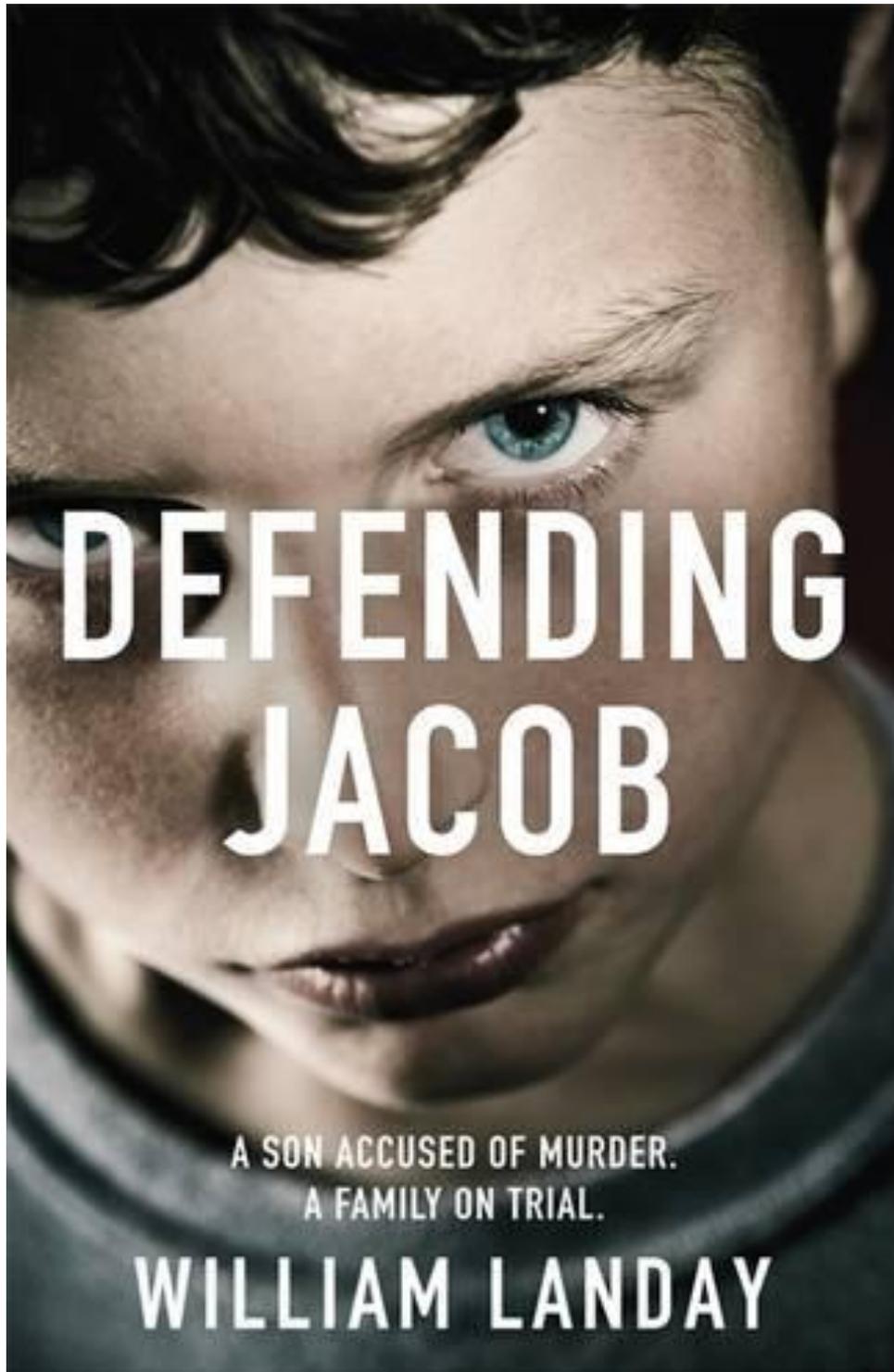
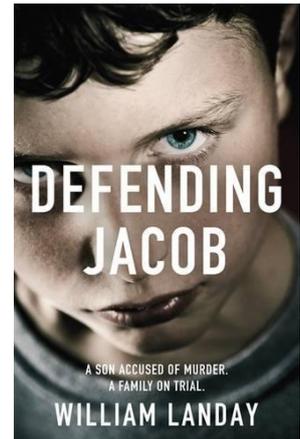


NORTHERN
BEACHES

BOOK CLUB





Defending Jacob
William Landay

Fiction

505 Pages; pub 2013

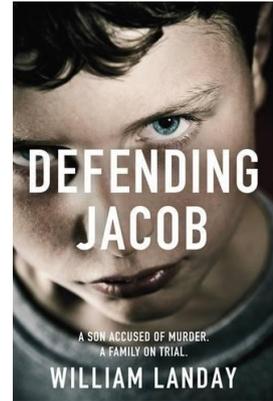
If your son was on trial for murder, what would you do? Andy Barber's job is to put killers behind bars. And when a boy from his son Jacob's school is found stabbed to death, Andy is doubly determined to find and prosecute the perpetrator. Until a crucial piece of evidence turns up linking Jacob to the murder. And suddenly Andy and his wife find their son accused of being a cold-blooded killer. In the face of every parent's worst nightmare, they will do anything to defend their child. Because, deep down, they know him better than anyone. Don't they?

REVIEWS

Publishers Weekly:

Andy Barber, a respected First Assistant DA who lives in Newton, Mass., with his gentle wife, Laurie, and their 14-year-old son, Jacob, must face the unthinkable in Dagger Award-winner Landay's harrowing third suspense novel. When Ben Rifkin, Jacob's classmate, is found stabbed to death in the woods, Internet accusations and incontrovertible evidence point to big, handsome Jacob. Andy's prosecutorial gut insists a child molester is the real killer, but as Jacob's trial proceeds and Andy's marriage crumbles under the forced revelation of old secrets, horror builds on horror toward a breathtakingly brutal outcome. Landay (*The Strangler*), a former DA, mixes gritty court reporting with Andy's painful confrontation with himself, forcing readers willy-nilly to realize the end is never the end when, as Landay claims, the line between truth and justice has become so indistinct as to appear imaginary. This searing narrative proves the ancient Greek tragedians were right: the worst punishment is not death but living with what you-knowingly or unknowingly-have done.

Defending Jacob
William Landay



DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. How would you have handled this situation if you were Andy? Would you make the same choices he made? Where would you differ the most?
2. Before and during the trial, how would you have handled the situation if you were Laurie? Do you feel she made strong choices as a mother and a wife?
3. Is Andy a good father? Why or why not?
4. Do you believe Jacob is guilty?
5. Is Jacob a product of his upbringing? Do you think he is a violent person because his environment made him violent, or do you think he has had violent inclinations since birth?
6. How do you think people could or should stop adolescent bullying?
7. How much of a factor did Jacob's age play into your sympathies for him or lack thereof? If Jacob were seventeen, would you view him differently? What about if he were nine?
8. Do you think Neal Logiudice acts ethically in this novel? What about Andy?
9. What is the most damning piece of evidence against Jacob? Is there anything that you felt exonerated him?
10. If Jacob hadn't been accused, how do you think his life would have turned out? What kind of a man do you think he would grow up to be?

Reference:

<http://www.randomhouse.com/rhpg/rc/2013/09/23/discussion-questions-defending-jacob-by-william-landay>

DISCUSSION STARTERS (CONTINUED)