

Book Club Questions for

DESIGNING STELLA

1. The main themes in *Designing Stella* are love, betrayal, friendship, family, and rebuilding. How do they play a role in the novel?

2. As the narrator in *Designing Stella* tells us, "When people in their forties and fifties fall in love it's rarely a simple thing." Is mid-life romance more interesting than young love?

3. Are fairy-tale endings possible in middle-age? Or do books like *Designing Stella* belong in the fantasy section, as one reader suggested?

4. How do Stella and Sam complement one another? What do you give their chances for marital success? Where will Elliot fit in?

5. How did Stella's scars and "their psychological counterparts" affect her personality and character?

6. Can you identify with Stella's desire for "a life in an adult world with white furniture free of juice stains that didn't smell like a dog"?

7. Was Stella's preoccupation with the fate of Floyd Finger understandable?

8. How did the redo of number two Whimsy Court and going into business with Marilee mirror the renovation of Stella's life?

9. Should Stella have left Washington, D.C. and Grissom & Gray in the first place?

10. Is there a chance that a guy like Floyd Finger can find happiness with someone like Edna Oster? Or like Buck Early, would you rather put your money on a "crooked roulette wheel"?

11. What did you think of Elliot and his odd relationship with Kitty?

12. Compare the characters Kitty and Paula G. How might they represent the old south versus the new south?

13. Which character did you most relate to/identify with? Which one would you like to "do lunch" with?