

STUDY QUESTIONS FOR BOOK GROUPS

1. What, if any, limitations does this book reveal about the United States criminal justice system?
2. Did your belief concerning the guilt and/or innocence of Casper Bennett change as the story progressed? If so, when and why?
3. Almost all of the characters in this book were first generation children of immigrants. Has public opinion changed about immigrants and their children since the time of the Bennett trial? If so, why?
4. Are there differences between the type of people who immigrate to this country today as opposed to those who came to this country at the turn of the 20th century?
5. Did the police adequately investigate the circumstances of Florence Bennett's death? If not, what should they have done differently?
6. Did any of the lawyers act unethically in either prosecuting or defending this case? Why or why not?
7. Do you think that Casper Bennett abused his wife either physical or mentally? If so, does this make him more likely to have murdered his wife?
8. Did Casper Bennett's open infidelity reflect on his basic character and make him more likely to have killed his wife?
9. If you believe that Casper Bennett murdered his wife, at what time did the murder occur?
10. What is your opinion regarding Casper Bennett's alibi?
11. Has society's view and treatment of alcoholism changed since the time of this trial? If so, how and why?
12. Did the author use a third person limited narrative in any chapters as opposed to a third person omniscient narrative? If so, why?
13. Did the photographs and documents in the book add or subtract from the story?
14. Would Florence Bennett have more options and opportunities to leave Casper Bennett today as opposed to fifty years ago? If yes, why?
15. Is spousal abuse more prevalent today as opposed to fifty years ago?