

BOOK CLUB IN A BOX

Bookclub-in-a-Box presents the Novel Notes presentation guide for Hans Fallada's novel Every Man Dies Alone

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Quotations used in this guide have been taken from the hardcover text described above. All information taken from other sources is acknowledged. This discussion companion has been prepared and written by Marilyn Herbert, originator of Bookclub-in-a-Box. Marilyn Herbert is a graduate of the University of Toronto, Canada and has taught English language skills to students at all levels from elementary school to college. Currently, Marilyn organizes and conducts literary presentations, workshops and discussions for private and public groups. For more information about the Bookclub-in-a-Box team, visit our website.

Bookclub-in-a-Box Novel Notes guide for Every Man Dies Alone

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CONTACT INFORMATION: SEE BACK COVER.

BOOKCLUB-IN-A-BOX

Readers and Leaders Guide

Each Bookclub-in-a-Box guide is clearly and effectively organized to give you information and ideas for a lively discussion, as well as to present the major highlights of the novel. The format, with a Table of Contents, allows you to pick and choose the specific points you wish to talk about. It does not have to be used in any prescribed order. In fact, it is meant to support, not determine, your discussion.

You Choose What to Use.

You may find that some information is repeated in more than one section and may be cross-referenced so as to provide insight on the same idea from different angles.

The guide is formatted to give you extra space to make your own notes.

How to Begin

Relax and look forward to enjoying your bookclub.

With Bookclub-in-a-Box as your behind the scenes support, there is little for you to do in the way of preparation.

Some readers like to review the guide after reading the novel; some before. Either way, the guide is all you will need as a companion for your discussion. You may find that the guide's interpretation, information, and background have sparked other ideas not included.

Having read the novel and armed with Bookclub-in-a-Box, you will be well prepared to lead or guide or listen to the discussion at hand.

Lastly, if you need some more 'hands-on' support, feel free to contact us. (See Contact Information)

What to Look For

Each Bookclub-in-a-Box guide is divided into easy-to-use sections, which include points on characters, themes, writing style and structure, literary or historical background, author information, and other pertinent features unique to the novel being discussed. These may vary slightly from guide to guide.

INTERPRETATION OF EACH NOVEL REFLECTS THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE BOOKCLUB-IN-A-BOX TEAM.

Do We Need to Agree?

THE ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION IS NO.

If we have sparked a discussion or a debate on certain points, then we are happy. We invite you to share your group's alternative findings and experiences with us. You can respond on-line at our website or contact us through our Contact Information. We would love to hear from you.

Discussion Starters

There are as many ways to begin a bookclub discussion as there are members in your group. If you are an experienced group, you will already have your favorite ways to begin. If you are a newly formed group or a group looking for new ideas, here are some suggestions.

Ask for people's impressions of the novel. (This will give you some idea about which parts of the unit to focus on.)

- Identify a favorite or major character.
- Identify a favorite or major idea.
- Begin with a powerful or pertinent quote. (not necessarily from the novel)
- Discuss the historical information of the novel. (not applicable to all novels)
- If this author is familiar to the group, discuss the range of his/her work and where this novel stands in that range.
- Use the discussion topics and questions in the Bookclub-in-a-Box guide.

If you have further suggestions for discussion starters, be sure to share them with us and we will share them with others.

Above All, Enjoy Yourself

NOVEL NOTES

Every Man Dies Alone *(a discussion)*

All **Bookclub-in-a-Box Novel Notes** are intended to acquaint the reader with the essence of a specific novel and to introduce its author. A **Novel Notes** guide reflects a live discussion led by a **Bookclub-in-a-Box** presenter and will contain a thought-provoking look at thematic content, writing style, questions, author and background information. You may choose what to use for your own presentation or discussion.

Our goal is to make it easy for readers to lead or participate in a discussion of this work of fiction. We hope to inspire you to add your own unique thoughts and perspective. The full guide will be published in due course. Log onto the website, www.bookclubinabox.com, for updates.

Enjoy our presentation of Hans Fallada's novel, **Every Man Dies Alone**.

notes

INTRODUCTION

- Fallada's story is about a quiet, middle-aged couple, Otto and Anna Quangel, who lose their only son in the Nazi invasion of France. They are normally unassuming and obedient citizens, but grief pushes them over the edge, into action.
- They decide to write anonymous postcards with the intention of stimulating others into resistance by prodding their anger. Their postcard campaign becomes an obsession not only with Otto and Anna, but also for Inspector Escherich, the policeman who wants to capture the phantom "hobgoblin" responsible for the operation.
- At first, the story is a ridiculous "cops and robbers" chase. Then, it takes on the absurd atmosphere of Kafka's *The Trial*, the story of a man arrested and prosecuted by an unknown authority. In the end, Fallada's story weighs in with the kind of psychological and spiritual introspection and conclusion that we find in Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*.

Are there other literary parallels that this novel reminds you of?

Keys to the Novel

There are a number of key elements that identify this novel as being important to literary fiction and to human psychology and philosophy.

Fear Factor

- Fear is one of the most powerful controls of human behavior. It may be stronger than peer pressure, social obligation, justice, and other



**Thanks for previewing this
Bookclub-in-a-Box discussion guide.**

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print or PDF format, just visit:**

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