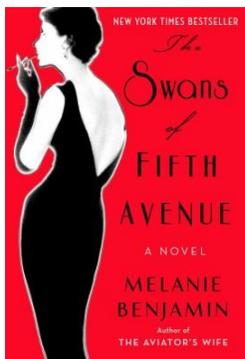


Lillie M. Evans Library District Book Club

August 28, 2017

Biography:



Melanie is a native of the Midwest, having grown up in Indianapolis where she pursued her first love, theater. After raising her two sons, Melanie, a life-long reader, decided to pursue a writing career. She published two novels under her real name, Melanie Hauser, before turning to historical fiction. Her previous historical novels include [Alice I Have Been](#), [The Autobiography of Mrs. Tom Thumb](#), and [The Aviator's Wife](#). Her novels have been translated in over fifteen languages, featured in national magazines such as *Good Housekeeping*, *People*, and *Entertainment Weekly*, and optioned for film. Melanie lives in Chicago with her husband, and near her two grown sons. When she isn't writing or speaking, she's reading. And always looking for new stories to tell. (Adapted from the author's website: <http://www.melaniebenjamin.com>)

Similar Resources:



Discussion Questions:

1. The Swans have very complicated relationships with one another. What ties these women together, despite their differences and the sometimes competitive nature of their friendships?
2. Truman is embraced wholeheartedly by the Swans when he first appears on the New York social scene. What do you think draws them to him?
3. What do you think of Truman's relationship with fame? At times, he seems willing to sacrifice almost anything (love, his health, and his friendships) in pursuit of the limelight. How does that serve him, ultimately?
4. Truman and Babe were both heavily influenced by their mothers. In what ways were their childhood experiences similar? In what ways were they different?
5. Babe and her sisters were raised for successful marriages. Did they live up to their mother's hopes?
6. A number of characters tell stories throughout the novel. What are some of the stories that you tell--about yourself or about others? In what ways do stories shape our experiences?
7. Discuss the significance of memory in this novel. In what ways do we distort our memories? What, if anything, is the significance of this?
8. How has the role of women in society shifted from the 1960s to today? Can you think of a woman who is the modern equivalent of Babe Paley and her circle of friends? (Questions issued by publisher.)