

Discussion Questions:

1. The following can be for discussion if you wish, or for personal reflection, if you'd rather: Imagine that someone was writing you into a book. How would you be characterized? This could be a sort of examination of conscience/self-assessment. Keeping in mind always how much God loves you, and that we are all works in progress, what are some negatives that the author might show? What are some of the positives?
2. Can you relate to Barbara Buncle? Do you see any of yourself in her? What about her counterpart, the fictional Elizabeth Wade? Are you an Elizabeth Wade who sometimes has Barbara Buncle moments or days? Or are you a Barbara Buncle who sometimes has Elizabeth Wade moments/days? Or other?
3. While Barbara Buncle could see deeply beneath the surface of others, she was completely misjudged by many of her Silverstream neighbors. Discuss this. Also discuss the real Barbara Buncle – her outward appearance, her outward simplicity, her pure enjoyment of things, her ability to perceive others as they indeed are, etc.
4. Discuss the human tendency to judge others based on appearances, and an experience you've had of realizing, after getting to know someone, that you were wrong about him or her.
5. Disturber of the Peace has a powerful effect on the residents of Silverstream, even life-changing for some of them. Barbara Buncle gives her second book the title *The Pen is Mightier . . .* This is the first part of an adage, "The pen is mightier than the sword." Discuss the power of the written word. Can you think of works of fiction that have influenced you, even affected the path your life has taken? What about the news media?