Possible Discussion Questions

1. What is the central idea discussed in the book? What issues or ideas do the various pieces explore? Are they personal, sociological, global, political, economic, spiritual, medical, or scientific?

2. What kinds of challenges do soldiers experience when they return home after serving in a war zone? How can those of us who didn’t serve support them when they return to school or work? How can we prepare for our own family members’ homecoming?

3. How do you define heroism? Who are the heroes reflected in the text?

4. Should the U.S. allow immigrants, documented or undocumented, who risk their lives in combat to automatically become U.S. citizens?

5. What is terrorism? How does it differ from planned acts of military aggression?

6. How do you think the U.S. and other countries should work toward preventing terrorists from attacking again?

7. Would you be willing to donate a kidney to allow another person to live? How is sacrificing a kidney the same or different from the sacrifice a soldier makes in joining an army to fight in a war with high casualties?

8. Can Democracy be imposed on another county?

9. Should the U.S. take the other countries’ perspectives into account before taking any military action abroad?

10. What cultural observations are made in the book? Do the contributors examine economics and politics, family traditions, the arts, religious beliefs, language or food?

11. What is different from our own culture? What do you find most surprising, intriguing or difficult to understand?

12. How do the writers criticize or admire the culture? Do they wish to preserve or change the way of life? Either way, what would be risked or gained?

13. Do the issues affect your life? How so—directly, on a daily basis, or more generally? Now or sometime in the future?

14. What evidence do the contributors use to support the book's ideas? Is the evidence convincing? Is it definitive, or speculative? Do they depend on personal opinion, observation, and assessment, or is the evidence factual, i.e., based on science, statistics, historical documents, or statements from experts?

15. What kind of language do the authors use? Is it objective and dispassionate? Or passionate and earnest? Is it polemical, inflammatory, and/or sarcastic? Does the language help or undercut the author's premise?

16. What are the implications for the future? What are the long- and short-term consequences to the issues raised in the book? Are they positive or negative; affirming or frightening?

17. What solutions (if any) do the authors propose? Who would implement those solutions? How probable is success?

18. How controversial are the issues raised in the book? Who is aligned on which sides of the issues? Where do you fall in that line-up?

19. Talk about specific passages that struck you as significant—or interesting, profound, amusing, illuminating, disturbing, sad...? What was memorable?

20. What have you learned after reading this book? Has it broadened your perspective about a difficult issue—personal or societal? Has it introduced you to a culture in another country...or an ethnic or regional culture in your own country