

5. How have Fey's growing-up years shaped her? Does she devote time (and ink) telling us? If not, why not?

6. Fey takes issue with various comments, by males, that women are not funny. Here is Fey's own comment on that stance:

It's an impressively arrogant move to conclude that just because you don't like something, it is empirically not good. I don't like Chinese food, but I don't write articles trying to prove that it doesn't exist.

Do you agree with her...or are men funnier than women? Is their humor different?

7. Artistically and philosophically speaking, authors tend to explore life's tragedies and the ways in which ordinary individuals cope with sorrow. Yet Fey finds that real life teaches her about comedy. What, then, is funny about life—is it funny? What kind of funny? Have you ever made observations—about people and situations—that could be turned into comedy skits or one-liners?

8. Talk about Fey's how-to advice on improv comedy. How did it prepare her for Saturday Night Live and 30 Rock?

9. What's with the book's cover? Why would Fey have given herself hairy, masculine arms?

10. What does Fey tell us about her personal life—her husband, for instance? What do we know about him?

11. What do you think of Tina Fey? Has reading *Bossypants* altered your view of her? Why or why not?

12. Is Fey really Liz Lemon...or is Liz really Tina Fey? Who wrote this book—Tina or Liz? In other words, are they one in the same?

Discussion Questions

Book Club in a Bag

Tina Fey *Bossypants*



“A book that reminds you why Fey has succeeded where so many have failed — because she is precise, professional and hilarious.”

— Mary McNamara,
LA Times



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Elizabeth Stamatina
“Tina” Fey is an American actress, comedian, writer and producer, known for her work on the NBC sketch comedy series *Saturday Night Live* (SNL), the NBC comedy series *30 Rock*, and films such as *Mean Girls* (2004) and *Baby Mama* (2008).

Fey first broke into comedy as a featured player in the Chicago-based improvisational comedy group *The Second City*. She then joined SNL as a writer, later becoming head writer and a performer, known for her position as co-anchor in the

“Weekend Update” segment. In 2004 she adapted the screenplay *Mean Girls* in which she also co-starred. After leaving SNL in 2006, she created the television series *30 Rock*, a situation comedy loosely based on her experiences at SNL. In the series, Fey portrays the head writer of a fictional sketch comedy series. In 2008, she starred in the comedy film *Baby Mama*, alongside former SNL co-star Amy Poehler. Fey next appeared in the 2010 comedy films *Date Night* and *Megamind*.

She has received seven Emmy Awards, three Golden Globe Awards, four Screen Actors Guild Awards, and four Writers Guild of America Awards. She was singled out as the performer who had the greatest impact on culture and entertainment in 2008 by the Associated Press, which gave her its AP Entertainer of the Year award for her satirical portrayal of Republican vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin in a guest appearance on SNL. In 2010, Fey was the recipient of the Mark Twain Prize for American Humor, the youngest-ever winner of the award.

Book Summary

Before Liz Lemon, before “Weekend Update,” before “Sarah Palin,” Tina Fey was just a young girl with a dream: a recurring stress dream that she was being chased through a local airport by her middle-school gym teacher. She also had a dream that one day she would be a comedian on TV.

She has seen both these dreams come true.

At last, Tina Fey’s story can be told. From her youthful days as a vicious nerd to her tour of duty on *Saturday Night Live*; from her passionately halfhearted pursuit of physical beauty to her life as a mother eating things off the floor; from her one-sided college romance to her nearly fatal honeymoon—from the beginning of this paragraph to this final sentence.

Tina Fey reveals all, and proves what we’ve all suspected: you’re no one until someone calls you bossy.

(Includes Special, Never-Before-Solicited Opinions on Breastfeeding, Princesses, Photoshop, the Electoral Process, and Italian Rum Cake!). (From the publisher.)

Discussion Questions

1. Readers and reviewers are all over the map on *Bossypants*: some see it as a revealing memoir, others as an act of concealment, revealing very little of her personal life. Where do you stand on Fey’s book? Is the book a memoir...or a comedy book filled with one-liners. Is it humorous...or insightful...or neither? Do you want more? Or does it leave you satisfied?
 2. Speaking of one-liners, which ones do you find funny or, perhaps, insightful? Talk about the lines that tickled your funny bone...or others that struck the philosopher in you.
 3. Fey has never been afraid to poke fun at female vulnerability...or to twist it. How does she do that here? Do you appreciate her take on the feminine? What matters most to Fey about being a woman? What matters most to you—whether you’re a woman...or a man?
 4. Which essay pieces do you find most engaging or provocative—the women’s magazine parody, the “prayer” for her daughter, the pretend facts-of-life brochure, or the satirical “me time” for parents?
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