DISCUSSION GUIDE

The following questions are intended to enhance your discussion of *Dreamland*.

1. Consider the title *Dreamland*. What does it refer to? How does it work as a symbol to explain the themes of this book?

2. What are the typical preconceived notions that a reader might have about opiate addiction? In what ways does the book work against those ideas?

3. Explain the connection between OxyContin and black tar heroin. How are they similar? How are they different? How does the existence of both forms of opiates feed into addiction?

4. Discuss Purdue Pharma's marketing of OxyContin. Do companies like Purdue have a responsibility to be more transparent with their consumers? Why or why not?

5. Why are teens particularly susceptible to opiate addiction?

6. How have medical practitioners contributed to the rise of opiate addiction? Do you think that any of the doctors and researchers in this book were justified in their reasoning and methods?

7. The concept of rehabilitation comes up in the book as some of the characters try to get clean. What versions of rehabilitation seem effective? How can systems be put into place to give addicts more help?

8. The book discusses law enforcement and criminal justice. In what

ways have police forces and the courts been successful in dealing with addiction? In what ways can they improve and use better strategies to help addicts?

9. According to their interviews, the Xalisco Boys rarely sell to African Americans. Why is this? How do race relations play into the ways that opiates are distributed and used? Do race relations affect how opiate addiction is perceived in comparison to other drug addictions?