

# MARIANO'S CHOICE

## BOOK DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Historical fiction sometimes suffers when authors dwell too much on historical fact at the expense of a good story. On the other hand, fiction can sometimes veer too far away from the facts. What kind of balance between fact and fiction do you find in *Mariano's Choice*?
2. What are the main goals Mariano Medina is striving to attain? What motivations—both conscious and unconscious—fuel his efforts to continue the struggle toward these goals?
3. What happens to Mariano when he becomes discouraged and loses hope?
4. What are the sources of Medina's attraction to Takánsy?
5. What are the central dilemmas faced by Mariano Medina? What values influence the choices he makes? How does the past influence his choices?
6. What is your favorite scene in the book, and why? What major emotion does the scene evoke in you as a reader?
7. How do both Mariano's body memory and his mind help Mariano cope with early childhood trauma? How do they hinder him?
8. What parallels and differences exist between the period leading up to the 1846 U.S. war with Mexico and current border issues?
9. What did you learn about the time period in which this story unfolds? What surprised you about Fort Bridger, El Pueblo and Taos that you didn't know before?