



Reading Group Guide

Georgia Bottoms may be the town of Six Points's finest feature—beautiful, worldly, a splendid cook, and faithful churchgoer. Georgia also has a discreet side business “entertaining” six local gentlemen—one for each night of the week, with Mondays off. Each caller has been trained to leave a “gift” to help Georgia get by, and each thinks he is Georgia's only secret lover.

When Preacher Eugene Hendrix (Saturdays) decides he must confess their affair in front of the entire congregation, Georgia sets out to save herself and her particular notion of virtue from total ruin. Nothing in Six Points will ever be the same.

Written with hilarity, insight, and affection for the many failings of man—and womankind, *Georgia Bottoms* plumbs the irrepressible workings of the rebellious human heart.

Reading Group Questions

- When Georgia's September luncheon goes awry due to outside events, how would you describe her reaction? Is she justified in feeling this way?
- Georgia often refers to the Ant Connection. Why do you think she is so concerned with how ants are like (or unlike) humans?
- Little Mama's attitude toward race is very pronounced. As Georgia says, "Not liking colored people was Little Mama's big thing. It cut to the heart of who she was" (page 150). Do you think Little Mama's position changes through the novel, and why?
- How does Georgia reconcile her guilt about Nathan? As she admits, "It was ridiculous of Georgia to blame anyone for how he turned out. If she'd wanted something better for him, she could have raised him herself." By the end of the book, does she act differently?
- Why does Georgia prevent herself from ever becoming emotionally involved with any of her suitors? Are there any men that she does let her guard down with?
- What does Brother bring to the cast of characters? Does he also undergo a transformation throughout the book, as Georgia does?
- Georgia considers the many stereotypes for women, "A woman without a husband isn't supposed to be happy....A woman alone is not supposed to have fun....Women are supposed to hate the idea of getting older." What are some other stereotypes about women? To what extent does Georgia contradict them or play into them?
- Georgia and Krystal are best friends, but it seems they couldn't be more different. Why do you think their friendship works? What are the fault lines in their relationship?
- Georgia wonders if she dated Skiff to spite her mother (page 121). Do you agree with Georgia's assessment? What do you think of the choices she made afterwards? Were her actions understandable given her circumstances, or should she have acted differently?
- What is Georgia's initial reaction to Nathan's arrival? How does her attitude towards him evolve as the book goes on? What do you see as the turning point in their relationship?
- Do you think Georgia deserves the letter she finds in her room (pages 239-241)? Was something like this bound to happen, or was the motivation behind it unusually malicious? Did you think Georgia's response was appropriate? What could you see as her other options?
- What do you imagine happens to Georgia when she gets to New Orleans?

Menu for Georgia's September Luncheon

- Miss Angie's Five-Layer English Pea Salad
- Lobster Scallion Shooters
- Taco Cheesecakes
- Curried Chicken Salad with Grapes and Candied Pecans
- Fresh Mountain Apple Jell-O® Compote
- Endive Boats with Cranberry Ambrosia Cream Cheese Spread
- Pizzetta Bruschetta
- Coca-Cola® Cake

Recipes

Miss Angie's Five-Layer English Pea Salad

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| 2 cups lettuce | 2 tablespoons sugar |
| 2 cups celery, chopped | 2 cups green onions, chopped fine |
| 2 cups bell pepper, chopped | 1 can water chestnuts, drained and chopped |
| 1 cup mayonnaise | 1 box frozen small English peas |
| 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded | bacon bits |

Line a deep glass bowl with the lettuce. Add a layer of celery, layer of bell pepper, layer of green onions, water chestnuts and English peas. Spread over English peas 1 cup mayonnaise and 2 tablespoons sugar mixed together. Then a layer of 1 cup cheddar cheese (shredded). Cover with cling film, refrigerate overnight. Just before serving sprinkle bacon bits on top.

Coca-Cola Cake

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| 1 cup Coca-Cola | 2 cups all-purpose flour |
| 1/2 cup buttermilk | 1/4 cup cocoa |
| 1 cup butter or margarine, softened | 1 teaspoon baking soda |
| 1 3/4 cups sugar | 1 1/2 cups miniature marshmallows |
| 2 large eggs, lightly beaten | Coca-Cola Frosting |
| 2 teaspoons vanilla extract | Garnish: 3/4 cup chopped pecans, toasted |

Combine Coca-Cola and buttermilk; set aside.

Beat butter at low speed with an electric mixer until creamy. Gradually add sugar; beat until blended. Add egg and vanilla; beat at low speed until blended.

Combine flour, cocoa, and soda. Add to butter mixture alternately with cola mixture; begin and end with flour mixture. Beat at low speed just until blended.

Stir in marshmallows. Pour batter into a greased and floured 13 x 9-inch pan. Bake at 350° F for 30 to 35 minutes. Remove from oven; cool 10 minutes. Pour Coca-Cola Frosting over warm cake; garnish, if desired.

Praise for GEORGIA BOTTOMS:

“This is Mark Childress’s finest novel. I adore Georgia Bottoms, novel and character. Her story is funny, smart, serious and engaging, beginning to end. A must read.” —LYNN FREED

“Move over, Flannery O’Connor, and make room for a new master. Mark Childress has written yet another laugh-out-loud Southern classic!”
—FANNIE FLAGG

“Charming, hilarious, heartbreaking, warm and tough....Georgia Bottoms is one of my favorite characters....This is Childress’s best book yet.”
—ANNE LAMOTT

“Georgia is the freshest bad girl to rise from the South since Scarlett O’Hara.”
—PUBLISHERS WEEKLY



Mark Childress was born in Monroeville, Alabama. He is the author of six previous novels and three books for children. He has lived in Ohio, Indiana, Mississippi, Louisiana, Georgia, California, Costa Rica, New York, and currently lives in Key West, Florida.

Also from Mark Childress:

