

MAHU SURFER Book Group Guide

Discussion question 1: One of the most difficult things for Kimo in MAHU SURFER is the idea that he must lie to his family about returning to the police force. His new boss, Lieutenant Sampson, believes that if Kimo's brother Lui knows that he's a cop, his undercover assignment will be ruined.

Do you agree? Do you think Kimo's brothers could be trusted to keep this secret? Why or why not?

Discussion question 2: When Kimo returns to the North Shore, he discovers that his old friend Dario is still there, now married, prosperous, and the father of a child. Dario embodies many of the contradictions gay men find in their lives—a desire for a stable family life opposed by a desire for sexual freedom. These contradictions eventually lead to his downfall.

Did you find him a believable character? Sympathetic?

Discussion question 3: In MAHU, Kimo surfs for fun and relaxation. In MAHU SURFER, though, this hobby becomes part of the case—the more Kimo returns to his surfing roots, the closer he comes to solving the mystery.

What do you think of detective hobbies? Do they make the characters deeper and more interesting, or do they distract from the plot?

Discussion question 4: Because of its focus on surfing, MAHU SURFER is rooted in Oahu's North Shore. The climate, culture and geography of the island all play a part in establishing the book's atmosphere, yet the basic plot could take place anywhere, with minor modifications.

How important is setting to you in a mystery? Do you think the setting here adds to your enjoyment of the book?

Discussion question 5: As a character, Kimo has many dimensions. He's a son, brother. Uncle and friend. He's a person of mixed race, with Caucasian, Hawaiian and Japanese ancestry. He's a native of Hawaii, a surfer, and a police detective. He's also gay.

Do you think there's a balance between these attributes? How important is each one to him, and to you as a reader?