

One Life by Megan Rapinoe

Discussion questions from University of Mary Washington

1. In the prologue, Megan talks about how her privilege has given her the opportunity to share her message more easily than others and come out more easily. Why is Megan's activism more readily accepted than that of other athletes, such as Colin Kaepernick? Why was Megan coming out more readily accepted than that of a male athlete?
2. What does Megan mean when she says that people assume "Men play sports because they love it and want to get rich; women are there for the purity of the game" (p. 3). How does that affect Megan's ability to speak out about issues that are important to her (e.g. equal pay)?
3. On page 4, she says "...the more you stand up for others, the easier it is to stand up for yourself." What does she mean by that?
4. Why do professional sports organizations feel the need to shut down social activism among their athletes?
5. How do you think Megan's childhood or family affected her social activism?
6. Megan notes that she did not grow up in a particularly affirming household, but she had "no qualms about accepting the fact [she] was gay" (p. 59). Why do you think that is? What contributed to that?
7. Megan and her sister had very different experiences coming out in college. What factors do you think contributed to those differences?
8. What are your thoughts on Megan outing her sister to their mother?
9. Megan commented several times that many of the players on her club team and the national team were in the closet. What factors do you think contributed to those players not coming out?
10. Megan said "If you're a prominent athlete, coming out isn't for yourself but for others." What did she mean by this?
11. In many media appearances, Megan found herself saying "coming out was the best decision I had ever made" and that it "improved [her] playing." What is potentially problematic with Megan sharing this message?
12. Megan acknowledges that it is "hard" for athletes to come out, but she seems to think that the way to fix that is to push people out of the closet. What are other ways Megan could potentially use her platform to help other athletes who identify as LGBTQ+?
13. Megan seems to focus mostly on the "coming out" process and gives less thought to issues related to everyday life as a person who identifies as LGBTQ+. For example, she seemed

shocked and confused by the fact that Lyon was “intolerant” of LGBTQ+ people. Why do you think Megan was surprised by her experience in Lyon? What are the consequences of focusing mostly on the “coming out” process and less on “living” as an LGBTQ+ person?

14. Several times Megan stated that the best way to make their case for equal pay was to win and be the best in the world. Should people have to go ‘above and beyond’ to show they deserve equal treatment?

15. On page 146, Megan says “homophobia is less extreme for gay women than for gay men, but it gets mixed up with sexism and becomes instantly more toxic.” What does she mean by that?

16. In the chapter titled “Kneeling,” Megan reviews many historical events that are examples of racial discrimination. It is an area of the book where she actually provides more detail and context than in other chapters. Why do you think she did that?

17. Megan says “protesting against racial injustice” is “also [her] fight.” Do you agree?

18. Megan faced more “outrage” when she spoke about racism than when she advocated for LGBTQ+ rights. Why is that?

19. Megan’s motto of “No caveat, no apology. Arms out wide, claim your space” may be perceived as a reckless and abrupt communication style. Should allies be mindful of the way they present themselves or is Megan right that unapologetic authenticity is key?