

Discussion Questions

All the Things You Are by Declan Hughes



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1. Danny notes that but for circumstances, there wasn't that much of a difference between Jackie Bradberry and himself. In what ways were the Brogan and Bradberry families similar? How did family circumstances contribute to the escalation of Jackie and Danny's dispute?
2. When Claire walks into her abandoned house, she doesn't call the police. Danny and Donna try to keep the whereabouts of the girls from Claire. There are other times that the characters make decisions about who to talk to—or not—that have major repercussions. What would you have done in the place of Claire? Of Donna or Danny? Do their actions make sense by the conclusion of the book?
3. Hughes often uses song titles as his chapter headings, as well as for the title of the book. What do you think he is trying to convey by using such titles? Do they seem apt for the chapters that follow? Do you think *All the Things You Are* is an apt title for this story?
4. Did the author create a convincing portrait of Madison? Why or why not? Why do you think he chose to set *All the Things You Are* in the Madison area?
5. Hughes chose to tell *All the Things You Are* in a several narrative voices. Was that something that you felt added or detracted from the storytelling? How would telling the story from a single perspective changed your understanding of Claire and Danny's predicament?
6. Identity plays a pivotal role in this story, with several characters realizing that what they believed true of themselves might have, in fact, been false. Who do you think has the most consistent view of their personal identity through the novel? Whose self-perception has changed the most by the end?
7. Danny and the rest of his childhood friends didn't take responsibility for the events of Halloween 1976 at the time, and by the time of the events of the novel, enough years had passed that no one would ever be criminally charged for the fire. Do you feel that Danny and the rest of the Four Horsemen were guilty of a crime or was the Bradberry fire a tragic accident? Who are the victims in the novel? Could Dave's and Dee's actions be considered justice? Where is the line between justice and revenge?