Black-Eyed Susans
Book Club Questions

Readers, beware of possible spoilers

1. Did you or someone you know experience violent psychic trauma as a child? Based on that, or survivors you see on TV, do you believe there is such a thing as full recovery? Do you believe children are more resilient than adults?

2. Was the doctor helpful to Tessie in their sessions before the trial? Do you believe in repressed memory and the techniques to unlock them?

3. How do you relate to Tessa's relationship with her teen-age daughter?

4. Tessa was conflicted about the death penalty. Are you for or against it? Did this book change your mind a little one way or the other? Have you ever made a stand beyond stating your opinion? Does it irritate or inform you when friends use Facebook as their forum? If you live in Texas, were you surprised about the matter-of-fact way an execution plays out in the middle of Huntsville?

5. What was your favorite "Southern moment" in *Black-Eyed Susans*?

6. How do you think forensic scientists and death penalty lawyers emotionally survive a career where death is a constant? Could you do it?

7. Was Tessie always in the right when it came to her relationship with Lydia?

8. Was there more darkness or light in Lydia? Tessa? Do you think most human beings, in a tough situation, will do what serves them, or what is really right?

9. What do you think of the idea laid out in this book—that voices in your head, especially of someone you love who has died, can be more productive than destructive?

10. When do you think a person's true nature, and the nature of a friendship, is mostly likely to be revealed?