

The Rosie Effect



Graeme Simsion

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PRAISE FOR *THE ROSIE EFFECT*

'There's no sophomore [second-novel] slump here... It's a funny novel that also made me think about relationships: what makes them work and how we have to keep investing time and energy to make them better. A sweet, entertaining, and thought-provoking book.'

BILL GATES

'Laugh-out loud funny, poignant and so ingenious and compelling you feel as if you want to jump into the world of the novel and join in.'

AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY

'[A] romantic comedy that's just as smart, funny and heartwarming as the original.'

WASHINGTON POST

ABOUT GRAEME SIMSION

Graeme Simsion is the internationally bestselling author of *The Rosie Project*, *The Rosie Effect*, *The Rosie Result*, *The Best of Adam Sharp* and *Two Steps Forward*, which he co-authored with his wife, Anne Buist.

A READER'S INTRODUCTION TO *THE ROSIE RESULT*

In this highly anticipated sequel to the *New York Times* bestselling novel *The Rosie Project*, Don Tillman and his new wife, Rosie, find themselves with a new and unexpected project—a baby on the way.

When he and Rosie moved to New York City, Don was willing to make a few adjustments to his rigidly structured lifestyle. But nothing could have prepared him for the arrival of Bud (baby under development). Soon Rosie is overwhelmed by Don's overzealous research and retreats into her thesis studies.

Luckily, Gene moves in to provide his trademark advice, but not all goes according to plan.

As Don evades arrest, joins a research project on lesbian mums, battles an intrusive social worker, and attempts to invent a soundproof crib, he completely loses track of the most important project of all: Rosie. And when Rosie threatens to move back to Australia without him, Don must enlist all of his exceptional brain capacity to win her, and Bud, back for good.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. At the beginning of *The Rosie Effect*, we see that Don has made significant progress in allowing more flexibility in his life. What do you think is the most impressive change?
2. Don notes that Rosie is able to compartmentalise her organisation skills. She is completely in control of her thesis research materials, but can't keep her bath towel in the same place. What do you compartmentalise in your life? How are you different at work versus home?
3. Gene's theories about relationships are heavily influenced by his job as the head of the psychology department in Australia. Do you agree that there is always an inequality of social capital in marriages? How does Don's genetic research filter into his approach to love?
4. Discuss the scene in which Rosie tells Don that she is pregnant. How does Rosie want Don to react? How do you think his sister's fatal ectopic pregnancy affects his feelings about her pregnancy?
5. Don has multiple mechanisms in place to maintain order. He meticulously plans meals and knows exactly how to deploy his Gregory Peck impression for optimal results.

Do you have any similar systems or habits that you rely on to help your life stay organised?

6. While tending bar, Don is offended when a patron compares him to Dustin Hoffman's character, Raymond, in *Rain Man*. Discuss the differences between Don and Raymond, and the pros and cons of using the word 'autistic' as an umbrella term.
7. Discuss Don's ability to sympathise versus his ability to empathise. He is able to excuse his former landlord's unpleasantness by recognising that his life is unrewarding.

However, he finds it incredibly difficult to step into Phil's shoes and imagine how he felt when Rosie's mother died. Do you think this problem is exclusive to Don?

8. Gene tells Don not to fetishise parenthood; that children are just like little adults who don't yet know the rules. Do you agree with this advice? Discuss the rules that children must learn and the rules that they shouldn't.
9. As he and Rosie hurdle toward her due date, Don realises that change is unstoppable. He thinks change is necessarily a bad thing. Do you think change can be good? Discuss examples of good changes.
10. Discuss the symbolism of the eternity ring that belonged to Rosie's mother. What does it mean to Phil, and now to Don? Do you think it's significant that it is stuck on Rosie's finger as she considers ending her marriage?
11. Lydia ends up being a huge obstacle to Don as he tries to prepare for the baby. Discuss how her past

experiences bias her against Don. Who else in the novel is unfairly biased? Is Don?

12. After failing to reunite Gene and Claudia, and providing lovely advice to a bullied Eugenie, Don must accept that Gene's lies went so far that he couldn't turn back.

At what point did Don's lies become too deep? What about Rosie's? What would you have done differently?

13. Discuss the relationship between George and his son, who both abused drugs. How much can a parent blame themselves for their child's shortcomings? At what point must that child be held responsible for their own actions?

14. Has Rosie changed in this book? Some readers have suggested that Rosie is unreasonably intolerant of Don: 'She knew what she was getting herself into'. Do you agree?

15. Rosie tells Don that the things that she loves about him as a husband are precisely the things that will make him an incompetent father. Why do you think she changes her mind?

16. Discuss Don's comment in the *New York Post*: 'Of course lesbian parents are not average. Hence we should not expect average outcomes. But it would seem un-American to seek averageness'.

What is the distinction between averageness and tradition? How are Don and Rosie exceptional? Do you think Hudson will be exceptional?