

challenges do women still face in such situations, even with the cultural changes that have taken place since Jane Austen was writing?

4. Which cad is worse: Schine's Kit Maybank or Austen's John Willoughby? If Miranda could meet Marianne, what advice would the two characters give each other?

5. The fact that Miranda and Annie are not Joseph's biological children also mirrors Austen's plot. Would Joseph have handled the divorce differently if the girls had been his biological daughters?

6. Is Frederick a good father to Gwen and Evan? What stokes Annie's attraction to him throughout the novel?

7. Is Betty very much like her relatives? Which of your family members would you turn to if you were in her situation?

8. What accounts for the similarities and differences between Annie and Miranda? Are both women simply driven by their temperaments, or have they shaped each other's personalities throughout their lives? How does their relationship compare to yours with your own siblings?

9. Schine's work often blends humor with misfortune, such as Miranda's undoing by authors who turn out to be plagiarists and extreme fabricators. What other aspects of the novel capture the tragicomic way life unfolds?

10. Why is it so hard for Joseph to understand why his stepdaughters are mad at him? Why does he prefer Felicity to Betty? Discuss the revelations about Amber. In what way is her romantic situation similar to Felicity's?

11. Ultimately, how do the Weissmanns reconcile sense with sensibility? Who are the book's most rational characters? Who is the most emotional?

12. What makes Roberts remarkable (eventually)? Who are the overlooked characters in your life story?

13. What aspects of the ending surprised you the most? What had you predicted for Betty, and for Leanne? Do the novel's closing scenes reflect an Austen ending?

14. Does the storytelling style in **The Three Weissmanns of Westport** remind you of Schine's other portraits of love? What makes the Weissmanns' story unique?

Author Bio

Cathleen Schine is the author of *KÜNSTLERS IN PARADISE*, *THE GRAMMARIANS*, *THE THREE WEISSMANNS OF WESTPORT* and *THE LOVE LETTER*, among other novels. She has contributed to *The New Yorker*, *The New York Review of Books*, *The New York Times Magazine* and *The New York Times Book Review*. She lives in Los Angeles.

Critical Praise

"Schine has a gift for illuminating wholly believable yet somehow unexpected characters with a single line."

The Three Weissmanns of Westport

by Cathleen Schine

Publication Date: February 1, 2011

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: Picador

ISBN-10: 031268052X

ISBN-13: 9780312680527