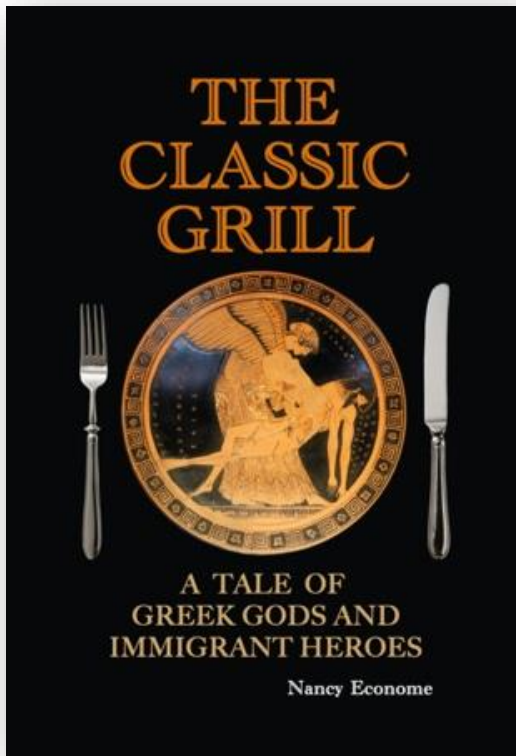


# The Classic Grill – A Tale of Greek Gods and Immigrant Heroes

## Questions for Discussion

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1. In this story, what is the importance of The Classic Grill restaurant to the Pappayannis family and to the people of Vallejo?
2. The subtitle of this novel is, *A Tale of Greek Gods and Immigrant Heroes*. Who are the immigrant heroes and who are the Greek gods in this story?
3. What was your initial reaction to Achilles' big plans for a new restaurant and his treatment of his family? Did your opinion of Achilles change by the end of the story?
4. As the narrator of this story, George learned about himself and his place in the world. What were the important milestones in George's development?
5. Many beliefs are presented in this book: Greek Orthodoxy, ancient Greek gods and, of course, superstition like the Evil Eye. Discuss which had the most influence on the main characters: Achilles, Chrisoula, Demo and George.
6. Achilles arrived in America from Greece in the early 1900s and his American-born children, Demo and George, lived their teenage years in the 1940s. How did Demo and George's outlook differ from their immigrant parents' view of the world and their place in it?
7. What was Achilles' motivating factor? What were the motivating factors for Chrisoula, Demo and George?
8. George often refers to the fact that he should have spoken up when Tetsuya and family were taken to the internment camp. Was this an unreasonable expectation of a teenager at the time? How did he eventually resolve this conflict within himself?

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9. What did the young people from the fast food restaurant learn from talking with old George? How did they feel about him? What did old George learn from talking with the young people who were also children of immigrants?
10. What was Achilles' vision of America at the beginning of the story? Why was he later disappointed in Roosevelt's Four Freedoms?
11. How did the Pappayannis family try to assimilate into American culture? Were they successful? Had the anti-immigrant climate changed for the young people that old George encountered in the fast food restaurant?
12. From the beginning to nearly the end of the story, Achilles declared that he would make his dream and that nothing else was important. What did Achilles have to sacrifice while attempting to achieve his dream? What did he accomplish in the end?
13. Chrisoula's harsh early childhood was similar to that of many young women growing up at that time in Greece. How did Chrisoula's background prepare her for the conflicts she faced in America?
14. Achilles and Theo Vasili were young musicians before they came to America. Yet they worked hard to earn money for their families in Greece and later provided for the next generation in America. What was the mindset that these immigrants had when they came to America?
15. Why did the author set this story in Vallejo, California in 1942? What was important about that period of time in history?
16. What thoughts and feelings did you take away from *The Classic Grill – A Tale of Greek Gods and Immigrant Heroes*?