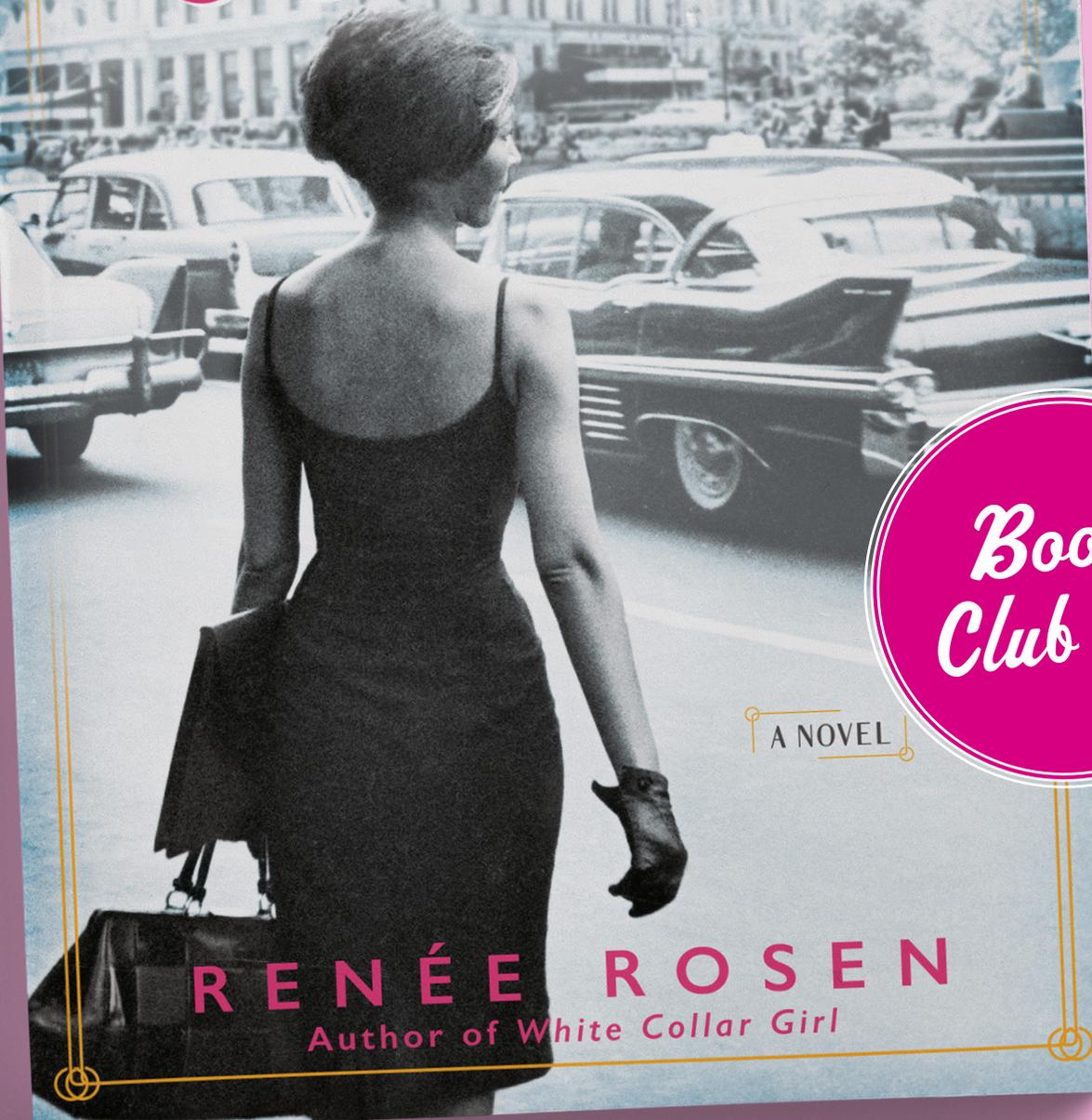


"Renée Rosen is my go-to for whip-smart heroines who love their work....  
*Park Avenue Summer* is a delightful summer cocktail of a read!"  
—KATE QUINN, author of *The Alice Network*

# PARK AVENUE SUMMER



Book  
Club Kit

A NOVEL

RENÉE ROSEN

Author of *White Collar Girl*



Penguin  
Random  
House

# DEAR BOOK CLUB MEMBERS,

Thanks so much for selecting *Park Avenue Summer* for your book club pick. I love book clubs and the idea of a group of women (and occasionally men) coming together and bonding over their love of reading and sometimes wine!

Of the six novels that I've written, I have to say that I had the most fun with this one. I think in large part that has to do with the subject matter. Helen Gurley Brown was a fascinating woman, a true badass and free spirit, who at the same time was vulnerable and quirky.

I can remember reading *Cosmopolitan* magazine and stealing my older sister's copies, leafing through the sexy articles, studying the Bedside Astrologer as if it were the gospel. And of course, Helen Gurley Brown's Step Into My Parlor column was a must. For those of you who are too young to remember, I'm especially excited about introducing younger readers to a true feminist icon who (as you'll see in *Park Avenue Summer*) has impacted all our lives more than we probably realize.

To help you make the most of your time together with *Park Avenue Summer*, my publisher and I have put together this Book Club Kit, so I hope you enjoy going through it. Also, as you plan for your get-together, keep in mind that I love meeting with book clubs via Skype or FaceTime. I've met some wonderful women this way and have formed many new friendships. I'd love the chance to get to know your group, too, so if you'd like to set up a visit, **just contact me through my website: [reneerosen.com](http://reneerosen.com).**

As an avid reader myself, I know that there's never enough time to read all the books we want to, and so I never take it for granted when someone picks up one of my novels. It's because of you that I'm able to do the work I love, and that's never lost on me. Thank you for that.

