

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR
CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD'S *THE MEMORIAL: PORTRAIT OF A FAMILY*¹

1. Why does Isherwood use the following chronological sequence to present his story: Book One, 1928; Book Two, 1920; Book Three, 1925; Book Four, 1929?
2. While the impact of the War on British society affects some of the characters in *The Memorial* more than others, it seems that Isherwood's use of the motif is minimal, indirect, and seeps in only at certain points of the story. But in what way(s) might it be argued that the use of the War motif guides the whole of the novel?
3. As the back page of the book and the book's contents suggest, a major theme of Isherwood in his novel is homosexual relations. Does this theme enhance or detract from other themes of the book (e.g., the War itself)?
4. It seems that Isherwood looks through a narrow window when he examines the lives of one extended family. How does he move this small purview toward a more general or broader vision of post-War British social culture?
5. How does Isherwood capture the interplay of different generations in British society after the War? Of the interplay of gender relations? Of the interplay of familial relations?

¹Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999, 294 pages.