

Community for Understanding Discussion Group - St. Mark's, LeRoy

Tuesday, October 17 6:30-7:30 pm

The Day the World Came to Town: 9/11 in Gander, Newfoundland by Jim DeFede
William Morrow, 2002, 2021

Please make sure to read the 2021 publication as it contains additional information!

The book and the audio version are also available on the Hoopla app in the Nioga Library System, and the audio is available from the Libby app in the OWWL Library System.

1. The book is told through short sections focusing on a wide variety of people. Why? What effect did it have on your reading and understanding of the situation?
2. The Baptist Church in Gander (page 74) may have declined in numbers but not in their sense of community. What were their specific challenges and how did they meet them?
3. What strengthens “Newfies” sense of community? (see pages 4-5, 78, 196, 246, and 252)
4. In Rebecca Solnit’s book, *A Paradise Built in Hell: The Extraordinary Communities That Arise in Disaster*, she discusses how people during disasters become resourceful, altruistic and brave and that the communities that form are joyous. Did this happen in Gander, and why do you think that’s the case?
5. Which story was most powerful to you and why?
6. Have you ever lived through a crisis or natural disaster that forced you to rely on the goodwill of strangers? Discuss.
7. On pages 193-94, the author describes the feeling of the Hugo Boss CEO, “...given everything that was wrong in the world, it was reassuring to see that right now, right here, in one small corner of the planet, something was going right.... Here, the basic humanity of man wasn’t just surviving but thriving.” What other revelations did people have?
8. Eventually, Mr. Baldesserani chooses not to have a private jet pick him up and take him home. Why? This was 2001; do you see this happening today? (see also pages 247 and 251) Discuss.