***DOORWAY TO MURDER* – A Discussion Guide**

**TIME TRAVEL**

1. Before the inventions of Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, and the Wright Brothers, the world was a different place. Electric lights, speaking with someone miles away, or soaring above the earth was the stuff of science fiction—or magic. Before smart phones, computers, and software applications like Skype, it was hard to imagine talking on the phone and *seeing* the person on the other end. Today, the idea of time travel is inconceivable.

◦ Do you think we will ever figure out how to time travel? When?

◦ If/when we can time travel, will it be a common activity in everyday life?

◦ How might people use the ability? How could they abuse it?

2. Olivia travels 80 years into the past, from 2014 to 1934. A former journalist, she’s interested in seeing newspapers and listening to the news on the radio.

If you could time travel into the past . . .

◦ What year would you visit? What would you want to see?

◦ Would you try to change something, influence an event or a decision, or warn someone

about something?

◦ Would you like to spend time and talk with someone famous? Who? What would you

ask or say to that person?

◦ Would you want to meet your parents or grandparents? At what point in their lives?

What would you talk about with them?

◦ Would you want to find your younger self? What would you say? Would you try to

change something in your life or warn yourself about something?

3. Steven travels 80 years into the future. He’s excited to see the cars of the 21st century and to experience the technology that Olivia shows him, like the large, flat-screen TV and her laptop. He wants to know how the police solve crimes. However, he does **not** want to know *his* future.

If you could time travel into the future . . .

◦What year would you visit and what or whom would you want to see? Why?

◦ Would you want to see yourself at a future time? If so, what year and why did you

choose that year?

◦ Would you want to know about your future? Your death?

4. Olivia accepts what is happening between her and Steven fairly quickly and easily. This is partly because of the research she did on *time*. She learned about Einstein’s theory that there is no past, present, or future; that all time happens simultaneously; that time can fold over itself to reveal another time which is happening concurrently.

◦ How would react you if a man appeared at your bedroom door in the middle of the

night?

◦ What would you think if you watched him walk through the wall?

◦ What would you do if he returned night after night?

◦ Would you eventually speak to him? What would you say?

◦ Would you tell anyone about the incident? Whom?

**RELATIONSHIPS**

5. As *Doorway to Murder* unfolds, we discover that both Steven and Olivia are in somewhat of a vulnerable situation. Steven’s mother—his best friend and confidante—recently died. He feels alone. Olivia is getting back on her feet after her former fiancé cheated on her. She still needs time before she can trust again.

Discuss how their positions of vulnerability affect the development of their relationship. Would it be the same if Steven’s mother still lived in the house? Would Olivia be as interested in Steven if she were still happily engaged?

6. For the moment, Steven and Olivia are friends. Discuss the challenges they would face if their relationship turned romantic.

7. Trust is a crucial element in every relationship. The original working title of *Doorway to Murder* was *A Betrayal of Trust*. There are 6 betrayals in the novel. (Possibly 7, depending on how you look at it.)

◦ What are the 6 betrayals?

◦ What motivated the character to betray that trust?

◦ Was there another choice? What else could s/he have done to get what s/he

wanted or needed?

**THE CRIMES**

8. Did you guess the killer of Leo Castleman? When? What were the clues?

9. Did you guess the other killer? When? What were the clues?