



HIGHLAND PARK
CONSERVATIVE TEMPLE
Congregation Anshe Emeth

*HPCT-CAE Sisterhood presents their
Spring Book Discussion*

Bessie: A Novel

By Linda Kass

*Thursday, May 9th
7:00 p.m.*

Moderated by Debbie Gerber

*Hosted by Eva Ronnen in the
Community Room at
30 South Adelaide Avenue,
Highland Park*



Just days after the close of World War II, Bess Myerson, the daughter of poor Russian Jewish immigrants living in the Bronx, is competing in the Miss America pageant. At stake: a \$5,000 scholarship. The tension and excitement in Atlantic City's Warner Theatre are palpable, especially for traumatized Jews rooting for one of their own. So begins *Bessie*.

Drawing on biographical and historical sources, *Bessie* reimagines the early life of Bess Myerson, who, in 1945 at age twenty-one, remarkably rises to become one of the most famous women in America. This intimate fictional portrait reveals the transformation of the nearly six-foot-tall, self-deprecating yet talented preteen into an exemplar of beauty, a peripheral quality in her world, where success is measured by intellectual attainment. Yet it is the focus on her beauty, and the secular world of pageantry, that she must choose to escape her roots and fulfill her fierce desire to achieve and become someone for whom great things happen.

Bessie is a tender study of a bold young woman living at a precarious moment in our cultural history as she searches for love and acceptance, eager to make her mark on the world.

Please RSVP by May 6th to

Marcia Berkin at 732-249-0327 or msemrg@aol.com