



The Debs

Susan McBride

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LAURA DELACROIX BELL—this dazzling trust fund girl’s size 14 figure doesn’t stop her from attracting the sexiest scoundrel in town, or the admiring eye of the Glass Slipper Club. However, a salacious secret could take her out of the running.

Michelle “Mac” Mackenzie—brainy, cynical, and maybe a tad judgmental, Mac would rather bury her nose in a good book than embrace her deb destiny. But being a debutante was her late mother’s dream.

Ginger Fore—this adorable tree-hugger wants to wear her grandmother’s vintage ball gown instead of splurging on an expensive dress. Yet when she gets tangled up with an older guy, Ginger will have plenty more to think about.

Jo-Lynn Bidwill—a former child beauty queen, Jo-Lynn is a bitchy vamp who makes it her mission in life to take out the debu-trash. And Jo-Lynn’s sights are set on Laura Bell.

The Debs Details

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Author : Susan McBride

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From Reader Review The Debs for online ebook

Sarah Evans says

Take the high end brand-name dropping and excessive teenage drinking of Gossip Girls, add the feel-good girl bonds of Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants, mix with a dash of casual sex then serve up in chick-lit style with an evil queen bee on the rim and you have McBride's series for teens. In Houston, the most privileged high school senior girls wait breathlessly to be selected as Rosebud Debutantes for the Glass Slipper Club. Best friends Laura, Mac, and Ginger are all daughters of former Rosebuds as is their arch-nemesis, Jo Lynn. The story unfolds in chapters told in third person from one of the four girl's perspective. Laura is an attractive and confident size 14, but allows herself to be run around by her love/lust for hunky Avery as well as the dirt Jo Lynn holds over her. Mac has no desire to be a deb, but is pushed along by her friends, her late mother's dream, and her well-meaning albeit annoying step-mother. She's more interested in books and understanding the changing nature of her relationship with the boy next door. Ginger plans to debut in her grandmother's gown, but her passion for environmentalism and a college guy put her in a compromising position. Meanwhile, Jo Lynn's pettiness and insecurity keep her busy trying to undermine Laura, the daughter of her mother's best friends. The author's adult fiction roots show here as both Laura and Jo Lynn often sound more like world weary 29 year-olds than 17 year-olds facing their senior year. Fortunately Ginger and Mac are both realistically drawn and appealingly sympathetic. The unique setting, intriguing storylines and gossip-lit trappings will keep teen girls clamoring for more, though more conservative communities may not respond as positively.

Jennifer Wardrip says

Reviewed by Breanna F. for TeensReadToo.com

THE DEBS is told through the eyes of four girls in Houston, Texas. These four girls being... Laura Delacroix Bell, Michelle "Mac" Mackenzie, Ginger Fore, and Jo-Lynn Bidwill. Laura, Mac, and Ginger have been best friends for ages. Jo-Lynn is basically their enemy. The one thing these four girls all have in common is the desire to be a Debutante Rosebud in the illustrious Glass Slipper Club.

Laura is a size-14 girl whose mother is friends with the head of the GSC committee. She is totally psyched to be a Rosebud, and she and her mother both think she's a shoe-in. But Jo-Lynn has had it out for her ever since she dated Avery, who is one of the most popular guys in school. After Laura gets back from fat camp, Avery happens to show up at the airport. Will this end up causing Laura even more trouble with Jo-Lynn?

Mac would definitely rather be reading than become a deb. But it was her late mother's dream for Mac, so of course Mac needs to do it. Also, it doesn't help that her new step-mom, Honey Potts, is obsessed with Mac becoming a deb, too. With her two best friends also in the running, she decides it might not be such bad idea after all.

Ginger is really excited at the thought of becoming a Rosebud, and she'd really love to be able to wear her grandmother's vintage ball gown on the big presentation day. But when a really cute college guy, Javier, gets her into a bit of trouble involving a protest over a tree that is supposed to be torn down to make more room for parking at her school, she could end up in hot water. Hopefully, it won't cost her the chance to become a Rosebud.

