

Book Club Discussion Questions  
Fifth Avenue Glamour Girl  
By Renée Rosen

1. Friendship is at the heart of this novel. However, in the beginning, Gloria says she never could have imagined that she and Estée would have become friends. What do you think drew these women to each other? Have you ever formed a friendship with someone you initially thought you had nothing in common with?

2. In the beginning of the novel, Gloria is the first to admit that she's helpless when it comes to taking care of herself. What do you think were the major turning points that allowed her to grow and become independent and self-sufficient? How much influence do you think Estée had on Gloria's transformation?

3. Because of Gus Dowaziac's crimes, Gloria was estranged from her father and other members of her family. Did you feel she was justified in keeping her past secret from those closest to her? Do you think their relationships would have changed if they'd known the truth earlier?

4. What did you think of Estée's relationship with Joe? How did you feel when she left him? Were you supportive of her decision to divorce him? What did you think about them reuniting and going into business together?

5. Gloria and Waller had an unspoken understanding about the nature of their relationship. Were you ever rooting for the two of them to become more involved, or were you satisfied by the terms of their so-called arrangement?

6. For much of the book Gloria goes out of her way to avoid getting romantically involved with anyone. Why do you think that was, and what was it about Edward that allowed her to lower her guard and let him in?

7. Estée was very determined to make a name for herself in the beauty industry. There were times when her drive could have been construed as brash and downright pushy. Did you find her sales tactics admirable or annoying?

8. Estée's public persona turned out to be very different from her humble beginnings. Did discovering the truth about her cause you to think less of her accomplishments? Did it change the way you think of her? Were you sympathetic or at least able to understand why she did what she did?

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9. A theme in this book is reinvention, and one could say that makeup is another tool for just that. Many women use it to camouflage, embellish and otherwise alter what they were born with. Do you think there's anything wrong with a woman using cosmetics to be her best? And with all that is available in terms of false eyelashes, hair extensions, plastic surgery and so on, where do you draw the line?
10. How did you feel about the way Gloria finally resolved her differences with her father and the rest of her family? Did you think she waited too long? Should she have forgiven her father for the crimes that he committed?
11. Family relationships can be complicated. Could you relate to any of what Gloria was going through? What do you think about the popularly held belief: You like because of, and you love in spite of?
12. Estée Lauder was a true pioneer in the cosmetic business, and to this day her company remains one of the major brands worldwide. Certain concepts that are now commonplace practices within the cosmetic industry came from Estée's own ingenuity. Can you identify some of the ways in which she revolutionized the makeup counter as we know it today? Aside from her own Estée Lauder brand, can you name the other companies that are now under the Estée Lauder umbrella?

Discussion questions by the publisher

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