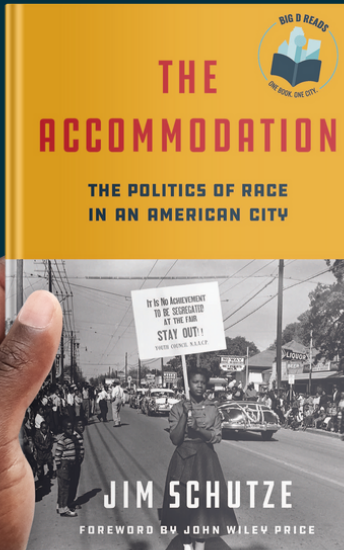




COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY READER'S GUIDE



The book you hold in your hand is a conversation starter. A conversation that should include diverse voices and perspectives and space for vulnerability, courage, and reflection. This is an opportunity to learn from one another and encourage others to tell their stories. We encourage you to read this book in community with others.

The objective of these questions is to encourage college-level students to think carefully about the actors driving events in the narrative of *The Accommodation*, and to occasion discussions about the meaning and value of those actions.

1. What is the general social/political context of the bombings?
2. What events led up to them?
3. How do you allocate responsibility for the bombings?
4. Who are the major decision-makers in this environment?
5. What pressures – financial, psychological, intellectual, emotional, ideological, moral, religious and/or political, etc.– do you suppose conditioned the decisions and actions of the major decision-makers, and how? Please be clear about where you can find evidence from the text for this and where you are speculating.
6. How do you *evaluate* specific, major decisions made by the various decision-makers, in light of the pressures mentioned above?
 - Do you approve of the decisions made, disapprove, both, neither? Explain your answer.
 - In cases where you *disapprove* of the decisions taken, what do you think the historical actors ought, realistically, to have done instead?
7. In your view, who, if anyone, is the (or a) hero of *The Accommodation* – where the word *hero* is defined as *someone worthy of great admiration*? Are there any heroes? What would it take to be a hero in this situation?
8. In your view, who are the worst villains in this book, Why?



Key Passages:

Please read, consider and comment upon some of the following key passages. How and to what degree do they show the attitude of the author of *The Accommodation* towards the events he describes in the book?

- Bottom of page 18 and top of page 19;
- Bottom of page 24 and top of page 25;
- Last 2 paragraphs on the bottom of page 28 and top of page 29;
- Bottom of page 35, page 36, all;
- Pages 63 - 64;
- Pages 75-77;
- Bottom of page 93 to end of page 95;
- Pages 96-97;
- Pages 103-105;
- Page 163;
- Pages 191-193;
- Pages 205-208;
- Pages 211 & 234
- Pages 229-230
- Page 249

Essay Questions:

As a facilitator, use the essays as a follow up from a Seminar Style class. Any of the above Discussion Questions could be turned into individual discussion for an essay but two very obvious essays come from question #2 and #5.

1. Discuss and qualify who should take responsibility for the harm done by the bombings. Does blame for the bombings and threats rest ultimately with one group or individual, or with different groups or individuals to different degrees? Or is it ultimately less the fault of any group or individual but with some more general system or mindset? Or all/none of the above?

2. Pick a few major decision-makers from the following list and then compare and contrast the pressures that may have caused them to make their decisions. Be sure to outline what major decisions/actions each individual or group made. Then justify their actions by probable motivations.

- a. Citizen's Counsel
- b. Mayor of Dallas
- c. Businessmen who organized the displacement of African Americans from various neighborhoods in Dallas (along with the virtual theft of their homes)
- d. Bombers
- e. Police
- f. Individuals and organizations who sent the bombers
- g. Relevant neighborhood and church groups
- h. African American pastors who are involved in the jury or consulted by the jurors on the "blue ribbon" grand jury
- i. The citizens of Dallas at large