

BITTEN
BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS

1. Before reading this book, had you ever heard about bug-borne weapons? Why aren't these programs better known?
2. The book subtitle is "The Secret History of Lyme Disease and Biological Weapons." What did you find the most surprising about the secret history and/or biological weapons?
3. What was your first impression of Willy Burgdorfer? How does the author illuminate his strengths and appeal, as well as the darker side of his nature?
4. How did your opinion of Willy change over the course of the book?
5. Is it difficult to believe that this program was hidden for so long? Do you think the government should declassify the information related to these bioweapons?
6. Did you like the inclusion of photos throughout the story? How did that add to your understanding? Which photos were most impactful?
7. Do you think Willy sold biological agents to a foreign power? Are there any other plausible explanations for his secret bank account and hidden wealth?
8. What was the author's motivation in writing this book, and do you think her personal involvement with Lyme disease diminished the believability of the information presented?
9. One of the more frustrating parts of Newby's investigation was the hesitancy of sources to talk freely about 50-year-old Cold War experiments. Do you feel that secrecy oaths signed decades ago should still be honored today?
10. The author describes the politics surrounding Lyme disease. How do you think the history of biological weapons has fueled the controversy surrounding tick-borne diseases?
11. Were you satisfied with how the book ended?
12. How might you describe the experience of reading this book? Was it easy to delve into? Was it too technical?
13. Did anything in the book make you angry?
14. Would you recommend this book to a friend?