

***Dirty Wars and Polished Silver*, by Lynda Schuster**

Reading Group Guide

1. In the book's prologue, Lynda writes that war would come to dominate her existence both as a reporter and as a wife. To what extent do you think that was driven by choice and to what extent was it the result of chance?
2. How would you react if someone you loved announced that she/he were moving to another part of the world, especially one as dangerous as the Middle East?
3. Where did Lynda's motivation to seek a life of adventure, "through the eye of a needle," if necessary, come from? Was it simply a rebellion against what she perceived as her mother's staid housewife's existence? Do you see the fraught relationship between her parents as part of her motivation?
4. Discuss Lynda's use of humor in coping with both dangerous and tragic events.
5. What did you think of the May—December relationship between Dial and Lynda?
6. Does Dial's murder change Lynda? If so, in what ways?
7. Was there anything about Lynda's description of working as a foreign correspondent that was surprising or a revelation? Do you think that being a woman in that profession is an advantage? Disadvantage? How do you think the profession has changed with the advent of the Internet and social media?
8. Discuss Lynda's decision to give up daily journalism to marry Dennis. Was this surprising?
9. How did you feel about Lynda's difficulties in adjusting to life as a diplomatic spouse? What did you think of the two-week course that she referred to as "Ambassatrix School"? Was your understanding of diplomatic life changed by her stories?
10. Discuss Lynda's relationship with Simcha, her "kibbutz mother," versus that with her actual mother. Do you have similar relationships in your own life?
11. Was Lynda's sudden desire for a child unexpected? Did it change her? Her relationship with her mother? The book ends with Lynda worrying about her daughter in Israel; does this mean that her life has come full circle?
12. How does Lynda's memoir differ from others you have read? Which stories will stay with you? Which do you wish she had expanded further?