

NOTE: A word of warning to those who don't like spoilers: Rhoda R. Gilman's introduction to *Early Candlelight* is fascinating, but it does give away the ending. For that reason, I would wait to read the introduction until after you've finished the book. The fourth discussion question below also includes a spoiler!

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the character of Narcisse. Do you find him likable? Discuss how others in the novel feel toward him – Dee, his parents and siblings, Jasper Page, the Dakota Sioux. How do you think about the efforts of Narcisse's family, and Jasper Page, to protect him when he is in trouble?
2. Discuss the relationship between Jasper Page and Eva Boles, from your perspective as a reader. Discuss it also through Dee's eyes, both when she is younger and then later.
3. In a painful confrontation with M'sieu Page (pp.258-260), Dee says, "Everybody loves him. The Indians and the half breeds and the squatters and the soldiers. They don't know that his kindness to them comes from a belief that he is better than they. It was so clever of him to be born Jasper Page!" In a scene months later (p.315), Jasper says, "Of course [the words you said] were true. . . . I deserved most of them but not all. . . I do like my Injuns, Dee; and my Canadians; and my little squatter folk. I do like most people . . . I want to make it clear that one can be genuinely fond of people even when one feels above them." How do you view this? Is Jasper Page prideful? Or is he merely stating a truth? Is humility is the truth? Does that fit here?
4. In her introduction, Rhoda R. Gilman states that "present-day feminists may feel let down at the conclusion" because Dee, in a sense, "sold out" by marrying Jasper Page. Do you agree? Why or why not?