Member of the Family: My Story of Charles Manson, Life Inside His Cult, and the Darkness That Ended the Sixties by Dianne Lake

An inside account by the youngest member of Charles Manson’s cult describes her involuntary indoctrination by her parents at age 14 and the manipulation, psychological control and physical abuse that she endured before she was rescued and adopted by the police officer who arrested her.


About the Author: Dianne Lake is a retired special-education teacher and mother of three. She is the author of Member of the Family: My Story of Charles Manson, Life Inside His Cult, and the Darkness That Ended the Sixties.

Questions for Discussion

1. What did you find surprising about the facts introduced in this book? Why?

2. What did you find to be the most interesting events in this book?

3. What did you know about Charles Manson and the family before reading Member of the Family? Did you learn anything new about this?

4. What impact did Charles Mason have on the Sixties? Did Dianne have an impact on Manson?

5. Did you feel that Dianne Lake vividly recreated the early days of her life? Did it draw you in? What, if anything, seems too dry or unnecessarily detailed?

6. What scene resonated most with you personally in either a positive or negative way? Why?

7. Did any of the characters remind you of yourself or someone you know? Why?

8. How had Dianne changed by the end of the book?

9. Have any of YOUR views or thoughts changed after reading this book?

10. Are there any books that you would compare this one to? How does this book hold up to them?