



THE NIMBUS

**BOOK
CLUB
GUIDE**

a novel

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Welcome to the Book Club Guide for

THE NIMBUS

by Robert P. Baird

Please note: In order to provide book clubs with the most informed and thought-provoking questions possible, it is necessary to reveal aspects of the story, as well as the ending. If you have not finished reading *The Nimbus*, you may want to wait before reviewing this guide.

1. The novel suggests early on that Paul doesn't really want to leave graduate school, even though he knows it's not meant to be permanent. What do you think appeals to him about his life as a grad student? How does that change over the course of the book?
2. Renata struggles to adjust her life to the (apparent) presence of the nimbus, in large part because she can't see it herself. How would you describe her relation to the mysterious glow?
3. At one point in the novel, Warren suggests that his father was right to say that his decision to go to Div School would be a mistake. Do you agree? Do you think Warren would say the same thing by the end of the book?
4. *The Nimbus* invokes and alludes to several episodes of relatively obscure religious history. Why do you think the author included these in the novel? What narrative purpose do they serve?
5. How would you describe and contrast the attitudes that each of the four main characters has toward religion?
6. At a certain point in the book, Renata decides that Adrian's interest in the nimbus is driven by his ambition. Do you agree? If not, how would you explain it?
7. What do you make of Warren's obsession with time? How does it relate to his personal religious history?
8. Over the course of the novel, the nimbus is interpreted in different ways by different people. Which of these interpretations seems most persuasive to you? How do you expect you would react if confronted with a similarly inexplicable phenomenon?
9. How do their encounters with the nimbus change each of the book's main characters?
10. What is the significance of the passage from *The Epic of Gilgamesh* that Adrian reads to Paul's college class, and how does that differ from the passage from the same work that Paul reads at the end of the novel?
11. Late in the novel, Renata quotes the poet John Berryman to Warren. What do you think she intends with this quotation, and do you agree with that implication?