

# BOOK CLUB in a bag

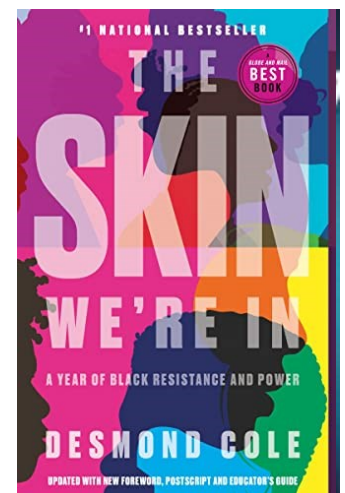


## The Skin We're In—A Year of Black Resistance and Power

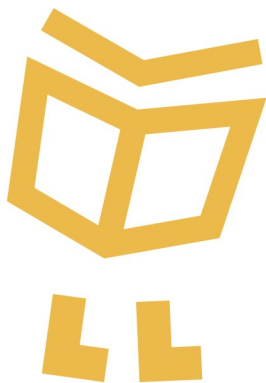
Desmond Cole

### Discussion Questions

1. *The Skin We're In* was also realised in a film format prior to the release of the book, in which at one point a member of Black Lives Matter, Alexandria Williams asks, “Who’s running media, who gets to control it, who gets to control the narrative? It’s not us.” What does she mean by this? Who controls the media in Canada and abroad, and how does this affect the information and perceptions that we can access?
2. The concept of journalistic objectivity comes up in discussions of political and social discourse often, but as Cole presents in both the novel and conversations since then, he feels as though objectivity is selectively used when beneficial to the author/network, especially when reporting on events against racialized individuals. As Cole argues, this flawed notion of objectivity further perpetuates systemic racism as it does not allow connections to be made against the overall fabric to our society.
3. Discuss this with your group: what are your thoughts on objectivity as understood by media? Is objectivity attainable in media or does everything come with a bias? Cole has argued that not only is it impossible to be objective as a journalist, but impersonal; what are your thoughts on that? Do you feel it is essential to be objective as a journalist? Does objectivity and truth go hand in hand, or do you feel like it is like oil and water?
4. Systemic racism is entrenched in our day to day lives and is perpetuated by structures in place used to continue a cycle of oppression through various avenues, often larger than ourselves. Yet the work in resistance against anti-Black racism and the overall racism found in Canadian structures in work we must all take on individual in order to put an end to it. Create a list with your group on ways you can all contribute to the dismantling of systemic racism and racism in your day to day.
5. How was your perception of anti-Black racism and over-policing in Canada changed prior to reading the novel to after reading it?
6. What is something that you can take from reading this book, that can be applied in your everyday?
7. Who would you recommend *The Skin We're In* to? Why?



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## About the Author

Desmond Cole is a journalist, radio host, and activist. His debut book, *The Skin We're In*, won the Toronto Book Award and was a finalist for the Forest of Reading Evergreen Award and the Rakuten Kobo Emerging Writer Prize. It was also named a best book of 2020 by *The Globe and Mail*, *NOW Magazine*, *CBC*, *Quill & Quire*, and *Indigo*. Cole's writing has appeared in *the Toronto Star*, *Toronto Life*, *The Walrus*, and *the Ottawa Citizen*, among others. He lives in Toronto.

Via the Writers' Trust of Canada (<https://www.writerstrust.com/authors/desmond-cole/>)

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