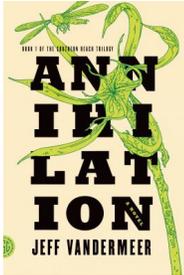


Books by the Stack



Annihilation by Jeff VanderMeer

Four women – a biologist, psychologist, surveyor, and anthropologist – set out on a scientific expedition to Area X, a quarantined zone that defies all attempts to map its terrain or understand its nature. Eleven previous missions have failed; is the twelfth time the charm?

Why you'll like it: *Horror. Science fiction. Introspective. Suspenseful.*

About the Author: Jeffrey Scott VanderMeer was born in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania on July 7, 1968. He is an editor, writer, teacher, and publisher. He is the founding editor and publisher of the Ministry of Whimsy Press. He is the author of several books including *City of Saints*, *Madmen*, *Finch*, and *The Southern Reach Trilogy*. His novel *Annihilation* won the Nebula Award for Best Novel in 2014. (Bowker Author Biography)

Questions for Discussion

1. What were your initial theories about the psychologist's motives and the whereabouts of the anthropologist? How did the ways they approached the expedition compare to the approaches of the surveyor and the biologist?
2. Did you envision the core of Area X as a tower or a tunnel? In your mind, is it a living creature or a product of engineering?
3. How did you interpret the phrases that emerged in Area X? Did you read them as prophecies? Poetry? Delusions?
4. Was the biologist's introverted, analytical temperament an asset or a hindrance on the expedition? How did the experiences of her youth – particularly her study of the neglected, dazzling swimming pool – prepare her for this fieldwork?
5. As the biologist recalled her husband and his role in the eleventh expedition as a medic, what did you discover about her vulnerabilities and about the strength of their relationship?
6. Are there any real-world figures today who take on a role like the Crawler's – a producer of words who controls an audience? What is the source of the Crawler's power?
7. What do you predict for book two, *AUTHORITY*?

(Questions provided by readinggroupguides.com)

