

Discussion Questions

The Southern Book Club's Guide to Slaying Vampires

by Grady Hendrix

1. After an uncomfortable introduction to the neighborhood, James Harris quickly and almost seamlessly transitions into being a trusted resident. Why does he fit in so well despite his sudden and surprising appearance?
2. Discuss the dynamics of the neighborhood. What are the pros and cons of living in a suburban community like Mt. Pleasant in the 1990s? Do these vary depending on gender, race, or social status?
3. The book is female-driven, and much of the horror happens to women and children. How do all the women in the book club respond to reports of strange or downright scary events, and how does their environment influence the different strengths and weaknesses they display?
4. "Something strange is going on" is a phrase Patricia repeats throughout the book. Are there red flags about James Harris early on that the women miss, or ignore? Are their reservations different from those of their husbands?
5. Patricia is the one person who remains suspicious of her handsome new neighbor despite his friendly and charming exterior. Why do you think she, out of all James Harris's new friends in their quiet neighborhood, is more prone to considering the possibility of a menace in their midst?
6. The response to reports of missing children in Six Mile versus Mt. Pleasant differs greatly, among both residents and law enforcement. What are the social implications of these differing reactions, and how do they influence the way the story plays out?
7. Despite the small-town charm and close-knit ties in Mt. Pleasant, Patricia finds her confidence broken again and again by people she trusts. How is her trust betrayed, both inside her social circle and beyond her community?
8. Although there is one obvious monster at the center of the story, we learn that fear, dread, and terror come in many forms. Is there more than one kind of monster? What are the scariest elements of this story and why?

9. Discuss how the women come together to end the threat to their community. Do you think the women's actions are justified, or do they go too far?

10. Discuss the novel in terms of other vampire horror fiction. What elements of vampire lore has Grady Hendrix expanded upon, discarded, and added to the genre? Do you think he has successfully furthered readers' expectations for the vampire novel?

(Questions issued by the publisher.)

