

BOOK GROUP QUESTIONS:

Ragged Island

- 1.** A confession at the end of *(Matinicus)*, the first book in the series, results in Hodge making a snap decision that both changes his life and forms the central conflict of *Ragged Island*. Do you agree with that decision? Do you see it as simply a choice between morality and pragmatism, or something more?
- 2.** Have you, yourself, ever been forced into a quick decision that later came back to haunt you? What was it and how did you deal with the ramifications? Would you make the same decision again, considering the outcome?
- 3.** Loss is a central theme in the story. Discuss the various kinds of loss the characters experience, and the different ways they deal with it (or perhaps don't).
- 4.** Consider the complex role that guilt plays in the book, as well as its varied manifestations (anger, denial, remorse).
- 5.** Throughout the series, the sport of baseball is used by both Hodge and Al as a subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, metaphor for life. Consider the ways in which this both illuminates and enriches their relationship, and the ways it helps them deal with the personal losses they've experienced.