

*NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF
SWEET SALT AIR*

BARBARA
DELINSKY
commitments



Commitments
by
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Discussion Guide

1. The characters in *Commitments* certainly develop and change drastically throughout the course of the novel, nevertheless, they start, and move forward from various backgrounds, viewpoints, and ideologies. Which characters, if any, did you relate to the most?
2. One of the major subplots within the story is Sabrina's relationship to her son, Nicky. How do you think you would handle her situation?
3. In the beginning of the novel, Sabrina and Derek would surely categorize their relationship as contrasting—even contradictory. How does that dynamic change? Do you believe that both Sabrina and Derek were “meant to be,” and consequently, actually begin to form a sustaining bond by the end of the novel? Do you believe that some things are “meant to be?”
4. How does the idea of commitment cultivate and grow in the story? Do any of these instances remind you of a major commitment in your own life?
5. Sabrina comes from, and is restored by, her family of fiction writers. How would you say this environment affects her throughout the story? Considering Sabrina's characterization as a serious and logical person, how would you say her family members alter that representation?
6. Though Derek is technically the only character who is imprisoned in the story, many other characters feel trapped within their lives. How do the limitations that Sabrina, J.B., Maura—and even Nicky—face, help to deepen the overall story?
7. *Commitments* takes place in various settings, most prominently New York City and the Berkshires in New England. How does location affect the development of the story?

8. Despite learning more and more about Derek through his relationship with Sabrina, there is still an air of mystery to his identity. Do you think we needed to know all of the details of Derek's crimes? How does Derek's admission to Sabrina at the end intensify his place within the story?

9. The book ends with a bit of a cliff hanger. Do you believe that everything from Sabrina and Derek's relationship to Nicky's future will endure based on chance? What other obstacles do you think the characters will face beyond the last page?