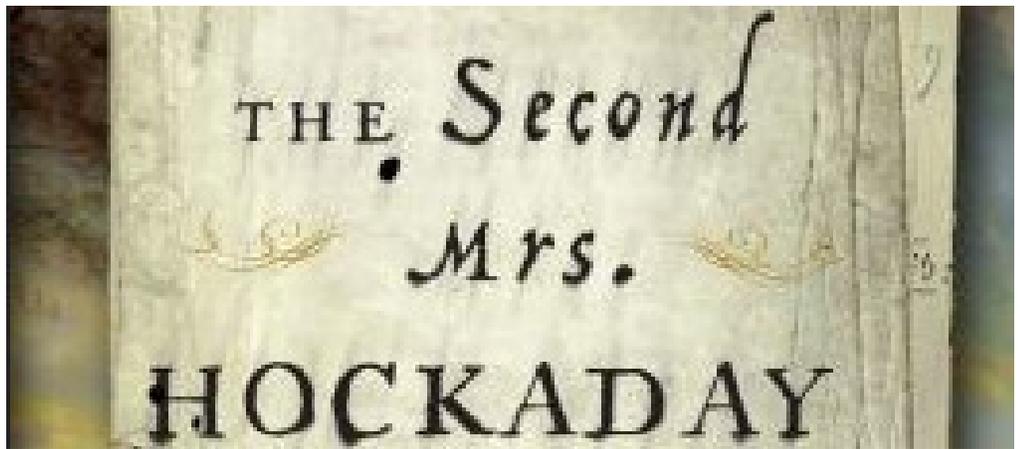


Book Club Kits!



About the Author:

Susan Rivers was awarded the Julie Harris Playwriting Award for Overnight Lows and the New York Drama League Award for Understatements. She is also the recipient of two playwriting grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and has had short fiction published in the Santa Monica Review. In 2007 she earned an MFA in fiction writing from Queens University of Charlotte in North Carolina, where she was also awarded a Regional Artist Grant from the Arts and Sciences Council. She currently lives and writes in a small town in upstate South Carolina. *The Second Mrs. Hockaday* is her first novel.

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/28110868-the-second-mrs-hockaday>



Inside the kit:

(8) book copies

(1) book club guide

About the Book:

When Major Gryffth Hockaday is called to the front lines of the Civil War, his new bride is left to care for her husband's three-hundred-acre farm and infant son. Placidia, a mere teenager herself living far from her family and completely unprepared to run a farm or raise a child, must endure the darkest days of the war on her own. By the time Major Hockaday returns two years later, Placidia is bound for jail, accused of having borne a child in his absence and murdering it. What really transpired in the two years he was away?

Inspired by a true incident, this saga conjures the era with uncanny immediacy. Amid the desperation of wartime, Placidia sees the social order of her Southern homeland unravel as her views on race and family are transformed. A love story, a story of racial divide, and a story of the South as it fell in the war, *The Second Mrs. Hockaday* reveals how that generation-- and the next--began to see their world anew. (From Goodreads)

Suggested Reads:

Frazier, Charles
Cold Mountain

Hicks, Robert
The Widow of the South

Nixon, Cornelia
Jarrettsville

Hambly Barbara
The Emancipator's Wife

1. *The Second Mrs. Hockaday* is told through letters and diary entries. Did you find this method of storytelling engaging or confusing or off-putting? Is the format sufficient in fleshing out the characters...or does it lead to rather sketchy or thin character development? What about the change in time frames between later generations?
2. What do we learn of Placidia and Millie through their correspondence. What do their letters reveal about themselves, personally, and especially about southern life for women during the Civil War? What do you think of Placidia? Do you sense a touch of Scarlett O'Hara in her...or not?
3. Why is Placidia so evasive in response to Millie's questions?
4. What role does Achilles Fincher Hockaday play? His nine-page letter doesn't make an appearance until Part 2 and readers have no clue as to who he is. Were you confused?
5. What do you think of Major Hockaday? One reviewer described him as Bronte-esque, i.e., Mr. Rochester or Heathcliff, perhaps. Do you see any resemblance?
6. Mystery stories ratchet up suspense by withholding information, releasing it bit by bit—until the big revelation at the end. Does Susan Rivers keep you in the dark? Is this story a page-turner? Were you surprised when you got to the end? Or had you figured out what happened beforehand?
7. Talk about the outfall of the buried secret on future generations. How do Placidia's offsprings come to grips with the damage left in the wake of the scandal—and the war?

<http://www.litlovers.com/reading-guides/13-fiction/10866-second-mrs-hockaday-rivers?start=3>