Jo-Lynn is a former beauty queen who makes it her mission in life to take out the so-called "debu-trash." Her

main target, of course, being Laura Bell. What she has in store for Laura is not in the least ladylike. But she has no idea that payback could be finding a way straight to her door. What's a stuck-up and spoiled beauty queen to do?

This was such a great book. I loved how each chapter was told through each different girls' experience. And I liked how great of friends Laura, Mac, and Ginger are. They would do anything for each other (including finding a way to take down Jo-Lynn) and I think that was the greatest thing about this book.

Ms. McBride has a great writing style and I loved each and every one of her characters. I even liked Jo-Lynn, despite her witchiness. All in all, this was just a fabulous book about the lives of four different girls who all want the same thing. Definitely check it out. Hopefully, you'll love it as much as I did!

Alexandra Cisneros says

Alexandra Cisneros

The Debs By Susan MsBride

The novel The Debs by Susan McBride I found to be very interesting. The story revolves around a young girls who comes from a wealthy family, yet is your average trust-fund girl. Laura Delacroix Bell is a wealthy young girl with a sassy, type-A personality who enjoys getting the job done. She comes from a family filled with wealth and fortune, but with this comes with extreme pressure from her friends and family. Her mother guilts her into loosing weight every chance she gets, her friends pier pressure her into going to parties and going crazy, and everyone else around her pressure her because she feels the need to live up to her families name and be someone who she really isn't. I found the layout of this novel to capture my attention because there was always a begging, climax, and ending in ever chapter. For example, in each chapter it would begin with a little introduction to a new character or scene, following with a crazy action, mystery or surprise, and ending with how it was resolved. Due to this layout the chapters were interesting, yet by the ending it became slightly boring.

I enjoyed the main idea and found it interesting; however, I did find the novel very superficial and predictable. I found that there was a protagonist and antagonist which was interesting but I think their characters roles became forced. For example, I found that the author constantly portrayed Laura as the "good girl" while shaming everyone else. Overall I did find the novel interesting, it was just not my favorite.

"Besides, your fine just the way you are so stop letting your mom try to make you into Mini-Tincy," (McBride 22).

This quote I think represents how others can change your identity and to stay confident and strong. This quote shows the importance of surrounding yourself with positivity and people you wan to resemble. In the quote Laura's mother his harassing her about her weight and physical appearance while one of Laura's friends comes to support her.

Overall I would recommend this book to teenage girls or anybody looking for a drama filled quick read. The story would be most relatable to teenage girls, because of the constant drama and partied going on. Many of the issues as well correspond to a self conflict and life lessons. The story is not too long as well which makes it easy to read whiteout the novel/story dragging out.

J. says

Had to read this after reading the second one in the series.

Katie says

Laura, Ginger, Mac are best friends. Jo-Lynn is their worst enemy. What do they all have in common? They are all fighting to get on the list of potential debutantes of the Glass Slipper Club. The list consists ten of the richest, prettiest, and most polite girls and the Glass Slipper Committee gets to pick who is on that list. And guess who is in charge of this committee? Jo-Lynn's mother. Laura, Ginger, and Mac have their work cut out for them.

You would think it would be easy for these girls seeing as they are all legacies but what the committee doesn't know is that all these girls have dirty little secrets. Laura always seems to fall for the wrong guy, the one who always ends up breaking her heart. Ginger also has some boy trouble. She always falls for the bad boys, the ones who can land her in jail. Mac just has problems with being a debutante. Mac never wanted to be a debutante and as the selection draws nearer she begins to wonder if she should even accept the invite.

Will Jo-Lynn find a way to use the girls weaknesses against them or will good prevail?

The Debs is a fast-paced, fun read. It's full of drama, mystery, and some romance thrown in all over. From page one you will be hooked.

