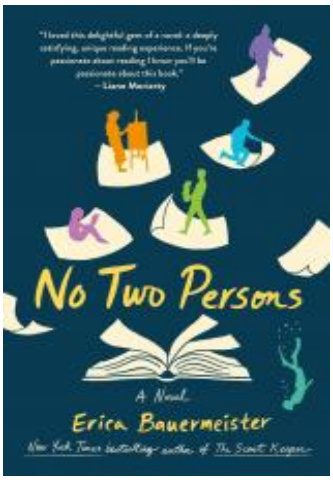
ReadingGroupGuides
The online community for reading groups

No Two Persons

by Erica Bauermeister



About the Book

One book. Nine readers. Ten changed lives. *New York Times* bestselling author Erica Bauermeister?s NO TWO PERSONS is ?a gloriously original celebration of fiction, and the ways it deepens our lives.? (Nina de Gramont, *New York Times* bestselling author of THE CHRISTIE AFFAIR)

Alice has always wanted to be a writer. Her talent is innate, but her stories remain safe and detached, until a devastating event breaks her heart open, and she creates a stunning debut novel. Her words, in turn, find their way to readers, from a teenager hiding her homelessness, to a free diver pushing himself beyond endurance, an artist furious at the world around her, a bookseller in search of love, a widower rent by grief. Each one is drawn into Alice?s novel; each one discovers something different that alters their perspective, and presents new pathways forward for their lives.

Together, their stories reveal how books can affect us in the most beautiful and unexpected of ways --- and how we are all more closely connected to one another than we might think.

Discussion Guide

1. The title NO TWO PERSONS comes from the quote ?no two persons ever read the same book, or saw the same picture.? What does that mean to you? Have you experienced this yourself?

2. The opening line of *Theo* is ?Wandering is a gift given only to the lost.? What does the phrase mean to Alice? Lara? The Cultus book reviewer? Miranda? Have you ever felt like a wanderer?

3. In The Writer, Professor Roberts says: ?If you think about it, every story --- even the most fantastical --- is grounded in things we already know.? How do you think Alice?s life informed the novel she ended up writing?

4. Why do you think Lara, the literary assistant, has such a strong response to *Theo*?

5. Which characters in NO TWO PERSONS elicited the strongest reactions in you? Why do you think that was?

6. What do you think Tyler gets from free diving?

7. In The Bookseller, Kit says to Annalise: ?I?m just saying that a character can be as real as a person. Or teach you as much, anyway.? Do you agree? If so, what fictional characters have been meaningful in your life?

8. In The Caretaker, Abigail?s margin comments in her copy of *Theo* draw a connection between Theo, William and the mules in the mine. What do you think she was seeing?

9. In The Coordinator, Juliet?s experience of *Theo* is affected because she listens to an audiobook. How do you think audiobooks affect our reading experiences?

10. There are no quoted passages from *Theo* other than the first line. We learn his story in bits, through the characters of NO TWO PERSONS. How does that affect your understanding of Theo?

11. In The Agent, Nola and Madeline have a conversation about what kind of endings they like in books. Nola likes to be left thinking, while Madeline believes things should be more nailed down. What kind do you prefer?

12. What do you think about Madeline?s choice for her own ending?

13. Initially, the characters in NO TWO PERSONS seem unrelated to one another, but as the book progresses, connections begin to surface. How many connections can you find? Which ones surprised you the most?

14. At the end of the book, Alice finds inspiration in an unlikely place. Where have you found inspiration?

Author Bio

Erica Bauermeister is the author of NO TWO PERSONS, THE SCENT KEEPER, THE SCHOOL OF ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS, JOY FOR BEGINNERS and THE LOST ART OF MIXING. She is also the co-author of nonfiction works 500 GREAT BOOKS BY WOMEN: A Reader?s Guide and LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE GIRLS: 375 Great Books for Readers 2-14.

She has a PhD in literature from the University of Washington, and has taught there and at Antioch University. She is a founding member of the Seattle7Writers and currently lives in Port Townsend, Washington.

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