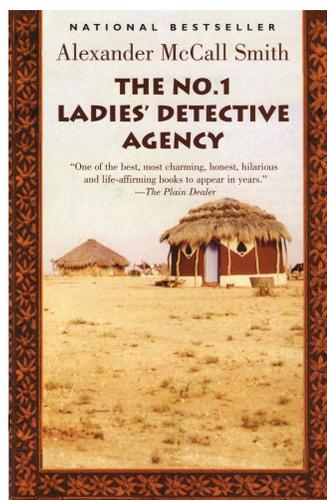




Discussion Guide



About the Book

Book Title: *No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency*

Author: Alexander McCall Smith

Author Website: www.alexandermccallsmith.co.uk

Questions for Discussion

1. What were your general impressions of the book?
2. Do you find it unusual that it was a man who wrote this book? Why or why not?
3. What did you think of the main character of this book? Did you enjoy her personality? Why or why not?
4. What did this book teach you about Africa? Do you think it was accurate? Why or why not?
5. In what ways did the author use humor in this book? What made you laugh out loud?
6. How did this book challenge sexual stereotypes? What do you think the author was saying in the way he portrayed women and men?
7. Would you recommend this book for other Book Clubs? Why or why not?
8. In what ways, if any, will this book change your life or perspective?
9. With which of the MAMs do you most agree about this book?

Other Links...

HBO TV Series website: <http://www.hbo.com/the-no-1-ladies-detective-agency#/>

Lit Lovers: <http://www.litlovers.com/reading-guides/13-fiction/745-no-1-ladies-detective-agency-smith>

Book Rags: <http://www.bookrags.com/studyguide-the-no-1-ladies-detective-agency/?gclid=CJLzutWlvcQCFbBj7AodrGUAJA#gsc.tab=0>

Nancy and the MAMs discuss the book...



NANCY: I really enjoyed this book. I found it to be a very fun read with a wonderfully quirky heroine. She carried us through her escapades with the unexpected lurking around the next bump in the road. She was delightful and light hearted, picking a punch without knowing it.

I respect Alexander McCall Smith very much. He hit a home run with this first book in what has become a long and voluminous career. The lady comes back in many books to follow, and he's created quite a few other series also.

I have to credit his wife and daughters with his obvious feminist perspective which shines through in an era that women were just beginning



SALLIE: I was quite amused by the Muslim teenager who outwits her father and the detective. And I cried for the young boy, until the unexpected twist of that story! I always look at the children. What I liked most about this book was how funny it was! And that straight sort of British isle humor of Smith's shone quite marvelously. I was quite amused by the Muslim teenager who outwits her father and the detective. And I cried for the young boy, until the unexpected outcome!



MOLLY: Well, I found this to be a very strange book, telling the story of Africans, but through the eyes of a white African living in Scotland. So, I'd love to hate the book, but I have to admit I found it a fun read. He seemed to deal quite sympathetically with the plight of the South Africans slaving away in the mines. And of course choosing to portray his protagonist as a successful woman, a feminist, who defies convention and the odds, makes it impossible for me to dislike in any way. Well done, Mr. Smith!



PRISCILLA: I wondered why she kept putting off all the men. It seemed like the one guy was such a good friend. I understand she had a rough experience in marriage, but after that, I found myself wanting her to give someone a chance!



KATHARINE: Well, like Abigail, I was impressed with the way he wove African history and culture into the story. I would recommend this one for some social history of Africa. It helps introduce the culture in a fun sort of way.



JANE: My hero – the female business woman... kicks convention to the wind and follows her muse and does a good job at it. Even she seems to be unsuspecting of success as she pushes on and surprises even herself. A role model, a leader, ahead of her times. Ladies – it's our turn now. Let's follow her into the dawn!



ABIGAIL: Well, I thought it was quite amazing the way he wove the sadness of the South African story into this humorous book, and in a triumphal sort of way really. With Mmse B. able to take her inheritance, and make a go of it, triumphing over the somewhat tragic life of her father.