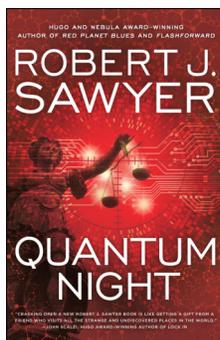


Quantum Night

Robert J. Sawyer

Experimental Psychologist Jim Marchuk has developed a flawless technique for identifying the psychopaths lurking everywhere in society. But while being cross-examined, Jim is shocked to discover that he has lost his memories of six months of his life from twenty years previously — a dark time during which he himself committed heinous acts.



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The following questions should stimulate an interesting group discussion. Please note that they reveal much of the novel's plot. To preserve your reading pleasure, please don't look at these questions until after you've finished the book.

1. If you had a foolproof device to spot psychopaths, would you use it? What if it identified your spouse or your child as a psychopath?
2. Did you know, before reading this novel, that there's a synchrotron in Saskatoon or a Human Rights museum in Winnipeg? How important is it to you that the details are accurate?
3. Did you start sorting your own friends and relatives into Q1, Q2, and Q3 categories? Which category do you belong in?

4. Should Victoria have dumped her boyfriend just because he was a Q1? They got along. He had a good, steady job. Did she do the right thing, especially given that there are four times as many Q1s as Q3s?

5. At various points in the novel, characters lie to Jim (and by extension, to the reader). Menno seems to lie at every turn. Is this unfair? What about Kayla keeping secrets from Jim? Is not saying anything more acceptable than lying?

6. Have you ever discovered that your memory of an event in your past was not accurate? Can you remember where you left your keys?

7. When you discover that Jim's sister Heather and Kayla's daughter Ryan are Q1s, do you care about them more, less, or the same as you did before you knew?

8. If you had to evaluate Jim Marchuk on RateMyProfessors.com, how would you score his teaching style in their three categories: helpfulness, clarity, and easiness (of marking)? How does Jim compare to teachers or professors you've had in the past?

9. Did you enjoy Jim's lectures? What did you think of Utilitarianism? It's Jim's personal philosophy, could it be yours?

10. Both Menno Warkentin and Dominic Adler were happy to jump into bed with the US Department of Defense (and work for a foreign power) in exchange for piles of research money. When universities receive funds from outside sources, to whom do they owe their allegiance?

11. When Jim Marchuk encountered the psychopath and his Q1 minion on the deserted road, both the Q3/Jim and the Q2/psychopath

ran away from the fight, but the Q1/p-zed would not stop. If we could identify them, should we only send mindless Q1/p-zeds off to fight in wars? They make the best soldiers, but is it a good idea?

12. How did you feel when US troops crossed the border and the tanks rolled into Ottawa? In the future, is a united North America inevitable? Do you think it will be a negotiated arrangement like the European Union or a military action as in this novel?

13. Do you think that Vladimir Putin and other real-world leaders are psychopaths? We can see that despots and military dictators are Q2s. But why, in democracies, do we elect them?

14. Is Jim Marchuk criminally responsible for murdering Dominic Adler and maiming Menno Warkentin? How is Jim any less guilty than Devin Becker, the Savannah Prison guard sentenced to death at the beginning of the novel?

Robert J. Sawyer — “Canada’s dean of Science Fiction,” according to **Booklist** — is one of only eight writers ever to win all three of the science-fiction field’s top awards for best novel of the year: the Hugo, which he won in 2003 for **Hominids**; the Nebula, which he won in 1996 for **The Terminal Experiment**; and the John W. Campbell Memorial Award, which he won in 2006 for **Mindscan**. He’s also won the top SF awards in Canada, France, Japan, China, and Spain. According to the **Locus Index to Science Fiction Awards**, he’s won more awards than any other novelist in the history of the science fiction and fantasy fields. A popular keynote speaker as well as a bestselling author, Rob lives near Toronto with his wife, poet Carolyn Clink.

