

The “Code Girls: The Untold Story of the American Women Code Breakers of World War II” is a non-fiction work by Liza Mundy. It gives a brief background of the origins of coded messages but deals mainly with the women who worked during World War II. The U.S. military originally recruited women from colleges that showed aptitude for math, science and languages. At the outset, the only choices for these educated women were as schoolteachers in overcrowded classrooms. Codebreaking started in earnest at the start of the war. Enemy troop movements, supply chains, and naval positions were vital information that the Allies needed to win the war. Women were destined to fill the vacancies of men sent overseas to fight the war. In total, over 10,000 women were employed by the Army and Navy. They had to deal with long hours, overcrowded housing and discrimination, all the while being sworn to secrecy about the job they were performing. The cryptanalysts broke major codes and became so proficient that messages were being read almost as soon as they were being sent. Liza Mundy highlights the backgrounds, friendships, perseverance, and achievements of this diverse group of women. Although tedious at times, I would still recommend this book to anyone interested in the accomplishments of unsung women during an historic era in U.S. history.

*This book is available as an e-book