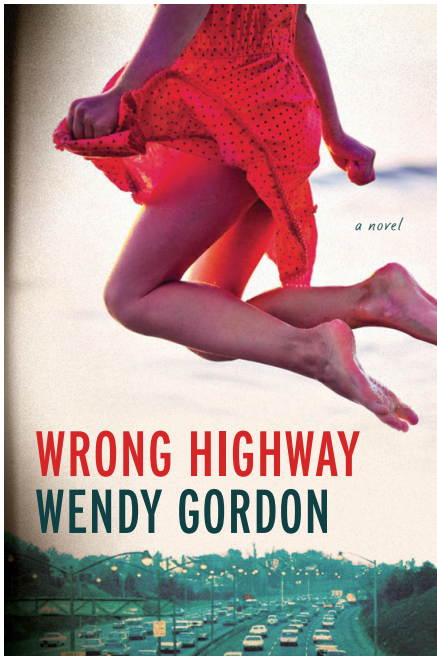


WRONG HIGHWAY

WENDY GORDON



BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. How does the book's 1980s setting inform the characters and plot? Do you think this story could take place today?
2. How does the suburban setting inform the characters and plot? Which aspects of this story are unique to upper middle class suburbs and which are more universal in nature?
3. Are you more sympathetic to Erica or to Debbie, or to both women? What do you view as their strengths and weaknesses?
4. Do you think Debbie bears any culpability for what happens to her or do you see her simply as a victim?
5. How do you think Erica gets away with having so many secrets—from her husband, from her family, from her friends?
6. Do you think Jared's behavior justifies the degree of his parent's intervention?
7. What is your opinion of Ron? Whether he actually beats his wife or son is left unclear. What is your gut feeling on this issue?
8. How do you see Erica as a mother?
9. How do you see Ethan as a husband? Do you think he views Erica as a full person?
10. Do you think Erica's attitudes and actions at home and Ethan's attitudes and actions on Wall Street parallel each other in any way? How are they alike and different? What holds them together?
11. What do you think motivates Erica to use drugs? Why cocaine in particular? What hole in her life is she filling? Do the holes come from without or within or both?
12. Why does Jared have such a hold on Erica's heart?
13. Where does childhood end and adulthood begin? Are there risks created by not drawing a clear line between the two? Why do you think Erica is so drawn to adolescents and adolescence? Do you agree with Debbie that you cannot be a friend to your child (or nephew)?
14. Erica endures a number of escapes and near misses that could have destroyed her life. But at the end she is "still standing." Do you think this is fair? Do you think she deserves a comeuppance?
15. Why do you think Ethan essentially shrugs off Erica's confession, telling her that he "has enough on his plate"?
16. Do you think, by the end of the book, that Erica has been changed in any way by her experiences? Has Ethan?
17. What do you think the future holds for Erica and why? Will she stay off drugs? Live her life differently? Reconcile with her family?
18. *Wrong Highway* touches on some charged issues: drug addiction, abortion, Wall Street malfeasance, to name a few. Did you come to any of these topics with preconceived notions that affected your perception of the book?