

Books by the Stack

all

All About Love by bell hooks

about

Visionary and original, hooks shows how love heals the wounds we bear as individuals and as a nation, for it is the cornerstone of compassion and forgiveness and holds the power to overcome shame.

love

NEW VISIONS

bell hooks

Why you'll like it: *Uplifting. Lyrical. Wise.*

About the Author: Bell Hooks was born Gloria Watkins on September 25, 1952. She grew up in a small Southern community that gave her a sense of belonging as well as a sense of racial separation. She has degrees from Stanford University, the University of Wisconsin, and the University of California at Santa Cruz. She has served as a noted activist and social critic and has taught at numerous colleges. Hooks uses her great-grandmother's name to write under as a tribute to her ancestors. Hooks has written works such as *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* and *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*.

Questions for Discussion

1. In the preface, hooks writes, "love returns us to the promise of everlasting life. When we love we can let our hearts speak" (p. xi). What does this mean?
2. hooks describes the inspiration and solace she finds in graffiti art declaring, "The search for love continues even in the face of great odds" (p. xv). Where have you found similar signs that have restored your faith in love?
3. Historically, how have the demands of love for women been different from those for men? How have they differed for adults and children? What does hooks suggest about these distinctions?
4. Discuss the way in which hooks uses her personal experience throughout this book. How does her personal experience enhance her assertions? Which vignette do you find particularly meaningful?
5. hooks describes the allure of lying in relation to the allure of power. What are the lies you tell to feel powerful? How do our concepts of power – born from the patriarchal culture we inhabit – keep us from love? What role does greed play and where does it come from?
6. hooks probes the gap between the values many people "claim to hold and their willingness to do the work of connecting thought and action, theory and practice" (p. 90). How does our culture reward those who nurture this gap? What changes would we have to make in society to nurture and inspire the closing of this gap?
7. If we must sacrifice "our old selves in order to be changed by love" (p. 188), what is it that we're giving up?
8. Although she warns against attempting to return to the past rather than forging ahead, hooks advocates repairing and restoring family bonds. Why is this an important goal? How do these bonds enable us to live with love in all areas of our lives?

9. What are the political ramifications of hook's visions of love? Is love a political issue?
10. Look over the chapter titles in *All About Love*. If you were to add a chapter, what would it be?
11. Why do we fear love? Are we more afraid of surrendering ourselves to love or of living without love? What sacrifices does love require? What relief and salve can love offer? Is it possible to be too damaged, too wounded to love?
12. How has *All About Love* enhanced, contradicted, challenged, altered your vision of love?

(Questions provided by readinggroupguides.com)



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