Susan McBride has created four wonderful characters. As I started the book I thought it was just going to be another book about spoiled rich girls whining about how horrible their lives are. Boy was I wrong. Each of the girls may be rich and gorgeous but they all have very normal insecurities about themselves and their lives.

If you are like me, you will want do some serious harm to Jo-Lynn by the end of the book. She is the perfect antagonist. While she does have her own insecurities, they aren't enough to balance out her evilness. Hopefully, good will triumph over evil in this series.

The storyline was also amazing. It was something different than your everyday plot. Susan McBride did a wonderful job providing background about the life of a debutante without making it boring.

Another thing I must applaud Ms.McBride on is her use of alcohol in the story. There is alcohol but it isn't unnecessary or overdone. It always seemed to fit with the story and what was going on. I sometimes feel that there is overuse of alcohol in YA books lately and I was glad that that didn't happen in this story.

Overall, this is the perfect read for lounging in the sun over the summer. It will keep you entertained and you won't be able to stop reading.

Maria says

Forty years ago I stopped watching TV shows because they were taking a negative direction and focusing on the art of the putdown. Since I feel life is hard enough without people purposely making it harder, I didn't want that type of action in my face all the time. This book is full of negativism, back-biting, shallow values, and just plain ugliness. If I thought that it was typical of teenagers today, I would worry about the future of this country. OK, I am already worried about the future of the country. As it is, I felt mainly a sense of pity that these four girls should have such poor excuses for adults in their lives and that most of the boys they know are such jerks. They have lost the mystery and romance in life and they are just starting their senior year of high school. Granted my senior year was over fifty years ago, but I was so much more mature and grounded than these poor girls. Plus I felt bombarded by brand names, most of which I had never heard before. These girls' poor value systems have nothing to do with having too much money. They certainly have to do with SPENDING too much money. I was struck when I read "The Millionaire Next Door" that the difference between being poor and being rich is not what you make, but what you spend. If you spend everything you make, it doesn't matter how much you earn. You will be poor. So here are four girls who have plenty of money and spend it all on junk and are poor in everything that matters. I don't think I will go any further in this series. It is definitely not my thing.

Erica Leigh says

Like Gossip Girl without the scandal, more shallow, and less interesting. And set in Texas.

I thought it'd be more of an inside story to what happens behind-the-scenes during debutante season, but it isn't. The debutante storyline is the only thing that connects these (two-dimensional) characters (why was Jo Lynn even one of the main characters?), and it's mostly on the back burner during the novel.

The author focuses on each character in alternating chapters, but their problems are too shallow (and too obvious) to really get into. There isn't even really a plot--all the girls are basically waiting to see if they'll be on the debutante list.

Rich girls with non-problems.

At least Gossip Girl was satirical and witty enough to be interesting--this book was just kind of boring and could've been set anywhere. The glimpses of Texas "southern belle" culture was the most interesting, but the story and characters weren't strong enough to enhance it.

Alex says

Each year, the exclusive Glass Slipper Club of Houston selects ten girls on their senior year of high school to become that year's debutante crop and become a Rosebud, as the debutantes are called.

Laura has always wanted to be a Rosebud, her mother was one and usually that would mean she's one shoe in, but her standing comes into question since she's a size 12 rather than a 2 and though she's pretty and rich, one just never knows. To add to that, there is Avery, a boy she loves and whom she thought loved her back... only that he never seems to stick around.

Mac - one of Laura's best friends - isn't so sure about being a Deb, she knows that's what her deceased mother wanted for her, but she's having a hard time bringing herself to care; especially since it would mean spending

a lot of time with her new stepmother Honey (a former beauty queen).

Laura and Mac's other best friend Ginger is having some trouble of her own, namely the fact that she always seems to pick the wrong guy and land in trouble.

