

Discussion Questions for In the Wind

What did the title and the cover art lead you to expect? Do covers or titles typically play a role in your reading choices?

What were your first impressions of Anni Koskinen? Did anything about her surprise you as the story developed? In general, do you like first person narrators or do you prefer stories that are told from more than one point of view?

Did the Chicago setting leave an impression on you? If you are familiar with the city, did it seem realistic? What about the settings in Minnesota and Wisconsin?

The plot involves political issues from the past and present. Did the political themes enhance or interfere with your reading experience? Do you feel the author was evenhanded or was the portrayal of issues biased? In general, how do you feel about political themes in fiction?

Anni's brother Martin doesn't play a major role in the plot, but he has a lot to do with Anni's background and character. Do you think this portrayal of autism was realistic?

Rosa Saenz: did you find the shift from a radical past to gentle and peaceful church worker believable? Was there anything about her that hadn't changed?

What did you think of the role Sophie's bipolar disorder and her family's response played in the book? Did you find it a distraction? Have you ever known a family in a similar situation?

Were there any secondary characters you particularly liked or disliked - Father Sikora, Lucas, Pilar who live downstairs, Thea Adelman the lawyer, various witnesses Anni interviews, the FBI agent on the case . . .

Anni feels betrayed by Jim when she learns he was responsible for his father's death. Why, under the circumstances, would he encourage her to take on the case? Was it just to stay in the loop in the investigation, to save his marriage, or did he actually want Anni to know? Did you find this twist plausible or problematic?

What about the ending? Were you surprised? Did you find it unconvincing? Would you have preferred a different ending - and, if so, what would it be?