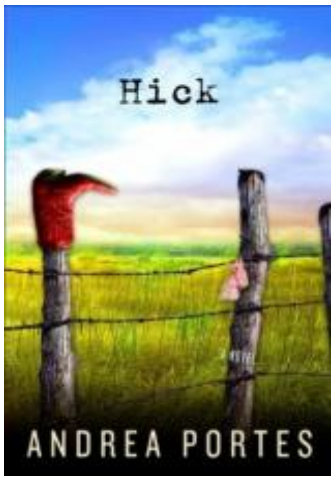
Hick

by Andrea Portes



About the Book

Though its first-person narrating voice is fast-paced, powerful and unquestionably authentic, **Hick** is a debut novel.

Beyond this voice, what makes the book so extraordinary is that, although all of the worst things imaginable do befall this 13-year-old girl, she is never defeated by them. Luli always fights back; she always resurfaces.

Set as a coming-of-age novel, **Hick** tracks the real perils that modern teenagers so often face. And it does so with bright wit, energy, and an indomitable spirit.

This is a book that will grab the reader from the first page and not let go.

And it is written by a woman who is becoming a cultural force in the hippest parts of Los Angeles.

Discussion Guide

1. How did you react, over all, to this novel? To the characters? To what happens to Luli?

2. Did you find the events of the novel and Luli?s reaction to them believable? If so why? If not, why not? If someone were to say to you that this novel ?lives in the voice of Luli,? what do you think they might mean by that?

3. Did you find the book funny? If so, how would you describe the humor in it? If not, why not?

4. How would you describe the tone of the novel?

5. What are some of the themes you can identify in the novel? What elements of the novel lead you to identify those themes?

6. How does the setting of the novel interact or contribute to the themes of the novel and the way you read it?

7. How would you describe Luli to someone? Why?

8. Describe the other characters in the novel, including the minor ones, like Luli?s school teacher. How if at all do they help move the plot and expose the thematic issues in the novel? How do they contribute to the development of other characters in the novel, especially Luli?

9. How realistic or well rounded did you find the characters in the novel? Are there parts of the story that make you feel sympathetic towards Tammy and Nick? If so, what are they? What do they add to the over all richness, or not, of the narrative.

10. How would you describe the author?s apparent point of view about why people act the way they do in this world? Do you agree with her, or find it convincing? If so, why? If not, why not?

11. How do you interpret the ending, or the resolution of the novel? What are your feelings about Luli and her future? What led you to your conclusions?

Author Bio

Andrea Portes grew up in rural Nebraska, later shuffling between Illinois, Texas, Brazil, North Dakota and North Carolina before attending Bryn Mawr College. She received her MFA from UC San Diego and became a script reader for Paramount Pictures. She now lives in Los Angeles and is a nightlife columnist for several websites. HICK is her first novel.

Critical Praise

"Reading Andrea Portes makes you feel like your elbows are damp from having been resting in beer-bottle condensation rings on a wobbly table in the kind of dive bar where sooner or later - and bet on sooner - somebody's going to have a pool cue broken over his head, and the guy wielding the cue is going to know enough to swing it from the narrow end because it's not the first time for him or, for that matter, the guy getting clocked? Portes is the woman sitting at the table with you - young, a little drunk and too smart by three-fourths. She's reeling off **a real spellbinder** about a few horrific days in her grimy-blue-collar upbringing in a rural Nebraska so sere and bleak and emotionally sandblasted that it'd make an off-the-shelf trailer park look like Rancho Santa Fe. Actually it's not Portes, but Luli McMullen, the narrator of Portes' **knockout** - as in a right cross to the jaw - debut novel 'Hick'."

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