Then there is Laura's nemesis Jo Lynn who will stop at nothing to make sure Laura won't make it to this year's debutant list. Jo Lynn is a former pagenet queen who loves to win, win, win. And hates Laura - mostly for being a size 12 and not caring about it, which I found kind of ridiculous - she also has a bit of boy trouble... could it be her boyfriend, Golden Boy Dillon just doesn't find her attractive anymore?

Well, that's that settling for The Debs, taking place in the days before the official Rosebud list goes out. I didn't like this book much. I felt some of the characterizations were weak, and I was seriously pissed off at the characterization of the guy Ginger likes - a Mexican transplant who apparently never learned correct use of Spanish because he said the most random and stupid things in Spanish (for the record, Mexicans don't talk like that) - but the overall writing of the book isn't bad.

It did leave me half intrigued about some things, I might read the second book Love, Lies and Texas Dips.

Sara Grochowski says

Title: The Debs

Author: Susan McBride

Publisher: Delacorte Press

Date Published: 2008

Genre: Young Adult

Main Themes: Debutantes, Love, Friendship, Family, Wealth

Pages: 246

Plot:

From back cover: "The heat is on down South!

Debutante season in Houston is under way, and four ultraprivileged girls await their invitations from the illustrious Glass Slipper Club.

Laura Delacroix Bell: This trust-rund baby's size-fourteen figure doesn't stop her from attracting hot boys or the admiring eye of the GSC selection committee. But a salacious secret could take her out of the running faster than you can say "Rosebud."

Michelle "Mac" Mackenzie: She'd rather bury her nose in a book than embrace her deb destiny. But Mac's debut is her late mother's dream and her stepmother's obsession. If Mac doesn't bow out now, she may become the crankiest deb in Texas.

Ginger Fore: She hopes to wear her grandmother's vintage ball gown on her big presentation day. But when a mysterious college guy puts Giger's deb eligibility in jeopardy, she may end up wearing an unflattering orange jumpsuit instead.

Jo Lynn Bidwill: A former beauty queen, she makes it her mission in life to take out the debu-trash. For now, Jo Lynn's sights are set on Laura Bell, and what she has in store for her bitter rival is anything but ladylike.

The Debs... high society doesn't get any lower than this."

I was pleasantly surprised by this book! When I first saw it I was expected something pretty shallow and kind of like a southern version of Gossip Girl. While it was still primarily a light read, it had some depth as well and I found the characters easy to relate to, despite the reader's first impressions.

I really liked how Susan McBride started off describing the girls in term of appearances, then delved deeper into who they are - their hopes, fear, and insecurities. I really enjoyed having four main characters and four points of view. I found that I related to each girl in some way or another.

One of my favorite parts of the book was the quotes at the beginning of the chapters. They were really funny and fit perfectly with the chapters!

Ratings (Out of 10):

Plot: 10

Characters: 10

Romance: 10

Writing Style: 10

Originality: 10

Total: 50/50 (A)

I recommend this novel! It was fun and humorous, with just the right amount of high society intrigue and gossip

Anna says

This book was a lot different than I thought it would be. I picked it up off of my shelf because I thought that it would be a nice, fluffy romance-type book. But it wasn't. It was actually a quite serious novel that dealt with a lot of issues that many girls deal with today. These issues include bullying, weight issues, and boy troubles.

I rated this book three stars just because I never felt like I was interested in what happened to the characters....I just never totally felt like I knew them or cared for them at all. There were points where I felt as if I was reading just to get it finished. This was a problem for me for about a good half of the book. Then, towards the end, I started caring for them and what happened in their lives.

I don't know if I am going to read the second one yet or not. We will see. I definitely recommend reading this one, just maybe get it from the library instead of buying it. When you start reading, remember that it's not a light, fluffy novel.

Cindy Mitchell *Kiss the Book* says

McBride, Susan The Debs, 246 p. Random House, 2008. Language - R (85+ swears); Sexual Content - PG-13.

