

ANOTHER BROTHER

Discussion Questions

- 1) ***Since Clarence Fitch died in 1990, the United States has been involved in two wars. Over 600 American soldiers have died in the war in Iraq over the last year and more than 10,000 Iraqis have died.***
 - Do you think the United States had good reasons for going to war in Iraq? Why? Why not?
 - What do you think might be the effects of the war on Iraq War veterans?
 - Did your opinion about the Iraq War change after viewing **ANOTHER BROTHER?** In what way?

- 2) ***At the beginning of the film ANOTHER BROTHER, Clarence Fitch says: “I was eighteen years old. I was anxious to get away from the authoritarian ways of your (sic) parents...I believed the hype and I feel for it hook, line and sinker. I joined the Marines.”***
 - Can you understand why Clarence joined the Marines after high school?
 - What are some reasons why young people in your community join the military today?
 - What other options might have been open for Clarence in 1967?
 - What options are available for young people in your community today? How is this similar? How is it different?

- 3) ***When Clarence came home on leave before going to Vietnam in 1967, he witnessed the riots in Newark, New Jersey. He says that this experience “changed the way black people viewed their existence, changed black people’s consciousness, especially mine.”***
 - What do you think Clarence meant by this statement?
 - What do think were some of the causes of the riots in 1967?
 - Have you ever had an experience that changed the way you look at your existence in the world?

- 4) ***Clarence’s friend Greg, another Vietnam veteran, says “I was shot at more times by American GIs than by Vietnamese, because of the racial tension.”***
 - What do you think caused this racial tension in Vietnam
 - How do think this tension affected black GIs in Vietnam?
 - How did it affect white GIs?
 - Can you think of examples of racial tension in your school or community today?

- 5) ***Clarence says he started smoking marijuana and using opium in Vietnam, like many other GIs, as a way of dealing with the emotional pain he was feeling.***
- What do you think was the effect of drug use in Vietnam?
 - Do you think military officials were aware that many GIs were using drugs?
 - Can you give examples of situations in the present where people use drugs or alcohol to deal with emotional pain?
- 6) ***Both Clarence and Greg talk about the “black power” movement among black GIs in Vietnam. Clarence says that, as he began to learn more about the war, he began to view the Vietnamese as “another minority” and that he “felt pretty guilty about being in Vietnam as a black man, knowing what I knew.”***
- What do you think Clarence meant by this statement?
 - Why might he view the Vietnamese as “another minority”?
 - Why might he feel guilty about being in Vietnam as a black man?
- 7) ***Clarence says that, after the war, many Vietnam veterans were “surviving by artificial means---drugs and alcohol” and that more committed suicide than were killed in the war.***
- Do you personally know a Vietnam veteran? How is his story similar or different from Clarence’s story as told in **ANOTHER BROTHER**?
 - Why do you think so many veterans got involved in drug and alcohol abuse after the war?
 - Why do you think so many veterans committed suicide after the war?
 - What could have been done to help Vietnam veterans?
- 8) ***Clarence’s sister Mona describes receiving a phone call from him one morning in which he informed her that “I’m a drug addict and I’m going into a rehab.” She also says she suspected that he had a problem but because it was never spoken out loud, she didn’t really confront it.***
- Do you think Mona should have expressed her concern about Clarence’s drug use directly to him?
 - Have you ever been in a situation where you suspected someone might have a drug or alcohol problem but you didn’t know for sure?
 - How did you deal with the situation?
- 9) ***Clarence’s daughter Kiwan says that she feels angry with her father for not letting her know more about his life, for not sharing his struggles with her.***
- Why do you think that Clarence was not more open with Kiwan?
 - How do you think these “family secrets” affected Kiwan?
 - Can you think of examples from your own experience where someone close to you has not been open with you about a personal problem?
 - How did this affect you?

- 10) ***Elena, Clarence’s second wife, says that he led a “double life” while he was using drugs.***
- What kind of toll did this double life take on Clarence? On his family?
 - Do you think it is possible to be a good husband, father, worker and community leader while using drugs?
- 11) ***Clarence’s mother says that when she found out he had AIDS she wanted to let him know that it didn’t matter, that he was still her son and she would be there for him.***
- How did this statement make you feel?
 - Do you think this kind of family support is available to most people with AIDS? Why? Why not?
- 12) ***As he is nearing the end of his life, Clarence says that he feels “pretty lucky” and that he has no regrets despite all the obstacles he has faced.***
- Why do you think Clarence feels lucky?
 - Can you think of people you know now who have faced great obstacles?
 - What has their attitude been? How has it been similar or different from Clarence’s?
- 13) ***Clarence’s wife Elena says that Clarence considered himself a casualty of the Vietnam War.***
- What do you think Elena means by this statement?
 - Do you agree?
 - Do you think that Clarence’s name belongs on a Vietnam Memorial? Why? Why not?
- 14) ***Clarence’s daughter Kiwan says that she wants her son to know about Clarence’s life and about how determined he was to make a difference. She also says: “There should always be something you care about in your life, that you leave for other people to carry on for you.”***
- Do you think Clarence made a difference? In what ways?
 - Do you agree that it is important to leave something for others to carry on?
 - What did Clarence leave?
 - What would you like to leave?
- 15) ***Clarence Fitch was a hero when he died in 1990 at the age of 42—not because he had been decorated with the Purple Heart for his combat in Vietnam, but because he transformed his life and dedicated himself to the fight for social justice.***
- Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?
 - What is your definition of a hero?
 - Can you think of examples of people in your life who you consider to be heroes? Why are they heroes?

- 16) *At the end of the film, Clarence Fitch says, “I don’t really want to be honored. The best memorial to me would be not to have another Vietnam.”*
- What is your understanding of Clarence’s statement?
 - Do you think the war in Iraq is like “another Vietnam”? Why? Why not?
 - How can we work to prevent another Vietnam from happening?

If you want to learn more about the Vietnam War, the anti-war movement and the issues faced by Vietnam Veterans, check out the following websites:

www.teachvietnam.org

www.vietsandiego.com

www.vietvet.org

www.prairienet.org/vvaw

For information about the military and young people today and the current movement against the Iraq War, check out:

www.afsc.org/youthmil

www.unitedforpeace.org