

Doing Max Vinyl Discussion Questions

By Frederick Lee Brooke

Author Bio: (GoodReads)

Frederick Lee Brooke is an independent author who has been a resident of Switzerland for the last 20 years. He has worked as a teacher, language school manager, and school owner. He has three boys and two cats and recently had to learn how to operate both washing machine and dryer. When not writing or doing the washing, Fred can be found walking along the banks of the Rhine River, sitting in a local cafe, or visiting all the local pubs in search of his lost umbrella.

There are currently 3 books in the Annie Ogden series.

Characters:

- **Max Vinyl** – Owner of TSR, a crooked computer recycling company. A car collector.
- **Tris Berrymore** – Former secretary of TSR and Max's ex-girlfriend. Environmentalist.
- **Manny Rodriguez** – GM of TSR. In charge of most of the company's day-to-day business decisions.
- **Ike Mullin** – Works for TSR. Does a lot of the company's dirty work – dumps recycled parts into Lake Michigan. Works with Tranny.
- **Tran Phan Ng** – (Tranny) -- Does a lot of the company's dirty work – dumps recycled parts into Lake Michigan. Works with Ike. Leaves the company's GPS at a restaurant.
- **Alison Paine** – Waitress. Takes the GPS left at her station to her husband.
- **Todd Paine** -- Alison's husband. Collects cell phones.
- **Annie Ogden** – Returning Iraq vet. Alison's sister.
- **Alden Sterling** – Accountant. In the middle of a divorce and custody battle.
- **Brainard Combs** – Works for TSR and does the company's subtle dirty work (ex. intimidation) and other odd jobs. Health conscious.
- **Luthor Van Verst** -- Tris Berrymore's ex-boyfriend. Person she goes back to after she breaks up with Max.
- **Cary Williams** – Classmate of Deborah and Alden Sterling. Mother to Clarissa.
- **Charles Williams** – Cary's stepfather. Possibly abusing Cary. Killed by a hit and run driver.
- **Ginger** – Max's ex-wife.
- **Bob Olsen** – Accountant – Works for Alden Sterling. Accidentally sends his boss' laptop to be recycled at TSR. Is tasked with getting the computer back.
- **Oscar Furey** – Lawyer for Max Vinyl and TSR.
- **Deborah Sterling** – Wife of Alden Sterling. Alcoholic.
- **Clarissa Williams** – Cary Williams' daughter. Adopted by Alden Sterling.

Discussion Questions:

1. Did you like the book?
2. Who is the main character in the book? The main antagonist? The main protagonist?
3. In **Doing Max Vinyl** many of the characters' actions are wrong, but they do not seem to understand that what they are doing is bad. Why do you think this happens? Does this happen in real life?
4. Did the shifting character viewpoints help or harm the story arc?
5. Which character did you like to most? Why?
6. Which character did you like the least? Why?
7. This book has a lot of misconceptions in it; mainly focusing on who is responsible for the bad things that happen to the various characters. How could the misconceptions have been avoided? How do these misconceptions forward the book's story line?
8. Why is Todd so hung up on his phones? Why is Annie? Was it really about the phones?
9. How did the fact that Annie was a returning vet affect the books? What impact does her history make?
10. What do you think about the interludes in the book with the lake monster?
11. This book has a lot of escalating revenge scenarios (where one person does something small and the next person takes revenge in a slightly bigger way, so the first person does something worse, etc.). Does this happen in real life? How does this affect the book?
12. Did Alden do the right thing in adopting Clarissa?
13. What did you think of the environmental message of the book? Overdone? Subtle? Just right?
14. What was the most surprising thing/action/event that happened in the book?
15. How did you end up feeling about the bad guys? Did you have sympathy for any of them?
16. What is the symbolism/meaning behind Max standing on a pile of garbage at the end of the book?
17. Does this book qualify as a mystery? Crime novel? Noir? Thriller?
18. There are three books in this series (so far). Will you continue to read the series?

Extras:

Great Lakes Monsters.

Chippewa and Canadian Indians told of Naitaka, a long necked monster that ate men and deer alike. The Chippewa also told of a nameless beast, the Giant Sturgeon of Lake Superior that ate whole ships. Ojibway Indians said Mishipishu was another monster of Lake Superior. It was a giant, cat-like creature, with something like spines down its back, who protected its copper at Isle Royale & Michipicoten Island, like a dragon protecting its gold.

(<http://markturnersmysteriousworld.blogspot.com/>)

More modern reports are of a creature with the non-threatening name of South Bay Bessie in Lake Erie. In 1793 the captain of the sloop Facility startled a large creature more than 16 ½ feet long. From then on, sightings of the elusive creature were reported from the 1800's into modern times. (<http://markturnersmysteriousworld.blogspot.com/>)

Bessie is a name given to an alleged lake monster in Lake Erie, also known as "South Bay Bessie". The first recorded sighting of Bessie occurred in 1793, and more sightings have occurred intermittently and in greater frequency in the last three decades. Bessie is reported to be snake-like and 9 to 12 m (30 to 40 ft) long, at least a foot in diameter, with a grayish color. (Wikipedia)

References:

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