The Queerly Beloved BOOK CLUB



THURSDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 6.30PM

Theme: Queer Memoirs and Biographies

Book: *Ten Steps to Nanette* by Hannah Gadsby

Blurb

'There is nothing stronger than a broken woman who has rebuilt herself.' - Hannah Gadsby, Nanette

Gadsby's unique stand-up special Nanette was a viral success that left audiences captivated by her blistering honesty and her ability to create both tension and laughter in a single moment. But while her worldwide fame might have looked like an overnight sensation, her path from open mic to the global stage was hard-fought and anything but linear. *Ten Steps to Nanette* traces Gadsby's growth as a queer person from Tasmania - where homosexuality was illegal until 1997 - to her ever-evolving relationship with comedy, to her struggle with late-in-life diagnoses of autism and ADHD, and finally to the backbone of Nanette: the renouncement of self-deprecation, the rejection of misogyny, and the moral significance of truth-telling. Equal parts harrowing and hilarious, *Ten Steps to Nanette* continues Gadsby's tradition of confounding expectations and norms, properly introducing us to one of the most explosive, formative voices of our time.

Themes / Discussion Points

- Is it possible to have a happy queer memoir? Would people read it?
- Societal expectations – gender, gender norms, sexuality, family roles, typical vs atypical brains
- ADHD / ASD – Late in life diagnosis
- People explaining your experiences to you
- Humour as armour
- Physical effects of trauma
- Aussie experience - receiving a Bicentennial coin, stamp collecting, reenactment of First Fleet arriving

Trigger Warnings

- “All the warnings”
- Sexual Assault
- Severe Trauma
- Mental Health Struggles
- Homophobia
- Fatphobia

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

General

- What format did you read *Ten Steps to Nanette* in?
- How much did you know about the book before picking it up?
- Have you seen Hannah’s show *Nanette*?
- What did you like about the book?
- What did you dislike about the book?
- How did the book make you feel?
- What will you remember about this book a year from now?
- Would you recommend this book to someone? Why or why not?
- Would you re-read it? Why or why not?

Memoirs + Biographies

- Are you a frequent memoir reader?
- Do you generally like memoirs? If yes, why?
- How does Nanette compare to other memoirs you’ve read?
- Does somebody have to be famous for you to want to read their memoir?
- How did the memoir make you reflect on your own life?
- Did Nanette evoke any memories for you?
- If you were to write a memoir, what period of life would you focus on?
- How important is honesty for a good memoir?
- What are the benefits of this story being told as a memoir isntead of another type of narrative?

Writing Style

- What did you think of the writing style employed in Nanette?
- Did you like the way the narrative was told?
- Was the writing style a reflection of Hannah themselves do you think?
- Did you find Nanette easy or hard to read?
- Was there anything you would have done differently?
- Did you like the inclusion of the footnotes and historical/political notes?

Storytelling

- Are there any people in the book whose perspective you would have liked to have more of?
- Do you think the people in Hannah’s life would have liked how they were depicted in *Nanette*?
- How important was the setting throughout the narrative?
- Was Hannah a reliable narrator do you think?
- Did the book make you think differently about anything?