

Discussion Guide

Ten questions for book clubs, congregations, classrooms, and anyone who wants to go deeper.

1.

Jim Jones convinced hundreds of intelligent, educated people to follow him into isolation and, ultimately, death. What specific conditions made that possible? Which of those conditions do you see operating in American political life today?

2.

The book argues that the Kool-Aid has no permanent political party. It travels wherever the conditions of fear, belonging, and certainty are strongest. Do you agree? Can you identify examples of Kool-Aid thinking in political movements you find sympathetic?

3.

Chapter Eight makes a distinction between groupthink and genuine conviction. Think of a belief you hold strongly. How do you know it is genuine conviction rather than tribal loyalty? What test would you apply?

4.

The confirmation hearing chapters describe nominees who could not give plain answers to factual questions. What is lost when elected officials and their appointees refuse to affirm documented facts? How should citizens respond?

5.

Chapter Eleven discusses the redistricting of Jim Clyburn's district. Why does the composition of a congressional district matter beyond who wins the election? What does it mean for a community to have genuine representation?

6.

The social media chapter argues that the algorithm rewards emotional intensity over accuracy. What practices have you adopted — or could you adopt — to protect yourself from that design? How do you verify what you share?

7.

Chapter Fourteen discusses Kilmar Abrego Garcia. How do you think about due process rights for non-citizens? Where does the obligation to follow legal process end — if it ends anywhere — in immigration enforcement?

8.

The tariff chapter explains that tariffs are paid by American consumers, not foreign governments. If that is true, why do you think the political message that tariffs punish foreign countries has been so effective? What is the relationship between economic fact and political narrative?

9.

The book closes with an Author's Note that says the opposite of Kool-Aid is not cynicism. What is it? What does the author mean by that distinction, and do you agree?

10.

After reading this book, what is one question you will commit to asking yourself the next time you are tempted to pass along something that confirms what you already believe?

From **Who's Drinking the Kool-Aid? — Jonestown Revisited** by Leroy Godfrey Jr. © 2026. Get the book at wdtkbook.com.