Ten lucky girls are chosen each year to join the Rosebuds, an exclusive group of Texas debutantes, who may become members of the elite Glass Slipper Club. But neither nomination nor election is assured, even if you are the daughter of a GSC member. Four of this year's crop of potentials have it out for each other.

Backstabbing and sabotage are a way of life and an art form for this diverse bunch of spoiled prima donnas.

Too much swearing for me, but if your school loves the IT girls or Private series, they will probably like this too.

NO. Cindy, Library-Teacher.

<http://kissthebook.blogspot.com/2008/...>

Sarahlynn says

Technically, Susan McBride isn't a new author. Actually, she's the author of the successful Debutante Dropout mysteries (which I enjoyed). But THE DEBS is her first Young Adult novel, so it's a change of direction and I was interested to see how it turned out. McBride is also launching a new "women's fiction" series next year called The Cougar Club, about 40-something women dating younger men. I'm anxiously awaiting that one, too, because McBride is a (barely) 40-something woman married to a (slightly) younger man . . . who just happens to be a guy with whom I went to college and played hockey.

I have met Susan. We're BFFs, so I can use her first name like that. (Not really. I've met her, like, twice. But she's really really nice and has this way of making you feel like you really ARE her friend, even if you just met her in a crowded public place.) So I want her to succeed. But I wasn't sure what to expect from The Debs . . .

And I was even less sure when I started reading. The brand names were dropping so thick and fast, I couldn't find the story. Oh, wait, there it is. Holy cow, what's up with this girl?! She's our first main POV character and she's blowing off her friends to go have sex with a guy who all her friends know is a complete jerk who treats her terribly. Niiice.

I had a hard time relating to the extreme wealth and privilege of the characters. All of the characters, especially with the current world economic situation. And I had a hard time relating to their big dramas and problems, too. I really wasn't connecting to the story.

Or so I thought. And then I realized that I'd finished the book in one sitting. And I was looking around for the next one, LOVE, LIES AND TEXAS DIPS, which I know doesn't come out until June. For the next several days, I kept drifting back to the characters in my mind and thinking about their situations, their challenges, their goals.

The girls had become real to me, and the guys had too. I have a theory about what's really going on with Avery, but I'm still trying to figure out Dillon's story. Even The Debs themselves grew on me. And I have hopes that college will help them figure out their priorities . . . especially Mac (the brain) and Ginger (the environmentalist) who I found most sympathetic.

Though I also found myself caring about Laura (the one who ditched her friends for a guy). And even "The Queen of Mean, Jo Lynn [who] is so easy to hate" (according to one review). I thought Jo Lynn was going to be a textbook Mean Girl, but she isn't. She's mean, yes, but she's sympathetic, too. And it's not like Laura, Mac, and Ginger are perfectly nice. They call Jo Lynn and her friends The Bimbo Squad.

I think my favorite thing about THE DEBS was how real the characters seemed. The boys' behavior was completely mysterious and confusing to the girls, and not easily deciphered by readers, either. The girls themselves were a mixture of child and woman, sometimes seeming so young and sometimes seeming far

too old. In short, they were teenagers.

They were all older and more sophisticated than I was at that age, for sure. But given their lifestyles, I found that completely realistic. I saw those kids from afar, when I was in high school. They didn't go to my school, necessarily, and we didn't often attend the same parties, but occasionally we'd cross paths at a golf tournament. Even public schools can have golf teams.

Shortly after finishing THE DEBS I read Orson Scott Card's new direct sequel to ENDER'S GAME, ENDER IN EXILE. After reading that, I was even more impressed with Susan McBride's grasp of teenage life.

McBride's teenagers aren't stupid. They're intelligent and passionate. But they're not all philosophers, either. They're not exactly the same as they were at 6 and will be at 60. They're kids. They have different interests and priorities than they had last year or they'll have next year. They make dumb choices and lack foresight. They care passionately about things. They're . . . interesting.

It depresses me that this is what t(w)eenage girls want to read, though. Brand-name dropping novels about ultra-rich, snobby, classist kids casually having sex, drinking, doing drugs, and being otherwise unpleasant.

