

Reader's Guide for *TRIAL BY FAMILY*

- 1) Do you think that there was any way to hold off the clash between Alvin's children and Fay, and if so, how would you have resolved this situation short of a jury trial?
- 2) There is a literal trial in *Trial by Family*. What other kinds of trials does the novel address?
- 3) How does each of the Segal siblings change in the face of this crisis? In what ways are these adult children immature at the outset of the story? Do they "grow up" in the course of it, and if so, how?
- 4) Lorraine and Alyssa have gone through more than one period of estrangement. Do you believe that they will eventually come back together again?
- 5) Ken is the middle child. How does his place in the family affect him and his relationship with his sisters? How did losing his leg impact his self-image?
- 6) Consuelo's position as housekeeper for both Alyssa and Fay and her history with the Segal family is pivotal to the story. What does this say about her relationships with her employers and her character?
- 7) In what ways are Fay's family, her daughter and son-in-law, similar to the Segals, father and children, and in what ways are they different?
- 8) How does the Segal's dead mother impact the action and the attitudes of her surviving children and spouse?
- 9) What do the perspectives of the two attorneys add to the story?
- 10) How are the themes of greed and need, love and money, interwoven throughout the story?
- 11) Have you or anyone you know gone through an inheritance battle of any kind, for instance one between siblings, or between step-families? If so, what were the similarities to and differences from this story?