

Discussion Questions for *Queen of the Mardi Gras Ball* by Lynn Shurr

1. Discuss the quote at the start of the book. How does it apply to Rosamond St. Rochelle?
2. Women got the vote in 1920. They cropped their hair, shortened their skirts, took up drinking and smoking in public, but in conservative families like the St. Rochelles, the Church and tradition still had power over their lives. Is Roz just another rebellious teen at the start of the book or do her feelings go deeper?
3. Why does Roz eventually succumb to marrying Buster Boylan?
4. This is the era of Jim Crow laws in the South. Black people are kept in their “place” by the power structure. How do Roz’s black servants attempt to help her without losing their jobs? What small bits of power do they hold?
5. In New Orleans, Roz is protected by her family’s wealth and position from the scandal of her divorce. How do the St. Rochelles both help and hinder her?
6. Journeying to Chapelle, Roz encounters Pierre’s way of life. Though both families have French origins, how do they differ?
7. Do you resent or understand Pierre’s not coming to her side at once when Roz arrives in Chapelle?
8. Small town life and gossip cause Roz to act outrageously again at Broussard’s Barn. What about that incident is a turning point in her life?
9. Roz intrudes into the world of black women who support themselves. She is not welcome there. How does she gain acceptance?
10. Midwives literally held life and death in their hands in the days when most women gave birth at home and abortions were illegal. How does Roz use her new skills to help both white and black women?
11. The Great Flood of 1927 is another turning point in the book. How does it affect Roz’s life?
12. Did you find the epilogue satisfying, or would you rather the book ended with the wedding in the refugee camp?

Contact Lynn at lynn.shurr@yahoo.com to schedule a Skype meeting with your group.