

Discussion Questions for *Then Came You* by Jennifer Weiner

1. Discuss the different mothers that make up *Then Came You*. How does the behavior of these women directly affect their children?
2. India, Annie, and Jules are all motivated, to a large degree, by financial gain. How did this affect your feelings towards them? Were some of their motivations more acceptable to you than others?
3. When visiting her father in Pittsburgh, Jules comments, “*I don’t make excuses. I know what he’s doing is illegal. I know that he’s a drain on taxpayers’ resources, that people who work hard at their jobs are the ones paying for his apartment and his food, for the cops that bust him and the counselors who hand him pamphlets about AA and methadone...But he’s my father...and I don’t believe that it’s his fault. It’s not like he’s lazy, some privileged rich kid trying to escape from some imaginary heartache or chasing some feel-good high. He takes drugs so that he can feel something close to normal.*” Do you agree with Jules’ assessment? How do you view addiction?
4. Surrogacy is a hot-button topic, and many on both ends of the political spectrum take issue with it. Corinne and Nancy are examples of each, and voice two different, opposing views to surrogacy. Locate their arguments within the text. Do you agree with either of these opinions? Where do you stand?
5. The novel suggests several motivations for India wanting to have a child. In the end, why do you think this was important to her?
6. Did Jules’ story, and the novel in general, change any of your perceptions of egg donation? Would you ever donate an egg? Do you think of egg donation differently than you do sperm donation? Why?
7. Discuss Gabe and Annie’s relationship. What purpose do you think Gabe ultimately serves in Annie’s life?
8. Early in her marriage, India remarks, “*What I was learning was that having was, strangely, less satisfying than wanting...that dreaming of all of this luxury was somehow better than actually possessing it.*” Can you empathize with this sentiment? Do you think Annie would agree?
9. Consider the different family structures portrayed in the book. What do you think *Then Came You* is saying about families?
10. Annie worries that Frank will feel he isn’t providing sufficiently for his family, if she decides to become a surrogate so that she can contribute to the family income. She also notices that Frank is more likely to lose his temper around bill-paying time. Do you empathize with Frank here?
11. If you were to use a surrogate and/or a donor egg to have a child, would you want either of these women to be involved in your life after the child was born? Why or why not?
12. Weiner is masterful at describing physical settings. Locate some instances where an interior is described, and discuss what you learn about the people that inhabit that space from this description.
13. Did your opinion of India change as the novel progressed? If so, what caused this shift?
14. At their first meeting, Kate Klein says to Bettina, “I always tell my clients to be careful what they wish for.” Do you think Bettina made the right decision in choosing not to tell her father what she had learned of India’s past?

15. Perception is an important, but often subtle theme of *Then Came You*. Discuss how each of the main characters wrestles with the way they are publicly perceived. In what ways do they each strive to control their image?