**Discussion Questions for *Tomorrowland***

**Directions:** **You don’t need to write down answers to these questions as homework, but take notes as you watch the film and be prepared to discuss them and/or write about them later.**

1. Mick LaSalle, writing for the *SF Chronicle*, said this: *“Tomorrowland* deals in two futures: the one people imagined in the early 1960s and the one people imagine today. In the ’6os, despite a Cold War that threatened to turn hot and blow up civilization, people saw the future as a clean and gleaming place, with flying cars and monorails moving at the speed of light. It was a vision captured in the cartoon series “The Jetsons.” Today, the future is generally portrayed as a post-apocalyptic nightmare, with limited resources, little water and either no government or an all-pervasive, controlling government that makes life a living hell. *Tomorrowland* is a plea on behalf of that earlier, more optimistic vision as having value in itself, the idea being that if people believe they are heading into broad, sunlit uplands, the chances are better that they will arrive there. [. . . .] The movie is saying something worth hearing about the place the future holds, the concept and promise of it, in human existence. It’s an attempt to wrest that vision from the narrow fantasies of doom-peddling action filmmakers. That’s an attempt worth making.”

What do you think the film is saying “about the place the future holds, the concept and promise of it, in human existence”?

2. *Rolling Stones’* film reviewer says the director, Brad Bird, “flies in the face of PG family fun by asking audiences of all ages to actually think.” What do you think he wanted your generation, specifically, to think and fell about this story? What DID you think and feel?

3. In the beginning of the semester I read this quote from one of the 20th century’s greatest writers and thinkers, George Bernard Shaw who described a type of person he called “world-betterers: “[People] with a developed sense of life . . . have enormous social appetites and very fastidious personal ones. They are not content with handsome houses: they want handsome cities. They are not content with bediamoned wives and blooming daughters: they complain because the charwoman is badly dressed, because the laundress smells of gin, because the seamstress is anemic. . . . The very air is not good enough for them: there is too much factory smoke in it. They even demand abstract conditions: justice, honor, a noble moral atmosphere.” What does the film say about this idea that a fully “developed sense of life” that makes people care about more than their own and their family’s welfare and happiness?Is it a belief system, a temperament, or what? How can it be fostered or damaged?

4. Though the emphasis of the film is on the promise of science and technology, the planners of Tomorrowland also recruit artists, musicians, dancers, a woman planting trees, and a naturalist studying elephants, among others. Do you think the film should have given more play to the many other lines of work that make up a complex civilization like ours? If not, why not? If so, how could they have done so?

5. What did you think were some key lines in expressing the film’s major ideas? (Try to get at least 3.) Why did you think these were important? [Please don’t share your answers! I want to see if we get a consensus or a variety of answers.]

6. This film got mixed reviews. What do you think were its key strengths? Weaknesses? Specifically, how well do you think it would go over with people your age? Why?