

The *Black Hour* by Lori Rader-Day Book Club Discussion Questions

Amelia regrets many of her own decisions in life, thinking about “the Amelia Emmets I killed myself” with her choices. What decisions have been pivotal for where you are now in your life?

At a critical moment in Amelia and Nathaniel’s friendship, at Amelia’s apartment, the two make assumptions at odds with what is actually happening between them. How do both Amelia and Nath enter this moment under delusions?

After reading *The Black Hour*, what kind of teacher do you think Amelia will be in the future? How has everything that’s happened changed her?

The media documented Amelia’s fall and then her rise from her blackest hour. What stories have you watched play out in the media? How do you think media attention affects victims?

The Black Hour opens with Amelia Emmet’s return to campus—where she thinks everyone is against her. That’s only partly true, but she can’t see it. Why do you think she has trouble accepting the support of her colleagues?

Nathaniel, reeling from his mother’s recent death, is attracted to dark topics and scenes. How might someone in his situation be attracted to the study of violence? When we meet Leo’s mother, how is her grief unique from Nath’s?

Amelia has mixed feelings about the woman hired to clean her apartment. As we learn about Amelia’s working-class background, how do we understand her hesitance better? In what other ways is Amelia ambivalent about privilege?

Rothbert University is shoved up against the shore of Lake Michigan—a scenic spot, but also the literal edge of the town. How is the lake part of the life of the university and those who study and work there?

