

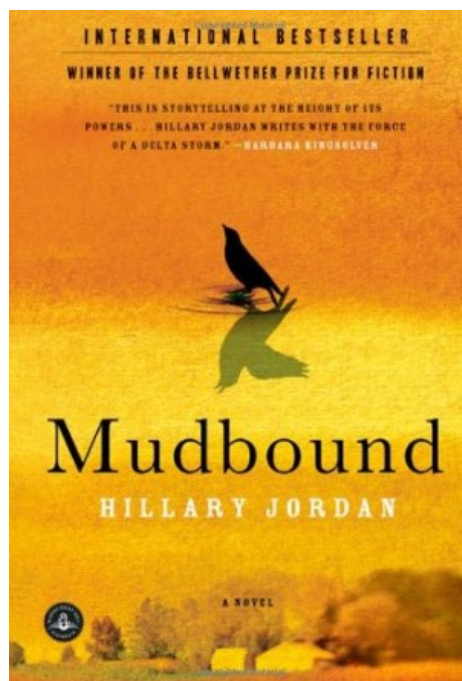
## Carey Page Turner's **September 18<sup>th</sup>** Discussion

# Mudbound

By HILLARY JORDAN

### Characters:

- Were you immediately engaged with the book, or did it take you a while?
- What did you like best about this book? What did you like least?
- The story is narrated by two farmers, two wives and mothers, and two soldiers. Compare and contrast the ways in which these parallel characters, black and white, view and experience the world.
- What do you think of the book's title? How does it relate to the book's contents? In what ways are each of the characters bound — by the land, by circumstance, by tradition, by the law, by their own limitations? How much of this binding is inescapable and how much is self-imposed?
- How original and unique was this book?
- All the characters are products of their time and place, and instances of racism in the book run from Pappy's outright bigotry to Laura's more subtle prejudice. Would Laura have thought of herself as racist, and if not, why not? How do the racial views of Laura, Jamie, Henry and Pappy affect your sympathy for them?
- The novel deals with many thorny issues: racism, sexual politics, infidelity and war. The characters weigh in on these issues but what about the author? Does she have a discernable perspective? If so, how does she convey it?
- Reflecting on some of the more difficult moral choices made by the characters — Laura's decision to sleep with Jamie, Ronsel's decision to abandon Resl and return to America, Jamie's choice during the lynching scene, Florence's and Jamie's separate decisions to murder Pappy — what would you have done in those same situations? Is it even possible to know? Are there some moral positions that are absolute, or should we take into account things like time and place when making judgments?
- Is the ending satisfying? How has the book changed you? Did you learn something?



Rating:

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