

Reader Questions for *She of the Rib: Women Unwrapped*, by Jayne Jaudon Ferrer

About This Book

She of the Rib: Women Unwrapped is a collection of poetry about the various roles and responsibilities of women. The forty-three poems are divided into five sections—Life, Laughter, Love, Loss, and Lessons—and range in tone from provocative to poignant. Topics addressed include body image, self-esteem, friendship, domestic abuse, motherhood, lost love, aging gracefully, dealing with the unexpected, and pursuing dreams and aspirations.

Discussion Questions

1. In “Road Trip,” what does the poet mean by “I need to improve my grip?”
2. Do you think the mother in “Future Shock” is regretting or celebrating her choice? What “difference” is she referring to?
3. What sort of event do you think the women have experienced in “Epiphany at St. Simons?” Have you ever had a similar moment of epiphany?
4. “Screen Test” is about news coverage. Do you think the media are guilty of manipulating our emotions to get the reaction they want? Do you think they exploit the victims of tragedies covered by the news?
5. What is your reaction to the infidelity committed in “To Whom It May Concern?” Is it okay to join a friend in criticizing her/her spouse or is it better to just offer a listening ear?
6. How far is a mother entitled to go in demanding help around the house from other family members? “Domestic Goddess Blues” uses humor to address the poet’s frustrations. Is humor an effective way to diffuse confrontation among family members?
7. What kind of DVD does the poet give the boy in “TLC, Not MTV?” Do you agree that old movies have more to teach us about romance than contemporary ones? Do you encourage your children to watch classic movies?
8. “Swan Song” and “Truth and Consequences” deal with society’s standards of what is attractive and what is not. Is it prejudice or human nature to favor those who fit those standards? Does the idea of being old/fat/wrinkled/grey bother you?
9. Several of the poems in this book mention different ways to relieve stress, such as getting away with friends, drinking a cup of tea, and taking a day off. What is your favorite stress reliever?
10. “The Ballad of Damask Rose” is about a dilapidated chair the poet can’t bring herself to part with. Do you have a possession that has long outlived its usefulness but still takes up space in your home?
11. If you’re a happily married woman, is meeting an old boyfriend for lunch an innocent walk down memory lane or an invitation to trouble?
12. As life expectancies continue to increase, enjoying a late life romance becomes more and more likely. Are the rules different at seventy than they were at seventeen?
13. What do you fear most about aging?
14. Are women’s lives today more or less satisfying than those of earlier generations? Is “having it all” a myth or a reality?
15. Are we responsible for our own happiness, or are we victims of our circumstances?