

### ***Amsterdam* Discussion Questions**

1. In this relatively short novel, the author devotes many pages to Clive's creative process. What does this emphasis suggest about the importance of that process? What about the importance of Clive's creative genius? How does creativity justify what may otherwise be construed as bad behavior?

2. At different points in the novel, both Clive and Vernon think that Clive has given more to their friendship than Vernon has. Can friendships ever be equal? Should they be? What do people "owe" to a friendship or a friend?

3. What is the basis of Clive's moral foundation? How can he condemn his fellow artists who "assume the license of free artistic spirit" and renege on commitments, even as he ignores the plight of a woman being attacked? What do people "owe" to a stranger?

4. What is the basis of Vernon's moral foundation? Vernon wants to crucify Garmony for the greater good of the republic. Is this a valid reason to go after a politician? Where do you draw the line between standards for private and public behavior of politicians? Do you agree with Clive that Vernon is betraying Molly's trust? Or is Vernon justified in his wish to stop a corrupt leader from gaining power?

5. What is the importance of Molly and her role in the novel, even though she never appears in it?

6. What is your understanding of hypocrisy in the novel?

Note: These questions are modified from those found on the [lanmcewan.com](http://lanmcewan.com) website.

