

SPIN DOCTOR

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Discussion Guide

1. How much privacy should public figures have? Do we have a right to know their health profile, for example, if it has no bearing on their performance?
2. What do you think Jack is afraid will happen if his secrets are revealed?
3. Do you think Jack was right to obfuscate his past with his friends? Would they really have thought less of him?
4. What is the metaphor of the Bay Bridge?
5. Why do you think Evan and Bob are friends? Why is Jack friends with both of them?
6. When do followers, whether staff or the public, owe their loyalty to a public figure and what should they do if they feel the public trust has been violated? Does a staffer have a moral obligation to not use inside information to embarrass the boss? Does your position on this extend to life beyond politics? How much loyalty do you owe your employer?
7. What are Linda's motivations for spending time with Jack? Do you think she is sincere?
8. Who do you believe about Lixubistan? What should the US do?
9. Do you think Jack is satisfied with his relationship with women? Which of the women do you think he should have stayed with?
10. Would Jack have been able to climb so high politically had he been honest about his background from the outset? Was spinning his father's death worth it?
11. If Cunningham had not been such a questionable successor to Dexter, should Jack have been concerned and taken the action he did?

12. Do you think Dexter was a good president? Was he a positive character? Does the moral ambiguity of his health crisis diminish his presidency? Would you vote for him?
13. Do you think it is possible that Dexter was moved by Jack's concern and faked his collapse at the debate?
14. The novel begins with the quotation from Joseph Conrad: "You know, I hate, detest, and can't bear a lie. Not because I'm straighter than the rest of us, but simply because it appalls me. There is a taint of death, a flavor of mortality in lies which is exactly what I hate and detest in the world." Why do you think the author included this quotation? What does it mean?
15. Did you ever feel as though spin doctor Jack Abbot was spinning his story to you, the reader, or were you convinced of his sincerity throughout?
16. Jack rationalizes that "spinning" is not the same as lying. Is there a difference? Is simply telling the truth always the right thing to do?
17. Can you blame Jack for, as he says, "putting [himself] in a better light?" Is it relatively harmless and common to do this? Do you know people outside of politics who are guilty of the same thing?
18. Do you think Jack made the right decision at the end of the book?

Please let us know your suggestions for discussion questions and we will add them to this list.

A Note to Readers

Thank you for reading *Spin Doctor*. As an indie author, I especially appreciate your support and am helped tremendously by your word of mouth recommendations and reviews on Goodreads, Shelfari, Amazon and other booksellers.

If your group has additional questions please forward them. I am also available, schedule permitting, to participate in your discussions via Skype, or in person if I am in your area.

I love to hear from my readers. You can reach me via mcl@MCLewisBooks.com, my website and on Twitter, @NovelPolitics.

