

## **Catharine, Queen of the Tumbling Waters, by Cynthia G. Neale:**

### **Key Concepts and Suggested Interview Questions**

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1. Through the eyes of an obscure unsung heroine of history, a unique perspective of the momentous times of early American history is powerfully portrayed.
2. Catharine Montour lives with her famous grandmother and uncle who are cultural diplomats and go-betweens. She straddles the swirling worlds of the Iroquois (Haudenosaunee), French, American, and British while remaining grounded in her own identity.
3. The Montours are Iroquois and French and speak many languages. They and their fellow Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) and other Indians of various nations attend treaties and speak with eloquence, wit, and intelligence.
4. Benjamin Franklin, known to be intrigued and fascinated with the Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) Confederacy and their constitution, attends treaties and prints many of the speeches of the Indian chiefs. He approaches the Albany Congress with the suggestion that the colonies unite as the Iroquois have done since the late 1400s, but this is rejected.
5. Catharine Montour takes white captives to bargain with the Pennsylvania governor for her people to be given back their land. There is conflict with her peaceful nature and taking this stand.
6. Catharine Montour was known as an intelligent and genteel woman, fair, but demanding implicit obedience when she becomes the matriarch of her village in New York.
7. General George Washington initiated a campaign to destroy all Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) villages in New York and Pennsylvania in 1779 and General John Sullivan of New Hampshire led this campaign. Every village was to be destroyed, including the crops of an autumn harvest. No one was to be spared, whether they were enemies, allies, or neutral. Catharine Montour leads her people to safety to Fort Niagara in Canada.
8. The Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) were a powerful, dignified, and united confederacy for nearly three hundred years. They desired neutrality, but it was impossible and by the end of the American Revolution, their confederacy was torn apart. Catharine Montour, a woman of peace, but fierce as a warrior, saw the possibility of people living in unity with equality. Benjamin Franklin saw it, too. The Haudenosaunee had lived it before the Americans and led the way.

### **Suggested Interview Questions:**

1. I. What inspired you, a white woman, to write a novel about an obscure Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) and French woman?
2. Why is Catharine Montour unique and why is it important to tell her story?
3. Catharine Montour comes of age during the French and Indian War and the American Revolution. What did she want for her life and how do these significant historic events affect Catharine Montour, her family, and people?
4. Eventually, Catharine Montour becomes a leader of a village in the Seneca territory of the Iroquois (Haudenosaunee). Did she aspire to this position and what was her alliance during the tumultuous times of the American Revolution?
5. Catharine Montour is recorded having visited Philadelphia with Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) chiefs before and after the American Revolution. Why did she go and what influence may she and her people have had on the early development of this country?