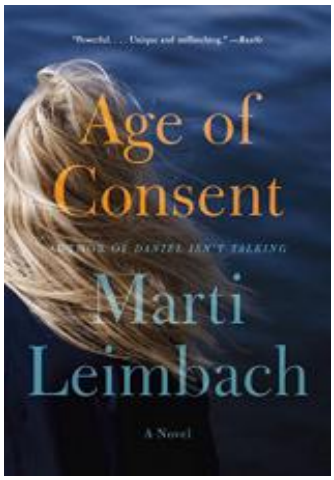
Age of Consent

by Marti Leimbach



About the Book

From the author of DANIEL ISN'T TALKING and DYING YOUNG comes a shattering new novel, a page-turner about a sexual relationship between a grown man and a newly teenaged girl.

June was a young widow with a hopeless crush on Craig Kirtz, a disc jockey at a local rock station. To her surprise, the two struck up a friendship that seemed headed for something more. But it was June?s 13-year-old daughter, Bobbie, whom Craig had wanted all along. Bobbie thought her secret life --- the sex, the drugs, the illicit relationship itself --- could remain safely buried in the past. But 30 years later, when Bobbie discovers Craig?s attentions to her had been repeated with any number of girls, she returns home with one purpose in mind: to bring Craig to trial.

Her decision is greeted with mixed feelings. Some people think that bringing charges against someone for a crime committed so many years ago is unjustified. She?s called a ?middle-aged woman with a vendetta.? She?s accused of waging war against her own family. But the past has a way of revealing itself, and some relationships lie dormant through the years, ready to stir to life at the slightest provocation.

June remembers things differently from the way Bobbie does. Craig insists he has done nothing wrong. As their traumatic history is relived in the courtroom, Bobbie and June must come to terms with the choices they made and face the truth they have long refused to acknowledge.

Told with warmth and compassion, this is a moving, deeply absorbing story of a family in crisis.

Discussion Guide

1. Had the crash never occurred, is it likely Bobbie could have extricated herself from the relationship with Craig?

2. What prevents Bobbie from telling her mother about Craig?

3. How does Bobby change during the 1978 scenes?

4. Why would June have missed or ignored the signs of what was going on between Craig and her daughter?

5. What part does threat play in the unfolding of events in the novel?

6. What do you think makes Bobbie trust Dan?

7. In what ways do Bobbie and Dan as teenagers want to protect one another?

8. Why does it take so long for Bobbie to take action against Craig?

9. How does the notion of shame, or the absence of it, permeate the novel?

10. What is the effect of Bobby's childhood experience on her present day self?

Author Bio

Marti Leimbach is the author of several novels, including the international bestseller DYING YOUNG, which was made into a major motion picture starring Julia Roberts; DANIEL ISN'T TALKING; and THE MAN FROM SAIGON. She lives in England and teaches at Oxford University's creative writing program.

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Critical Praise

?A nuanced portrayal of a mother and daughter at once linked and divided by a ferociously exploitative man?. Treating June?s perspective as richly as Bobbie?s, the novel brings memorable depth to issues often oversimplified; Leimbach?s scenes are convincing, whether they portray harrowing abuse or subtle moments of healing.?

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