

Queens *of the Age of Chivalry*

DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. The five Queens detailed in this book lived through some of the most turbulent events in British history—the toppling of two kings, the Hundred Years War, the Black Death, and the Peasants’ Revolt. How did these extraordinary events impact each of the queens?
2. In the introduction, Weir writes of Isabella of France, “I still believe that she did not deserve her reputation as ‘the She-Wolf of France.’” Do you agree or disagree?
3. Which queen did you like most? And which one was most effective in her role?
4. Arguably, Philippa of Hainault was the most popular of the five queens Weir covers. Do you agree? Why, or why not?
5. Isabella of Valois was only six years old when she married Richard II, who preferred her to her rivals because her youth meant he could “bring her up to his own mind.” Discuss the disparity between the romantic notion of “courtly love” and the realities of the politically driven marriages of the time.
6. Discuss the moniker “The Age of Chivalry.” In what ways does this era both live up to and fail to live up to its name?
7. What did this book teach you about the differences and similarities between the roles of men and women in society during the medieval versus the contemporary era?
8. Did these queens have any real power? How did each of them control events around them, even minimally? Did one of them have more power than the others, in your opinion?
9. How do the moral values and priorities of the Age of Chivalry differ from those of today?
10. What did you learn about this period of history that you did not previously know? Were there any revelations in particular—name as many as you like—that particularly struck or interested you?