

LITERARY BOOK CLUB

August 2019 Selection

***The Female Persuasion* by Meg Wolitzer**

To be admired by someone we admire--we all yearn for this: the private, electrifying pleasure of being singled out by someone of esteem. But sometimes it can also mean entry to a new kind of life, a bigger world.

Greer Kadetsky is a shy college freshman when she meets the woman she hopes will change her life. Faith Frank, dazzlingly persuasive and elegant at sixty-three, has been a central pillar of the women's movement for decades, a figure who inspires others to influence the world. Upon hearing Faith speak for the first time, Greer--madly in love with her boyfriend, Cory, but still full of longing for an ambition that she can't quite place--feels her inner world light up. And then, astonishingly, Faith invites Greer to make something out of that sense of purpose, leading Greer down the most exciting path of her life as it winds toward and away from her meant-to-be love story with Cory and the future she'd always imagined.

Charming and wise, knowing and witty, Meg Wolitzer delivers a novel about power and influence, ego and loyalty, womanhood and ambition. At its heart, *The Female Persuasion* is about the flame we all believe is flickering inside of us, waiting to be seen and fanned by the right person at the right time. It's a story about the people who guide and the people who follow (and how those roles evolve over time), and the desire within all of us to be pulled into the light.

ISBN 9780399573231

Discussion Questions:

1. *The Female Persuasion* is about the relationship between a young woman and her mentor. What does Greer learn from Faith, and vice versa? In what ways do Greer and Faith surprise or disappoint each other? Have you ever had someone come into your life and change it forever?



2. Greer and Cory are high school sweethearts, but their romance is much deeper than their age might suggest. How do the social settings of their hometown and their families turn them into the couple that they are? Discuss the class differences between Greer's family and Cory's. How do family origins affect the characters' ambitions?
3. Cory is entirely consumed by grief after a family tragedy. Talk about the ways in which grief can change a person's goals. How does it alter Cory's life path? What do you think about Greer's reaction to Cory's grief-induced changes? Is she right to give him space? Is he right to push her away? Could this moment in their relationship have gone any other way?
4. Compare Zee's childhood with Greer's. Have their backgrounds influenced the people they have grown up to be, or the decisions they make, or the ambitions they follow?
5. What do you think about Greer's treatment of Zee and its effect on their friendship and their lives? Do you recognize Greer's emotional response to the idea of sharing her job with Zee? Were you surprised by Zee's reaction when she found out what really happened?
6. How has feminism changed between Faith's youth and Greer's youth? What do their generational differences show about the nature of progress? Discuss the portrayal of women's advocacy as it evolves over the course of the book.

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