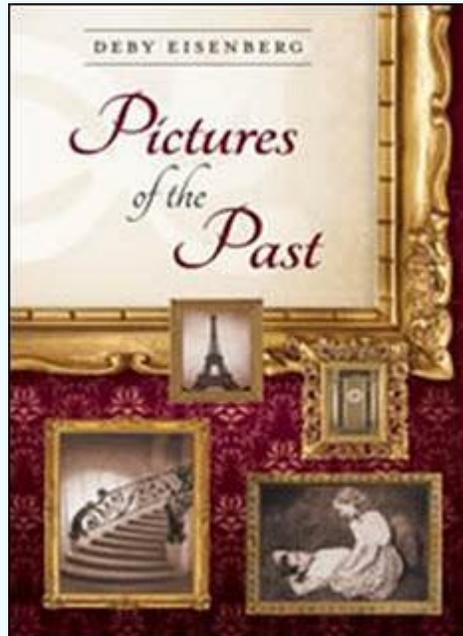


From C. Lewis dadofdivas.com Blog Book Review - *Pictures of the Past*



About the Book

As a Book Club leader for the past sixteen years, Deby Eisenberg challenged herself to write a story that her avid readers could not put down and would love to discuss.

The fascinating book that resulted, titled *Pictures of the Past*, is a compelling family saga spanning nearly seventy years, reliving events from pre-World War II Europe, but beginning in contemporary times. An Impressionist painting, hanging for decades in the Art Institute of Chicago and donated by the charismatic philanthropist Taylor Woodmere, is challenged by an elderly woman as a Nazi theft.

Inspired by her passion for literary research, art, travel and Jewish history, the author has crafted an epic tale that sweeps through Chicago, Paris and Berlin and combines the classic themes of man versus society, good versus evil, and the loss of innocence.

“I structured my novel around the prominent locales and historical events of the eras that have always intrigued me,” says Eisenberg. “I found that my earliest readers thought I had written it specifically with their favorites in mind.”

Taylor is from wealthy Kenilworth, and his gripping and passionate history takes the reader back to 1937. Sent to Paris on family business, he reluctantly leaves his girlfriend Emily, a spoiled debutante. But once in Europe, he immediately falls in love – first, with a Henri Lebasque painting, then with the enchanting Sarah Berger of Berlin. After Taylor returns home, the Berger family becomes trapped in the Nazi web, and any attempts for the new lovers to be reunited are thwarted.

The story moves from the mansions of Chicago’s North Shore and Newport, Rhode Island, to the bustling streets of European capitals, to the deck of the doomed ship, The St. Louis.

And the timeline alternates with the modern story of Rachel Gold, a beautiful girl in the late 1960's, who, left pregnant and abandoned by Court Woodmere, Taylor's son, goes to New York to live with her aunt, a Holocaust survivor.

The novel approaches this most serious subject of the Holocaust with vibrancy and heart. "As readers, we can better understand horrific events of global proportion through identification and empathy with individual experiences," Eisenberg states.

With a heart-grabbing ending, *Pictures of the Past* is a personalized portrayal of events and changing cultures over several generations. From a world torn by the horrors of war, a love story emerges that endures through years of separation.



About the Author

Deby Eisenberg is the leader of an established suburban Chicago book club. With a Masters Degree from the University of Chicago, she is a former literature, creative writing and journalism high school teacher. She has worked as a part time journalist and has served on a number of organization boards, including the Women's Board of Jewish Federation. She and her husband, Dr. Michael Eisenberg, live in Riverwoods, Illinois, and have three adult children and two grandchildren.

My Take on the Book

This was a great researched historical novel. As a reader you are drawn into the book and you truly feel like you are there. The author also did an amazing job at bringing together a list of characters that were so memorable. The book also was a fun, intriguing tale that kept me engaged and interested from the first to last page. The book does an amazing job at stirring up emotions and allows you to truly become one with the story itself.