Reading Guide:  
*Daughters of the Winter Queen*  
by Nancy Goldstone

1. We have read many books about powerful women in Europe and in the United States. How does Elizabeth Stuart measure up with previous women in history? Did you know much about her before reading this book?

2. How would you describe Elizabeth’s childhood and young adulthood? Were there moments when you felt badly for her?

3. Describe the complicated world of dynastic marriages in the 17th century.

4. How might European politics have been different if religion was not such a dominant force in the 17th century?

5. How does Elizabeth show strength and bravery throughout her life? Were there moments that you believed her to be cold and calculating? How does she manipulate the European political scene?

6. The Army of the Palatine has a number of military disasters. Which one is the most egregious in your opinion?

7. Which of the four sisters would you like to have as a friend? Did you feel like the author gave them enough attention compared to the amount of time devoted to their mother?

8. Did it surprise you that the “Marquis d’Epinay” was so easily able to insinuate himself into the Winter Queen’s affections? What do you think of the way the family responded to the scandal that followed his involvement with the queen and his subsequent death? How did this episode affect the daughters of the family?

9. How does the Treaty of Westphalia influence the future of Europe? What effect does it have of the Winter Queen’s family?

10. Did this book help clarify this complicated period of European history? Did the author’s style make reading about this time period interesting and engaging?
Author Biography

Nancy Goldstone is the author of five previous books including *The Rival Queens: Catherine de’ Medici, Her Daughter Marguerite de Valois, and the Betrayal that Ignited a Kingdom; The Maid and the Queen: The Secret History of Joan of Arc; Four Queens: The Provençal Sisters Who Ruled Europe;* and *The Lady Queen: The Notorious Reign of Joanna I, Queen of Naples, Jerusalem, and Sicily.* She has also coauthored six books with her husband, Lawrence Goldstone. She has a BA in history from Cornell University and a master’s degree in international affairs from Columbia. She lives in Sagaponack, New York, with her husband. They have a college-aged daughter, Emily.