

BOOK DISCUSSION GUIDE

**If We
Were
Snow
flakes**

Barbara D'Souza

BOOK DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR

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1. Hannah and Sarah both face problems because of their looks. Are there any similarities in the ordeals they face? Are their problems really, deep down, the same, or are they different?
2. Do you think Hannah thinks poorly of herself? What do you think has influenced her perception of herself and her body?
3. In Hannah's world, fat people are treated as criminals. Are there ways in which fat people in our society are treated as criminals? Are there ways in which fat people in our society are discriminated against?
4. In this book, certain foods, like chocolate, are treated as controlled substances. Do you agree that such foods are similar to drugs, or is the comparison completely wrong? Do you believe some foods should be controlled or restricted? If so, why? If not, why?
5. In Hannah's world fat people are assumed to be unhealthy and encouraged--or forced--to lose weight "for their own good." Do you think this assumption is right or wrong? Do you think coercing people to lose weight and penalizing those who do not is benign or harmful? Why?
6. What effect does the restrictive eating regimen at FatSchool have on Hannah? Do you see any similarities between the consequences of such dieting and eating disorders?
7. Do the attitudes and behaviors recommended for weight loss in Hannah's world--and FatSchool--seem helpful or harmful to Hannah's -- and others'--health and well-being? Do the attitudes and behaviors recommended for weight loss in our society seem helpful or harmful to you?
8. Hannah's and Christian's moms, and other adults in the book, seem to have as many problems as the teenagers. Do you believe the teenagers have, by the end of the book, come to see the adults as people and not just authority figures?
9. What part does Mr. Edwards play in this story? Do you view him as a hero or villain?
10. What part does football play? Is it just a sport Christian plays, or does it symbolize more?
11. Hannah's mom believes there is such a thing as harmless flirting, even when married. Do you agree, or do you think it's wrong to flirt when you're committed to another? Why?

12. By the end of the book Christian has found a romantic partner. Do you think he is now completely comfortable with his sexuality, or is there more work ahead for him?
13. After Hannah's disclosures the future of the local FatSchool is uncertain. What do you think will happen to it?
14. At the end of the book, a fat rights movement has begun. There is a fat rights movement in our society as well. What are some of the things that are being done in this movement? Do you believe these are steps in the right direction? What do you think should be done?
15. In our society, there are laws prohibiting weight-based discrimination in the state of Michigan, as well as in Washington D.C., San Francisco and Santa Cruz, CA, Binghamton, NY, Urbana, IL, and Madison, WI. Efforts are being made to add size discrimination to the Ontario (Canada) human rights code. How do you think Hannah would have been affected if she had lived in -- or near -- a state or city or province that prohibited discrimination against fat people?

Resources

If We Were Snowflakes is fiction, but if you're interested in facts about weight, discrimination, health, and size diversity, Pearlsong Press and author Barbara D'Souza recommend the following resources and readings:

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION TO ADVANCE FAT ACCEPTANCE (NAAFA)

www.naafa.org

ASSOCIATION FOR SIZE DIVERSITY AND HEALTH (ASDAH)

www.sizediversityandhealth.org

PRINCIPLES OF HEALTH AT EVERY SIZE®

www.sizediversityandhealth.org/content.asp?id=152

HEALTH AT EVERY SIZE® COMMUNITY

www.haescommunity.com

WWW.IFWEWERESNOWFLAKES.COM



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She has been published in *USA Today*, and won third place in the Pennwriters Annual Short Story Writing Contest for 2016. She works as an accountant, and lives in Bridgeville, PA with her husband, daughter, and two cats.



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