

# BOOK CLUB in a bag

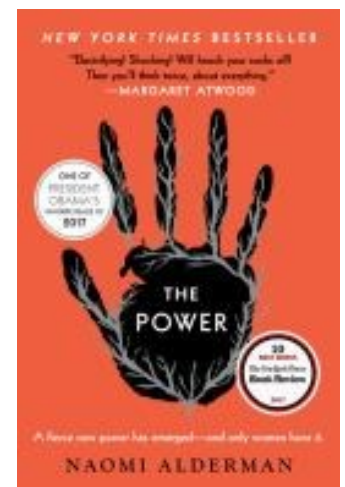


# The Power

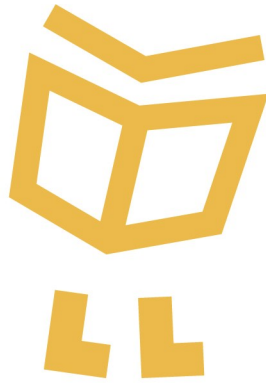
Naomi Alderman

## Discussion Questions

1. The premise of *The Power* seems to be that if a new world order were created—with women in charge—it would look little different from the way it does now. That woman would use their power to oppress men. Do you agree with that premise? Does Naomi Alderman make her case convincingly? Do you see other possibilities?
2. The book poses a question: why do people abuse power? What does the book suggest the answer is? What is your answer?
3. As an interesting exercise, go through the novel to identify those societal structures, both legitimate and criminal, that have been changed by feminine power. Look at how the book treats religion, the military, sex trafficking and porn, harassment, even bullying. What does the new power inversion say about the way gender and sexuality operates in "normal" society (i.e., today in the early 21st century)?
4. In what ways does each of the four characters—Eve, Roxy, Tunde, and Margot—illuminate the events of the novel and all that has changed? Whose perspective or story do you find most interesting ... or revealing ... or engaging?
5. What do you make of Neil Adam Armon and his gushing letter to Naomi Alderman, "I am so grateful you could spare the time," and "Sorry, I'll shut up now"? If you are a woman, does that tone, do those words, have a familiar ring? Also, what's the joke here about appropriation, given that Alderman's name, not Neil's, ends up on the novel? (If you haven't already, play around with the letters of Neil's name.)
6. Vogue reviewer, Bridget Read (really), calls parts of the book "revenge porn." Do you agree with her label? Do you find the revenge satisfying or twisted ... or both?
7. Neil ponders: "Gender is a shell game. What is a man? Whatever a woman isn't. What is a woman? Whatever a man is not. Tap on it and it's hollow. Look under the shells: It's not there." What does Neil mean, and do you agree or disagree? How do you see gender? Is it "real" or a social construct?
8. The novel: bleak or hopeful?



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## About the Author

Naomi Alderman is an English author, novelist and game designer whose most recent novel, *The Power*, won the 2017 Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction. Born in London, the daughter of Geoffrey Alderman, a specialist in Anglo-Jewish history, Naomi attended Lincoln College, Oxford, where she read Philosophy, Politics and Economics. Following Oxford, she studied creative writing at the University of East Anglia. From 2003-07, Alderman was the lead writer for Perplex City, an alternate reality game, at Mind Candy. She went on to become lead writer on the running video game *Zombies, Run!* which launched in 2012. Since 2012, Alderman has been Professor of Creative Writing at Bath Spa University. She continues to write a monthly technology column for *The Guardian*.

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