

Wolf Kill - DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Near the beginning of *Wolf Kill*, Sam Rivers is investigating a wolf predation at Judy Rutgers's sheep ranch. In what ways does Sam's work at Rutgers's ranch presage (and help) his subsequent investigation of the wolf predation at his childhood home?

2. Sam Rivers had a tumultuous relationship with his father, Williston Winthrop. In many ways, their characters are foils to one another. In what general ways do the two men differ? And in what specific ways (for example, their relationship to wolves) do the men differ?

3. In the novel, wolf dog hybrids are used to slaughter calves. Ostensibly, the carnage is arranged so that Angus Moon will no longer be burdened with the calves' care. What are some of the other perceived benefits of the wolf-calf predation? Does the predation reveal anything else about the motives and characters of the Iron County Gun Club members?

4. The wolf dog hybrids are set free, so they can wreak havoc in Winthrop's barn. Unexpectedly, after killing the calves, they cannot be corralled and caged. How is freeing the hybrids similar to the actions of the Iron County Gun Club?

5. There are five wolf dog hybrids, and there are five members of the Iron County Gun Club. Are there any other comparisons that can be made between the wolf dogs and the club members?

6. While breeding wolf dog hybrids is legal in Minnesota, the practice is banned in many other states. Does *Wolf Kill* begin to explore some of the reasons the practice is controversial? If so, discuss some of the reasons you would/would not like to have a wolf dog as a pet.

7. Diane Talbott is instrumental in understanding what has happened in Defiance, the surrounding county, and Winthrop's farm. How does her association with Hank Pederson help her understand how the Iron County Gun Club has benefited from Winthrop's death? How does Diane serve as an emotional connection to Sam's past?

8. Under duress, Sheriff Dean Goddard shared important prosecutorial information with Williston Winthrop days before Winthrop's staged death. Was the sheriff's divulgence instrumental in the gun club's murder of James T. "Jimbo" Beauregard? Technically, the sheriff violated the law. Should he be prosecuted? If so, why? If not, why not?

9. When Sam and Diane learn about the sheriff's reveal of prosecutorial information to Williston Winthrop, they agree to tell no one. Why? What does the agreement to conceal the sheriff's unlawful actions say about Diane and Sam and their sense of justice?

10. Near the end of the novel, Sam visits Angus Moon's kennel and finds a mangy wolf dog hybrid survivor. How does Sam's reaction to the wolf dog pup differ from how Sam's father raised him? Is Sam's treatment of the pup, and the pup himself, significant, and if so, why? Would you like to see Sam adopt the wolf dog? If so, why?

