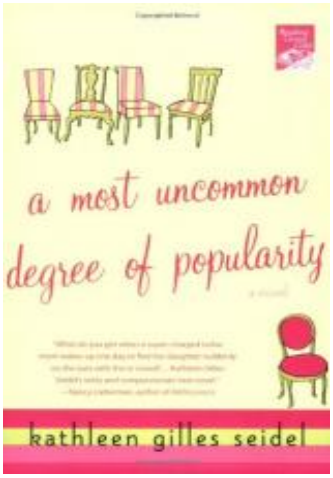
A Most Uncommon Degree of Popularity

by Kathleen Gilles Seidel



About the Book

Lydia Meadows, a former lawyer turned full-time mother, is startled to discover that her daughter Erin is one of the popular girls, a tight foursome whose mothers are also great friends. Lydia has always thought of popular girls as ambitious little manipulators who enjoy being cruel. But Erin is kind and well-adjusted. Maybe this popularity thing won?t be so bad after all.

Then a new student ruthlessly targets Erin to boost her own popularity, and Lydia wonders what to do when her daughter?s phone stops ringing. And the uneasiness among the girls begins to affect the friendship of the mothers?even though they are all grown women who should know better. Has their driven energy, once directed toward their careers, turned into an obsession with the social lives of their daughters?

A Most Uncommon Degree of Popularity is a delightful novel of manners, an unabashed chronicle of the rules, rituals, and pitfalls of raising a daughter.

Discussion Guide

1. Jane Austen, speaking of perfect novels and heroines, said, ?pictures of perfection make me sick and wicked.? How might she view **A Most Uncommon Degree of Popularity**? Does it avoid ?pictures of perfection??

2.What do the four friends --- Lydia, Mimi, Blair, and Annelise --- have in common? Is it a good basis for a friendship?

3. Lydia had always thought of popular girls as ?manipulative little blonde bitch-goddesses? only to discover that her daughter was one. What issues confront the mothers of popular girls? To what extent do you sympathize?

4. Lydia stops practicing law to stay at home. ?I was afraid I would disappear if I quit work,? she tells us. Does she

disappear?

5. What challenges face professional women who decide to become stay-at-home moms? Would more women stay at home if they could afford to?

6. Lydia travels to Houston to visit Jamie. Does the novel?s depiction of marriage seem too pessimistic? Too optimistic?

7. The novel is set in a ?theme-park version of a small town.? Does this setting reflect a trend in American culture that transcends this affluent section of Washington, D.C.? What is appealing about life in a small town?

8. How valid are the meritocrat/aristocrat class distinctions that Lydia makes?

9. We see the events of the novel through Lydia?s eyes. How would Mary Paige tell this story? How would Chris Goddard?

Author Bio

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