



Discussion Questions for *A Bitter Veil* by Libby Fischer Hellmann

1. Do you remember the Iran Revolution of the late 1970s? If so, what are some of your memories of that time?
2. If you had to use five words to describe Iran, what would they be? Do you think these words are different from the ones you would have used before reading this book?
3. Were you surprised by the identity of Nouri's murderer? If so, as you were reading along, who were you thinking was the murderer?
4. The theme of family is key to this book. If Anna had not had such a difficult, distant relationship with her parents do you think she would have been as likely to go to Iran with Nouri?
5. In a time of conflict, how important is it to remember that the individual people in a country are quite different and separate from their government? Is it important to understand and appreciate the culture of another country if we are in conflict with them?
6. Do you think that American authors should write novels about other countries? How do you think their perspective as an author flavors their work?
7. How would you handle yourself if you were in Anna's situation?
8. How do you think Anna will feel about her time with Nouri when she looks back on it in her later life? Does it help her to understand him once Baba-joon explains his psychology and motives?
9. What do you think is the significance of the title *A Bitter Veil*?
10. How would you feel if you lived in a culture where women were forced to cover themselves in public?
11. Has this novel given you a deeper appreciation for Iran, in terms of its geography, architecture, and culture? Are you interested in learning more about Iran now?
12. The Iranian protests depicted in the book---both in Chicago and in Iran---can be seen as similar to the current Occupy protests. How do you think they are the same or different?