

# BOOK CLUB in a bag

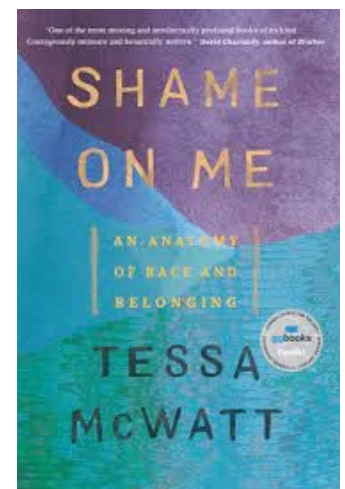


## Shame on Me

Tessa McWatt

### Discussion Questions

1. What do you think motivated McWatt to share her story? Did you find her story compelling?
2. What did you think of the author's voice and style? Did the quality of the writing match the story?
3. "What are you, Tessa?," the author is asked by her teacher at 8 years old. Were you ever demanded to explain who or what you are? What was that experience like?
4. Have you read other memoirs that dealt with topics such as critical race theory, mixed-race studies, the history of race and colonization throughout the world? How did this book compare to them?
5. How did the memoir make you reflect on your own life?
6. What did you learn from hearing McWatt's story?
7. Did you learn anything new about Canada that you weren't aware of before?
8. Are there any areas you wished she had elaborated upon further?
9. Who would you recommend this book to?



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## About the Author

Tessa McWatt is the author of seven novels and two books for young people. Her fiction and nonfiction have been nominated for the Governor General's Award, the City of Toronto Book Awards, and the OCM Bocas Prize. She is the co-editor, along with Dionne Brand and Rabindranath Maharaj, of *Luminous Ink: Writers on Writing in Canada*. Her first picture book for children, *Where Are You Agnes?*, is based on the life of abstract expressionist painter Agnes Martin. She is one of the winners of the Eccles British Library Award 2018, for her memoir: *Shame on Me: An Anatomy of Race and Belonging*, which also won the Bocas Prize for Non-Fiction 2020 and was a finalist for the Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Nonfiction. She is also a librettist, most recently working with British composer Hannah Kendall. Their chamber opera, *The Knife of Dawn*, premiered at the Roundhouse, London, in 2016, and they are working on a new full-length opera. McWatt is also in the process of bringing John Berger's novel *To the Wedding*, to the screen, with award-winning film director Andrea Pallaoro. Tessa McWatt is the Course Director for the Master's in Prose Fiction at the University of East Anglia and is on the Board of Trustees at Wasafiri. Born in Guyana, and raised in Canada, she lives in London.

Via Penguin Random House Canada (<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.ca/authors/140747/tessa-mcwatt>)

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