

READER'S GUIDE for *Southern Fried* by Cathy Pickens

1. Most readers want to find at least the main character in a book to be warm and likeable, yet with some understandably human weaknesses. How did you respond to Avery Andrews in the book *Southern Fried*? Could you relate to her reactions toward the other characters in the book?
2. As you meet Avery's great-aunts, her father and mother, were you able to picture where Avery learned her coping skills? Did she come across as a person who could handle adversity? What role does humor play in the book?
3. How do you think Avery handled the return to her hometown when, to some of the people she knew from growing, it would seem she had failed in her chosen career and come home in disgrace?
4. How well did Avery adjust to her lost status as a big-city lawyer? In Avery's effort to start over under the watchful eyes of everyone, did she seem to be taking a healthy view of herself and the way her life was going?
5. Did you find the characters in the book believable? Do you know people like those who live in Dacus? Do most small towns bear a resemblance to each other, or is Dacus unique to the South? Why or why not?
6. Are there people in Dacus you would like to get to know better? Who did you find most intriguing? What made this character stand out for you?
7. Would you like to visit Avery's hometown?
8. At what point in the story did you begin to suspect who the guilty party or parties were? Was the mystery solidly constructed so that you felt satisfied with the way it ended? What questions do you feel needed further explanation? Did the plot drag or did it hold your interest?
9. What more would you like to know about Avery and her career? What did you find to be lacking in Avery's story? Which questions do you feel are still to be answered?

Prepared by Catherine Anderson