in danger they didn't leave-when the noose began to tighten on Foch Avenue and they were surrounded by the enemy, they stood firm. This book is inspirational. It could change a life. It could inspire you, dear reader, to be bigger than yourself. With the example of the human beings in the pages of this book, you could be bigger and better than ever and aspire to do good things.

This is the best book I've read on Nazi occupied Paris. In fact, it's one of the few I've come across. It is laced with irony as we learn that the main characters who love Paris is an American doctor and a Nazi Gestapo officer. It is a true story, which makes it all the more incredible and saddening. The romantic version of the French Resistance is often one that depicts heroic resistance fighters on one

side and evil collaborators on the other. There is some truth to that picture, but not much. Most Parisians, especially in 1940 were 'grey.' They saw themselves as making the best out of a bad situation. Unfortunately, some of the "advantages" lay in shutting down all Jewish owned businesses giving rise to confiscation of properties and some French shopkeepers ridding themselves of competition. The major characters include a 30-year old SS-Standartenführer named Helmut Knochen ('bones') who loves Paris but is doing everything in his power to destroy its very soul. Up the street on Avenue Foch are other grand homes taken over by the Nazis, but one remains in the hands of an American doctor who runs the American Hospital of Paris. After the defeat by the Nazis, many French and British troops were treated at the American Hospital by a surgeon named Sumner Jackson. Jackson had been a surgeon in the First World War and was adept at amputations and fixing wounds, and the fact that the Americans were neutral in 1940 and that the hospital had taken a great load off the Germans hands (they didn't have to treat the wounded Allied soldiers) led the Germans to leave Dr. Jackson, his Swiss wife Torquette and their son Phillip alone.

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