Redeployment by Phil Klay

“In Redeployment, his searing debut collection of short stories, Phil Klay ... gives the civilian reader a visceral feeling for what it is like to be a soldier in a combat zone, and what it is like to return home, still reeling from the dislocations of war.”

--The Madness of War Told in the First Person

In the 2014 One Community/One Book selection Redeployment, former Marine Phil Klay presents twelve gritty and compelling short stories on the experience of war in Iraq and the challenges faced by those returning home. This collection is based on the author’s duty as a Public Affairs Officer in the Anbar Province, Iraq during the surge in 2007 and 2008. Each story is told from a different perspective, including those of a young artillery man, a member of Mortuary Affairs, a military chaplain, and a Foreign Service Officer.

If you do not have enough time to read the entire collection of stories, we suggest the following:

- Redeployment
- Prayer in the Furnace
- Psychological Operations

References

Suggested Questions to Begin the Book Discussion:

1. What is the significance of the title *Redeployment*? To what do you think it refers?

2. *Redeployment* has been described as gritty, stunning, and stingingly sharp. Which short story did you find the most poignant? Did any stories provide moments of humor or even hope?

3. How did the use of different narrators for each short story affect your experience in reading this book? Was there any one narrator in particular to whom you could relate?

4. Did the author’s use of first person heighten your reading experience or did it make it too personal and horrific? How difficult was it for you to read these stories?

5. Do you think reading these stories as works of fiction produced a different experience than if they had been part of a non-fiction memoir?

6. How does the author portray women in a field of literature that is often dominated by male characters? Do you think there should have been any stories told from the perspective of a woman?

7. What did these stories reveal to you about the jargon that members of the military create? What purpose does this slang serve?

8. Did reading *Redeployment* alter any preconceived notions you held about the experiences of soldiers in war and their adjustments in returning home? How?

9. Phil Klay has stated that he does not consider *Redeployment* to be either pro-war or anti-war. Do you agree?

10. Phil Klay depicts the war from differing points of view. Do you think the author should have incorporated any stories from the Iraqi perspective?

One Community/One Book is a project of The Libraries and the Center for Medical Humanities & Ethics. This program was made possible in part with a grant from Humanities Texas, the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.