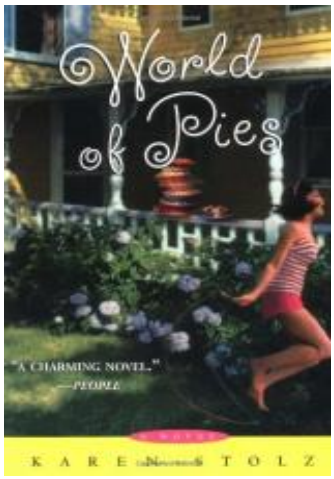
ReadingGroupGuides
The online community for reading groups

World of Pies

by Karen Stolz



About the Book

In this remarkable debut work from author Karen Stolz, readers follow the arc of a girl's life as she grows to womanhood. From crushes to surprise baby sisters to nail polish to a devastating death, Roxanne is our guide through a life that has moments of tenderness, poignancy, sorrow, and great humor, as well as some wonderful baking memories. *World of Pies* is a sumptuous novel?though like the best pie, tart in all the right places.

Discussion Guide

1. Aside from the presence of pie recipes and the title story, "World of Pies," why is the book as a whole called World of Pies? What does the title evoke for you?

2. Why do you think the author called the town in World of Pies Annette? What qualities does the name conjure up?

3. How would you characterize the relationship between Carl and Christina? What does Roxanne learn about relationships from her parents?

4. Why does Roxanne fear the arrival of her baby sister? What effect does the large age gap have on their relationship?

5. How does Stolz keep the father's presence felt in the chapters subsequent to his death at an early age?

6. What are the gifts of small-town life? What are the strictures?

7. What motivates Roxanne's interaction with Tommy at the end of "Solace"? Name three plot threads in the story that have a common link.

8. Aunt Ruthie is a source of humor in the book; what events gave you a more balanced view of her and her motivations?

9. Why does Roxanne have such a hard time deciding to have a baby when she comes from such a happy home herself?

10. What is the cultural center of Annette, Texas? What part does this venue play in the book's progress?

11. Why is small-town life in the sixties so food-focused? What memories did the food in the book stimulate in you?

12. What is Roxanne's biggest character flaw? What is her greatest strength?

13. Why did Stolz set all of the stories/chapters in the summertime?

Author Bio

Karen Stolz is a native of small-town Kansas and a graduate of the Iowa Writers Workshop. She lives with her son in Austin, Texas.

Visit Karen Stolz at www.karenstolz.com

Critical Praise

"I think [WORLD OF PIES] is a charming book and Karen Stolz's talent shines forth like a jewel. Annette, Texas is a place that I believe readers will want to visit again and again. "

World of Pies
by Karen Stolz

Publication Date: June 13, 2001
Paperback: 176 pages
Publisher: Hyperion
ISBN-10: 0786884622
ISBN-13: 9780786884629