Happy readings!

*Renée*

# Channel Your Inner H • G • B

## Playlist

“What’s New Pussycat?”  
by Tom Jones

“These Boots Are  
Made for Walkin’”  
by Nancy Sinatra

“Mustang Sally”  
by Wilson Pickett

“River Deep,  
Mountain High”  
by Tina Turner

“Will You Love  
Me Tomorrow”  
by The Shirelles

“Wild Thing”  
by The Troggs

“Happy Together”  
by The Turtles

“I Got You Babe”  
by Sonny and Cher

“At Last”  
by Etta James

“Piece of My Heart”  
by Janis Joplin

“Be My Baby”  
by The Ronettes

“Respect”  
by Aretha Franklin

## Honest to goodness beauty tips FROM SEX AND THE SINGLE GIRL

### Hair

Shampoo your hair once a week. Use cornmeal as a dry shampoo in between regular washing. “Just toss it in and brush it out.”

### Body

To rid yourself of excess body hair, HGB recommends bleaching: Mix 2/3 part bleaching peroxide with 1/3 ammonia and “some soap flakes. Slather this on thick over arms and thighs, sit in the sun to dry.”

### Nails

She recommends using Sally Hansen’s Hard as Nail (59 cents) and drinking one packet of Knox Gelatine mixed in fruit juice daily.

### Lips

“You can do marvelous things to change their size and shape with color. I know because I draw on a completely different mouth than my own every day of my life.”

### HGB’s Best Makeup Trick

She favored Anita d’ Foged Day Dew and Max Factor’s Pan-Cake. “To minimize a big nose, run a streak of dark makeup right down its center.”

# Recipes from SEX AND THE SINGLE GIRL

Very few people cared less about food than HGB,  
as evidenced by her hilarious go-to recipes and menu plans.

## *Crabmeat Puffs*

6 slices of white bread (crusts removed)  
3 1-ounce slices of American cheese  
1 cup crabmeat (fresh or frozen)  
2 eggs  
1 cup milk  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
Freshly ground pepper

Places three slices of bread, each covered with a slice of cheese, across the bottom a buttered shallow pan.

Cover the cheese with crabmeat and top with remaining slices of bread.

Beat eggs, milk, salt and pepper together and pour over bread.

Chill for 2 hours.

Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Serve immediately with cocktails.

## *Chateau Potatoes*

Cut raw potatoes into ball with melon scooper and soak in cold water. Drain and season with salt and pepper. Cook slowly in skillet with lots of butter until golden brown. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve at once.

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## *Green Salad*

Lettuce • Cucumbers  
Scallions • Watercress

Serve with dressing of sour cream, mayonnaise, garlic powder and fresh dill.

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## *Chloroform Cocktails*

Make a pot of coffee and boil down to 6 cups in a saucepan. Mix coffee with a fifth of gin or vodka and one quart vanilla ice cream. Serve in a Pilsner glass and top with nutmeg.

# Fun Facts

Helen Gurley Brown's *Sex and the Single Girl* sold 2 million copies in three weeks when it was published in 1962.

At the time of her death, *Cosmo* published 64 editions around the world and generated \$432 million in advertising revenue.

Helen Gurley Brown held 17 secretarial positions before she was promoted to copywriter at Foote, Cone & Belding in Los Angeles.

Peggy Olson's character in *Mad Men* was based on Helen, who was one of the first female copywriters in the advertising industry.



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you think Helen Gurley Brown was a feminist? How do you think her brand of feminism compared to Betty Friedan's or Gloria Steinem's?
2. What did you think of Helen's advice to Alice regarding her Don Juan? Do you agree that Don Juans are unavoidable and that everyone woman has that one man she can't say "no" to?
3. Speaking of Alice's Don Juan, did you understand why she got involved with Erik? Were you sympathetic to her situation or did you want her to break it off with him sooner? Or not enter into it at all?
4. Under Helen Gurley Brown's leadership, *Cosmopolitan* became a groundbreaking magazine for women and inspired many copycat publications. Were you a *Cosmo* reader? And if so, what do you remember most about that magazine? What other magazines did you read growing up?
5. Can you define today's *Cosmo Girl*? How has she evolved through the years?
6. When it comes to iconic female magazine editors, the two biggest names are probably Helen Gurley Brown and Anna Wintour. How do you think these two women are similar? How are they different?
7. In the book, Alice looks to both Helen Gurley Brown and Elaine Sloan as role models and mentors. How important do you think it was for a young woman back then to have that kind of guidance? And do you think it's still important in today's world?
8. In today's digital age we've seen the decline of physical magazines. How do you feel about publications moving from newsstands to the Internet? Do you miss reading them physically?
9. If you'd been put in Ali's position, would you have told Helen that members of the Hearst staff were sabotaging her? How do you think you would have handled that sort of predicament?
10. What prominent themes can you find in *Park Avenue Summer*? Do you think any of them are still relevant in today's world?
11. Alice, like so many people throughout history, moved to New York City to pursue her dream. Certainly, there are easier and more affordable places to live, and yet Manhattan's draw proves irresistible to some. Why do you think that is?
12. How did you feel about the ending of the book and were you surprised to learn where Ali ended up?

# ABOUT RENÉE ROSEN

**Renée Rosen** is a bestselling author of historical fiction. Renée is a native of Akron, Ohio, and a graduate of the American University in Washington, D.C. She now lives in Chicago where she is at work on a new novel, *The Social Graces*, a story about Mrs. Astor and Mrs. Vanderbilt vying for control of New York society during the Gilded Age. (Coming in 2021 from Penguin Random House/Berkley).

She frequently visits with book clubs (either in person or via Skype/FaceTime) and is available for speaking engagements. For more information, feel free to contact her using the contact form on her website.

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