

Book Club Discussion Questions

The Outrage – William Hussey

1. Think about the terminology of the government in the world of the novel, such as the Protectorate, the Outrage, the Public Good, degenerates, Re-Purification. How is language used to reinforce the message of the Protectorate? Do you see any parallels with how language is used in real life to try to promote a particular agenda?
2. Look at pages 51 and 52, where Gabe describes the posters circulated by the Protectorate. Discuss the use of visual propaganda within *The Outrage*, and how it compares to examples you know from real life, both present day and historical.
3. How has England changed under the Protectorate, and how has the author threaded these details through the narrative? Who and what else has suffered under the new regime?
4. In this novel, William Hussey has played with time — moving between chapters set “now” and “then”. What effect did this have on your reading experience? Did knowing what was in store for Gabe and Eric change the way you felt as you read about the early days of their relationship?
5. Think about the idea of allyship, in the Protectorate and everywhere that prejudice exists. What is the role of people like Ben and Grace, who stick by their LGBTQ+ friends when it would perhaps be easier not to?
6. “Without the absent character of the librarian, none of the events of *The Outrage* are possible.” Discuss. How does the discovery of the box of DVDs in the abandoned library act as a catalyst for the events of the book?
7. Make a list of all the films mentioned in the book. What do they have in common? In what ways are they different? Why do you think the author decided to include these films?
8. After the Rebels watch the documentary *Disclosure*, they come to realise that not all representation of LGBTQ+ people in films is positive representation. Think back on the films the Rebels watch, and any films you have seen recently. How have characters from marginalised or minority groups been represented in those films? Is bad representation better than no representation? Discuss.
9. In the Protectorate, officers have powers under Section 28, named after a real British law from the 1980s, which forbade the discussion of homosexuality in schools. Did you know about the real Section 28 before reading *The Outrage*? Why do you think the author chose to reference it in this book?
10. Many people across the world still live under restrictions similar to those depicted in *The Outrage*. What are some ways in which fiction can help us to navigate issues that exist in the real world? Do you think there are limitations to its use?
11. Consider Gabe’s mother and father. How did your view of them change over the course of the book? What do you think about some of the choices they made as members of the Resistance?



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12. Why do you think the author chose to include Alice as an important character in *The Outrage*? How does her experience differ to that of the other Rebels? Were you surprised when she revealed her true self to Gabe, or had you noticed places where the author had foreshadowed this moment?
13. Marsha tells Gabe and Alice that she used to be a history teacher, before the Outrage. Look at the passages on pages 302–307 where she describes the origins of the Protectorate. What role do you think historical knowledge can play in protecting human rights?
14. Throughout *The Outrage*, we are told that Mr Dufresne “would watch the whole world burn to save the Protectorate”. Why do you think that ultimately he decides to protect his son, at great risk to himself, and at the expense of the Protectorate?
15. How did you feel when you saw the poster for Gabe’s film at the end of the novel? Why do you think the author has chosen to frame the story in this way?