It seems that this is what girls (and women) want to read, though, and McBride serves it up nicely. But she slips a little bit of perspective into the story throughout. She creates the world in which the characters live, and she doesn't ridicule it, but she neither does she condone it or its excesses.

Well done, deftly handled. Thanks for the fun read!

Adriana says

I wanted to like this book. But I found it to be very superficial. I know that alot of these 'cliquey' books are meant to be that way, but maybe it's because I just can't relate to the Gucci-wearing, stilleto-clacking, uber-rich teens that are out there these days (like those on shows like 'My Super Sweet Sixteen'). In The Debs, three best friends in a rich Houston suburb, Laura, Mac, and Ginger are all anxiously awaiting their turn to be debutantes. The honor is by invite only, and since they come from the right families, they are most likely going to get invites. However, what sets these three apart is that they are not necessarily the blonde, A-list, cheerleader type. They do have money, cars, the latest cell phones, and designer handbags, but Laura is 'big-boned', Mac is a brain, and Ginger is concerned about the environment. Big deal. They still read like spoiled brats who do anything to get the guy and are concerned with ballgowns and Christian Louboutins. Something happens with each of the girls that could threaten their deb status. There is also a 'queen of mean' character that is the popular, blonde, A-list type, and in the end I was actually rooting for her. It just read like a romance novel, and I felt like the author was trying too hard to appeal to teens by using popular lingo and making way too many pop culture references that will certainly date the book (like mentioning Justin Timberlake and One Tree Hill). I don't know why, but I just couldn't sympathize with these three girls. This is the first in a series.

Ilovereadings says

Laura has many problems, including the fact that she wears double digits in clothing. Her next problem is getting into the debutante committee. It consists of pristine, groomed, perfect Barbie dolls who are carrying on a sweet tradition through tea parties, balls, dances, etc. Her friends, Ginger and Mac, also have the same

dream, each with their own problems. However, there's no way Laura's getting in if Jo Lynn Bidwell can help it. Her mother, Bootsie, is the head of the debutante committee. Jo Lynn hates Laura's guts for hooking up with her ex boyfriend, so she is desperate to get Laura's humongous butt kicked off the committee. (Preferably, she doesn't want to have it to come to her getting on the committee, but Jo Lynn thinks ahead.) With a scandal involving a disgusting photo and a lot of tears, Jo Lynn plays dirty again. Will Jo Lynn be able to get Laura safely booted off the team, or will her own mother succumb and invite Laura onto the committee? Tiny spoiler: There's a happy ending, but the way it comes about is quite unexpected! Very enjoyable book.

Kristi says

Laura Bell, Michelle "Mac" Mackenzie and Ginger Fore have a lot to look forward to! These best friends will be starting their senior year and eagerly awaiting their invitations to Glass Slipper Club! Then they can officially start their debutante season as Rosebuds!

There is a prestigious selection process to become a Rosebud, and these girls need to behave like a debutante would. Unfortunately, Jo-Lynn Bidwill, the evil queen, is waiting on her invitation as well. Her mother happens to be the head of the selection committee, so you can almost guarantee Jo-Lynn's name will be on the list. Jo-Lynn would love nothing more than to see Laura Bell out of contention for good, and she may just have her way.

What an enticing beginning to what I'm sure will be a fabulous series!! The Debs certainly left me craving more! I can't wait to see what happens to these three girls! And I really hope Jo-Lynn gets what is coming to her. This was a fast read for me, but I think it definitely had to do with the fact that I was engulfed with the story! The chapters sort of alternate among the four girls, so you get a peek at each one's life. That made the story so much more enjoyable for me. If you are looking for a fun read this summer, look no further than The Debs! I know I will be anxiously awaiting the release of the next book in the series Love, Lies and Texas Dips, coming June 2009! I seriously don't think I can wait that long!
