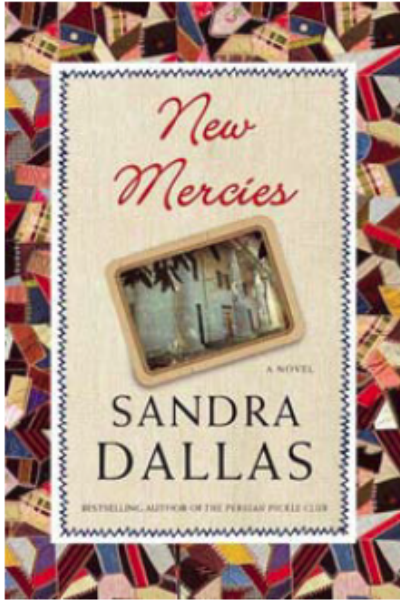


Reading Group Questions for books by SANDRA DALLAS



New Mercies

1. Nora Bondurant is a woman with secrets. At what point in the story did this become clear to you? How do her secrets mirror the secrets of Avoca?
2. In what ways does Natchez of 1933 cling to its past? In what ways has it shed its past?
3. Nora is an outsider when she first arrives, and views this town with an outsider's eyes. What are some of the more surprising aspects of the South that Nora discovers?
4. What is the "old South" and what is the "new South"? Which does Pickett Long represent? Which does Odalie represent?
5. What was your initial impression of the relationship between Ezra and Aunt Polly, and at what moment did that impression change?
6. Was Amalia a victim in any way? If so, how? If not, why not?
7. Were you surprised at Nora's reaction to the revelations at the end of the book and do you agree with how she responded?
8. How does the theme of "memory" play in the book? How does each character receive his or her own "new mercies"?