

## ***CALLED* Book Club Discussion Questions**

1. Dr. John and Clara were motivated by God's calling as well as a sense of adventure to travel to the wilds of Paraguay to serve the poor and the marginalized. Does the source of the motivation for service matter if the outcome makes this world a better place?
2. Social innovators – like Dr. John – are often unreasonable, inflexible people who provoke antagonism and conflict. Can radical social change ever happen without such dogged stubbornness?
3. Dr. John's strength of convictions caused painful personal turmoil and troubled interpersonal relationships. Have you known anyone like this? What would be your advice?
4. Someone who knew the Schmidts has said, "John made a lot of waves...and Clara came along behind him and smoothed things over." How did Clara smooth things over? How important is the role of peacemaker in social revolutions?
5. What social conflicts today are calling for revolutionary change? Can this change occur peacefully?
6. John and Clara's joint passion for service and adventure led to ever-deepening intimacy between them. How important has finding a common purpose been in your intimate relationships?
7. Dr. John believed that force should never be used to combat evil in the world. Do you agree? Is there ever a time when force is a justifiable response to injustices in the world?
8. A NetGalley reviewer wrote, "The evolution of Clara is so beautiful, at first a shy, unassuming Mennonite nurse who blossoms into a strong, fierce wife, mother, friend, and community activist." What were some of the important moments of growth for Clara along this trajectory? Do you recognize any similar moments in your own life?
9. Dr. John and Clara were ordinary and imperfect people who accomplished extraordinary things, suggesting that exceptional service is possible despite personal brokenness. What examples have you seen of imperfect people who accomplished extraordinary results?
10. Clara worried about not being a good mother for her children, who were often left behind as she and Dr. John followed their calling. What have you had to sacrifice to follow your passion? Was it worth it?

11. What are some of the upsides and downsides of a life of extraordinary service?
12. How would you describe Anastasia Brighton's role in Dr. John and Clara's life? Is she essential to the story? Why or why not?
13. Dr. John did not grow old peacefully, nor did he seem to feel a great sense of accomplishment at the end of his life, despite his extraordinary contributions. Why do you think this was the case? What life lessons might we draw from this?