



**NANCY:** This is a novel trending right now, with a TV series on Hulu. The well-drawn characters seem to provide something needed in this time. The contrast between the “establishment”, “proper” family of Shaker Heights and the love shared by the marginalized newcomers makes it popular. Teenage love and sex, jealousy, unwanted and wanted pregnancies and intercultural adoptions add to the intrigue. I think it also portrays an emptiness in the American dream and perhaps a call for change.



**KATHARINE:** A good read for a sociology class to examine a community like Shaker Heights, a wealthy American suburb. You see the way outsiders are treated. And then there are the issues of cross-cultural adoption, abortion, surrogate mothers. A lot that would make for lively discussion in a college class!



**PRISCILLA:** Now I don't think Mia and Pearl should have helped with supporting the girl getting the abortion. Her mother should have stopped that. Mercy Me. Killing babies is the downfall of America. Shame on Mia for not telling the girl's mother.



**JANE:** I found myself frustrated with Mia in this book. She was obviously a gifted artist. Why did she live such a marginalized life? She could have found success with her art and lived boldly, even under a pseudonym if necessary. I wished she had had more of an entrepreneur spirit!



**MOLLY:** This story is so familiar for people of color. The African-American housekeepers were often the most loving, supportive women for the children in a white household. Racism continues, for the other foreign-born people of color, too, and even though the love shines through, like with Bebe. Why are Americans racist?



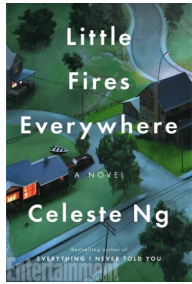
**ABIGAIL:** That whole idea of a planned community in this book? Shaker Heights supposedly is the place to live. The ideal place to raise a family, and yet, you realize that you can't plan life. And trying to keep an artificial sense of propriety can cause problems for everyone. We are all human.



**SALLIE:** This book highlights well the mother-child relationship and the importance of love. Mia and Pearl didn't have much, but Pearl had the love she needed. Izzy and her mother, on the other hand? And then there was the Chinese-American woman. Not to spoil it, but remember how the baby didn't cry? Love is the most important aspect of child-rearing. Some can't do it.



# Discussion Guide



## About the Book

Title: Little Fires Everywhere  
Author: Celeste Ng  
Published: Penguin Books, 2018  
Website: celesteng.com

## Questions for Discussion

1. What were your general impressions of this book?
2. Some people say that Shaker Heights is a character in this novel. It's considered a "planned community". Do you think it's a character? Can communities be planned?
3. What do you think the author's view is on intercultural adoptions? How did this play out in the book? What's your perspective on this topic?
4. Describe Mia. What was her life about and how did that play out with the Richardson's family and Bebe? What this all say about Shaker Heights?
5. What was the dynamic between Izzy and her mother? Did you have a relationship with your mother like this, or do you know people who have? Do you think this is common?
6. What does "little fires everywhere" refer to in this book? Does it mean more beyond the literal meaning?
7. What were the differences between Pearl and Lexy? How did they become friends and what does this tell us about Shaker Heights?
8. Read over the MAMs comments on the book. Which of them do you most agree with and why?
9. In what ways, if any, will this book change your life or perspective?