

Gideon's Sword Discussion Questions

by Douglas Preston & Lincoln Child

Author Bio: (Fantastic Fiction)

Douglas Preston was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1956. His first job was as an editor at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City – resulting in his first nonfiction book, Dinosaurs in the Attic, and his first novel, Relic, co-authored with Lincoln Child. He has written a string of other thrillers co-written with Child. Preston spends his free time riding horses in New Mexico and gunkholing around the Maine coast in an old lobster boat. He counts in his ancestry the poet Emily Dickinson, the newspaperman Horace Greeley, and the infamous murderer and opium addict Amasa Greenough.



Lincoln Child was a former book editor and is currently the co-author, with Douglas Preston, of a number of bestselling thrillers. He lives with his wife and daughter in Morristown, New Jersey.

Characters:

- **Dr. Gideon Crew:** Works at Los Alamos Labs designing and testing high-explosive lenses. Wants revenge for his father's death. Is a former art thief.
- **Melvin Crew:** Gideon's father. Math profession working for the government on an encryption program called "Thresher." Took a hostage to prove himself innocent. Was shot and killed.
- **General Chamblee Tucker:** Man who was responsible for Thresher and Melvin Crew's death.
- **Lamoire Hopkins:** IT tech at INSCOM, a classified facility.
- **Charles Dajkovic:** Former special ops soldier under Chamblee Tucker. Tucker "hires" him to kill Gideon Crew.
- **Manuel Garza:** A mysterious operative who works for Eli Glinn.
- **Eli Glinn:** CEO of Effective Engineering Solutions Inc. (EES). Hires Crew to find Mark Wu and get the information he is carrying.
- **Mark Wu (Wu Longwei):** Chinese scientist who clandestinely comes to the US. Dafa practitioner.
- **Madame Chung:** Founder of the Bergen Dafa Center. Jie Liang's grandmother.
- **Biyu Liang:** Mother of Jie, a student at Throckmorton Academy. She practices Falun Dafa, a mystical Chinese meditation system.
- **Tom O'Brien:** Crew's friend. A grad student at Columbia University. Computer hacker/expert.

- **Nodding Crane:** Chinese operative/assassin after Wu and the information he carries. Plays old American Folk music. Kills using his guitar picks.
- **Roger Marion:** Wu's American contact. A Caucasian living in Chinatown. Is killed by Nodding Crane.
- **Marilyn Creedy:** Prostitute hired by Crew to help with his disguises and roles. Crew calls her "Orchid."
- **Mindy Jackson:** CIA operative interested in Wu and the information he is carrying.

Discussion Questions:

1. Did you like the book? Why or why not?
2. Did you like the character of Gideon Crew? Did you like the way he was written?
3. Was the way Crew went after Chamblee Tucker justice or revenge? What is the difference between the two? Was it the right thing to do?
4. Why does Glinn hire Crew – based on just Crew's experiences with Tucker?
5. Why do you think Crew took the job for EES?
6. If you knew you only had a year to live, what 1 thing would you do?
7. Once the taxi accident involving Wu occurs, why does Gideon continue looking for the information – going so far as to break into the police impound lot? Why do you think he doesn't just go to EES and tell them it is over?
8. O'Brien tells Crew, "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel." What does he mean by that?
9. Crew is really good at making up stories; he is sort of an amateur conman. Does he need to go through all of that work for most of the people he meets?
10. If Crew is playing a role, why does he use his real name so often? (On the plane, Hong Kong hotel, etc.)
11. Do you think Crew qualifies as a "professional liar"? What would make a person that way?
12. Why do you think a group like Flaun Dafa (a group for mind and body wholeness) would go so far as to create a program like Freegate which allows people to see websites suppressed by their governments? How do the two ideas merge into one group?
13. If we could reduce the energy cost of electric generation (like through the use of a room temperature superconductor), what do you think the world would use it for? Is it worth killing for?
14. Why do you think Wu risked his life to tell the world about the superconductor – instead of just letting the Chinese government control it?

15. Crew knew where Nodding Crane was after Orchid's murder. Why didn't he turn him into the police?
16. Does the idea of a modern day Potters Field disturb you? What about as a place for amputated limbs and other biomedical "waste"?
17. Did you suspect Mindy Jackson's true motivation before it was revealed in the book?
18. Why do you think Crew gave the wire to Falun Dafa instead of EES?
19. If you had something as important/world changing as the wire, what would you do with it?
20. Why do you think Glinn hires Crew for a new assignment – even though Glinn doesn't get the superconductor?
21. One of the main criticisms of this book is that the situations Gideon Crew gets himself into verge on being unbelievable. Does that criticism have merit?
22. There are 4 books in the Gideon Crew series. Will you read more books in this series? Preston and Child have a number of other books. Will you read any of those?

References:

- Fantastic Fiction - <http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/p/douglas-j-preston/>
- Fantastic Fiction - <http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/c/lincoln-child/>
- Goodreads - <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/8286216-gideon-s-sword>
- Novelist - <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/novp/detail?vid=4&sid=c3fef620-aa12-43d8-b729-7a64d8201db1%40sessionmgr110&hid=101&bdata=JnNpdGU9bm92cC1saXZl#UI=379324&db=neh>

If you liked Gideon's Sword, try...

- Girl with the Dragon Tattoo – Stieg Larsson
- The Racketeer – John Grisham
- Zoo – James Patterson
- The Bone Tree – Greg Iles
- Book of Fate – Brad Meltzer

Gideon Crew Series (Preston & Child)

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|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Gideon's Sword (2011) | 3. The Lost Island (2014) |
| 2. Gideon's Corpse (2012) | 4. Beyond the Ice Limit (2016) |

Pendergast Series (Preston & Child)

1. The Relic (1995)
2. Reliquary (1997)
3. The Cabinet of Curiosities (2002)
4. Still Life with Crows (2003)
5. Brimstone (2004)
6. The Dance of Death (2005)
7. The Book of the Dead (2006)
8. The Wheel of Darkness (2007)
9. Cemetery Dance (2009)
10. Fever Dream (2010)
11. Cold Vengeance (2011)
12. Two Graves (2012)
- 12.5 Extraction (2012)
13. White Fire (2013)
14. Blue Labyrinth (2014)
15. Crimson Shore (2015)

Other Novels (Preston & Child)

- Mount Dragon (1996)
- Riptide (1998)
- Thunderhead (1998)
- The Ice Limit (2000)

Wyman Ford Series (Douglas Preston)

1. Tyrannosaur Canyon (2005)
2. Blasphemy (2008)
3. Impact (2010)
4. The Kraken Project (2014)

Nonfiction (Douglas Preston)

- Dinosaurs in the Attic (1986)
- Cities of Gold (1992)
- Talking to the Ground (1995)
- The Royal Road (1998) (with Jose Antonio Esquibel)
- The Monster of Florence (2008) (with Mario Spezi)
- Trial By Fury (2013)
- The Forgotten Killer (2014) (with John Douglas)

Dr. Jeremy Logan (Lincoln Child)

1. Deep Storm (2007)
2. Terminal Freeze (2008)
3. The Third Gate (2012)
4. The Forgotten Room (2015)

Other Novels (Lincoln Child)

- Lethal Velocity (2002)
- Death Match (2004)

Other Novels (Douglas Preston)

- Jennie (1994)
- The Codex (2003)