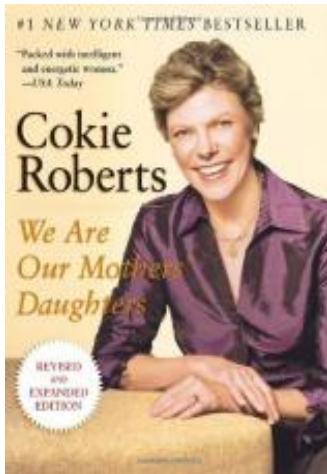


# We Are Our Mothers

by Cokie Roberts

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## About the Book

In this tenth-anniversary edition of **We Are Our Mothers? Daughters**, renowned political commentator Cokie Roberts once again examines the nature of women's roles through the revealing lens of her personal experience. From mother to mechanic, sister to soldier, Roberts reveals how much progress has now been made --- and how much further we have to go. Updated and expanded to include a diverse new cast of women, this collection of essays offers tremendous insight into the opportunities and challenges that women encounter today. In a series of new profiles and revealing updates, Roberts reflects upon the number of female achievers who have graced the public stage in the past decade. In addition to the illuminating and sometimes surprising history of women in a variety of fields, several chapters also introduce us to some of the fascinating women she has encountered during the course of her reporting career --- including Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, Laura Bush, Billie Jean King, Michelle Rhee, and Dorothy Height. Looking into the future, Roberts focuses on the question of "What next?", exploring how several women --- including herself --- have begun to define themselves in the next stages of their lives.

## Discussion Guide

1. At the beginning of **We Are Our Mothers? Daughters**, Cokie Roberts poses the question, "What is a woman's place?" How would you answer her?
2. Women's roles are often influenced by outside forces?religion, government, business. How can women minimize or alter these influences? Offer some examples.

3. In her introduction, Cokie Roberts tells us that, revisiting the original edition and expanding it, "has forced me to realize that there are great chasms we cross from one decade to the next. Not only does the world change around us?ten years ago we thought a blackberry was a piece of fruit?but we change ourselves.? Think back over the past decade of your life. How has it changed? How have these changes affected who you are?
4. Cokie Roberts argues that women "are connected throughout time and regardless of place. We are our mothers? daughters.? Do you agree with this? How are women connected to the past?and to the future? What about other cultures?
5. Compare your experiences to those of the women who have gone before you. Are your opportunities different than your mother?s or grandmother?s? What advantages do you think you have today that they may not have had? What about your children, or if you don?t have them, younger women you know?
6. In talking about her relationship with her mother and her daughter, the author writes, "there?s no role as demanding, as terrifying, as maddening, and as rewarding as that of a mother.? Do you agree with this? What if you don?t?or choose not to?have children?
7. **We Are Our Mothers? Daughters** profiles successful women from varied walks of life?sister and soldier, politician and athlete, reporter and scientist. Did you feel a connection with some of the women profiled in the book?
8. How do the experiences of the women profiled in the book reflect the wider changes our society has undergone?
9. Have the stories in *We Are Our Mothers? Daughters* changed your perceptions about women? If you have a daughter, or a special young woman in your life, what wisdom would you offer her?
10. Though this is a book about women, how have the transformations they have undergone impacted men?fathers, brothers, husbands, sons?
11. Speaking of society, American culture often sees aging, especially for women, in a negative light. Are there advantages to getting older? How can this negative perception be overcome?
12. What does the term "feminist" mean to you? Do you think of yourself as a feminist? Why or why not? Why do you think a large number of women?especially many with jobs and careers?don?t consider themselves feminists?
13. Roberts decries the divisive "mommy wars" mostly waged by women against other women. What might happen if women stopped fighting and found common ground?
14. Barack Obama?s election had an enormous impact on how African Americans see themselves and their place in the nation. What kind of impact might a woman president have, especially for women? What might a woman president offer the nation that male leaders cannot?
15. Cokie Roberts would like to see a female elected president in her lifetime. Do you think America might elect a woman to serve in the Oval office anytime soon? How would you feel if a woman were elected president?
16. The author tells us that women, especially those in middle age, frequently ask her, "What?s next??" What?s next for

you?

## Author Bio

Cokie Roberts is a political commentator for ABC News and NPR. She has won countless awards and in 2008 was named a "Living Legend" by the Library of Congress. She is the author of the *New York Times* bestsellers WE ARE OUR MOTHERS' DAUGHTERS; FOUNDING MOTHERS; LADIES OF LIBERTY; and, with her husband, the journalist Steven V. Roberts, FROM THIS DAY FORWARD and OUR HAGGADAH. She lives just outside of Washington, D.C.

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