

Book Club Resources

Dear Book Club Readers,

Thank you for choosing my novel for your book club. I'm delighted that you are spending time with Victoria Woodhull—a woman whose life was as extraordinary, complicated, and controversial as the era in which she lived.

Historical fiction offers something different from history alone. It allows us to step into the lives of people from another time, to imagine their private worlds and experience historical events through their eyes. The historical record provides the foundation, while imagination brings the people behind the events to life. The Author's Notes in the book explain how I sought to strike that balance in telling Victoria's story.

Victoria was not simply a woman ahead of her time, she was a woman who challenged her time, inspiring admiration in some and provoking fierce opposition in others. The stories told about her, shaped by opposition and sensationalism, gave rise to myths that have distorted her legacy and permeated both fiction and nonfiction for over a century.

I would be happy to join your book club virtually, or in person, if possible, to share with you my extraordinary journey to find the real woman buried beneath those myths.

Thank you for reading, for gathering, and for keeping Victoria's true legacy alive.

Happy Reading,

Kate

Discussion Questions

1. Did Victoria have to be controversial to be heard, or could she have changed the world by playing it safe?
2. Would Victoria have been considered so controversial if she had been a man?
3. How did Victoria's relationships with the people closest to her shape the woman she became?
4. When a woman challenges the conventions of her time, how much should she weigh her convictions against responsibilities to her family?
5. Was Victoria's greatest obstacle the laws that restricted women, the attitudes of the people around her, or something else?
6. How did public opinion shape Victoria's life? Did the stories people told about her become more powerful than the truth?
7. What does Victoria's story reveal about how history decides which people will be remembered and which will be forgotten?
8. What surprised you most about Victoria, and did your understanding of her change as you read?
9. What is the difference between making history and changing it? Did Victoria do one, or both?
10. If you could rewrite one chapter of Victoria's life, which would it be, and would you change the outcome?
11. What feels most different about women's lives today, and what feels frustratingly familiar?

12. What do you think Victoria would most like people to remember about her?