



Mrs. Benedict Arnold

OFFICIAL BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. Like many women of the eighteenth century, Peggy is introduced to the marriage mart in her teens, later marrying Benedict at only eighteen. How does her age influence her preoccupations and desires?
2. Anxiety is a significant part of Peggy's identity. For much of her adolescence and early adulthood, she faces many challenges brought on by her nature. How does the theme of obsession manifest throughout the novel?
3. Peggy had many motivations behind her actions throughout the novel—her family's safety, her friendship with André, and the future of her child. Which of these factors would sway you the most?
4. Whilst Peggy is eager to enter the political fray, her immediate family remains resolutely neutral. How does her family's stance hinder or propel Peggy's ambitions?



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5. Benedict and Peggy experience challenges in their marriage: alcoholism, financial strife, fears of infidelity, and, of course, a war raging outside their door. How does their marital woe drive them in their decisions?
6. Stansbury and Odell teach Peggy how to write letters in code in order to communicate with André. They use different inks, cyphers, and different burning techniques to conceal their messages. In what ways are these letters symbolic of the actual miscommunications that transpire throughout the novel?
7. After Peggy's pregnancy is revealed, how does Benedict change?
8. After Washington, Hamilton, and Lafayette discover Benedict's act of treason, Peggy remarks, "These men, sure as history, would be cast in bronze on rearing stallions, their images towering from plinths in the finest parks, while everything but Benedict's traitoring would be erased." How does the concept of legacy shape Benedict's actions? How does it shape Peggy's?
9. Throughout the novel, there are many smaller betrayals before the ultimate act of treason—betrayal between couples, friends, and family. How do we decide who to forgive and in what manner? Would you too forgive in the face of duplicity?
10. Throughout history, there have been many women revealed as the true masterminds behind powerful men. What other historical women come to mind after reading Peggy's story?

