

The Remarkable Cause
A Novel of James Lovell and the Crucible of the Revolution
By Jean C. O'Connor

Thinking / Discussion Questions

Use these Thinking and Discussion questions to explore further the ideas presented in *The Remarkable Cause: A Novel of James Lovell and the Crucible of the Revolution*.

1. What factors prompted those first shots in the conflict that becomes the Revolutionary War? What did you think were the factors before reading *The Remarkable Cause*? After?
2. Like young James before he leaves for Harvard, have you ever wondered about changes, difficulties in society, but had no one to talk about them with?
3. America is a “melting pot,” a blend of peoples and cultures. Just as Mary knew of Scottish traditions and practices from her Scottish parents, does your family treasure any unique traditions from your heritage? Does your community?
4. (After Chapter 12) James has a number of conversations with his father about taxation. What are Master Lovell’s reasons to support the British policy on taxation? What do you think of his reasons?
5. (After Chapter 15) Consider the sit-down strikes of the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. Consider marches and other forms of protest held today, both in the United States and in other countries throughout the world. How are these similar to some of the actions of protest in Boston in the years prior to the American Revolution? How are they different?
6. (After Chapter 23) Have you ever had to defend your right to participate in something others disagreed with? How did you handle it?
7. (After Chapter 25) What are some of the clashes in *The Remarkable Cause* between authority and society? Would you characterize these as peaceful or violent?
8. Is violence justified when peaceful actions do not achieve the desired results?
9. In *The Remarkable Cause*, newspapers create vital communication in society. How important is a free press to a free society?
10. Mary Middleton Lovell typifies in many ways Revolutionary War-era women. What are some of those ways? How is she different from many women of today? How is she like women today?
11. What would have happened if those in Boston had not felt so strongly about their rights?
12. Have you ever had a serious conflict with someone you love? How do you think James is handling his differences with his father?
13. Is it possible to peacefully co-exist with someone with whom you completely disagree? Explain.
14. Would the ways James carries on his relationship with his father work for you in a relationship with someone with whom you disagree? Explain.
15. *The Remarkable Cause: A Novel of James Lovell and the Crucible of the Revolution* is a story written based on extensive primary source research. The author identified questions about James Lovell and the world of pre-Revolutionary Boston after reading her grandmother’s journal. Do you have a story you would like to tell, or a nagging question you would resolve through inquiry or research? Explain.