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I Know Just What You Mean : The Power of Friendship in Women's Lives

by Ellen Goodman, Patricia O'Brien



Hardcover – 300 pages (May 2000)

Simon & Schuster; ISBN: 0684842874; Dimensions (in inches):

1.01 x 9.50 x 6.30

From Booklist

Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Goodman and journalist O'Brien examine their friendship of more than 25 years and a host of other friendships among women, famous and unknown. The two women met when both were in their thirties, divorced mothers of young 5 children, and beginning a Nieman fellowship* at Harvard. The writers use their own relationship and others to illustrate lifelong friendships among women, through careers, marriage, child-rearing, etc. They describe the process of writing the book ... [read more](#)

In *I Know Just What You Mean*, Pulitzer prize-winning columnist 10 Ellen Goodman and novelist/journalist Patricia O'Brien provide a thoughtful, deeply personal look at the enduring bonds of friendship between women.

* fellowship = bolsa de estudos

Editorial Reviews

Amazon.com

After more than 25 years of friendship, Ellen Goodman and Patricia O'Brien share their own story, the stories of other women, 15 and plenty of insight from psychologists and students of human nature in *I Know Just What You Mean*.

Aside from its merits as a piece of writing (Goodman and O'Brien live up to their mutually high standards), *I Know Just What You Mean* makes you think about your friends and friendships, past and present. 20 And perhaps the best testament to what these two old friends have created is how much you want to pick up the phone and tell a friend about it.

Gwen Bloomsburg

L í n g u a I n g l e s a - G a b a r i t o G r u p o F

Customer Reviews of the Day

The Heat of Woman's Friendships, July 23, 2000

Reviewer: **Kirsten Miles** from Huffman, TX United States

I have always thought that friendship was a powerful relationship that gained far too little attention. In this book, I found women who describe feelings and needs and situations I have been trying to express for years.

25 We sacrifice friends too easily, not giving ourselves permission to care deeply enough. In the chronicling of their own path, and those of others, Ellen and Pat have given all women a priceless gift.

Too Much of a Good Thing, July 3, 2000

Reviewer: **A reader** from Fort Washington, Pa USA

I enjoyed this book for the first 40 pages...at which point it became disappointingly repetitive. I continued to plow through the book, hoping for some less obvious

30 observations and insights, but they never really came. If you have a best friend (especially one you've had for a long time), most of what you read in this book will be obvious to you, and not very new or thought-provoking. That's unfortunate, because I usually enjoy the finely-honed insights of both of these authors. There are two tests of friendship that I wish the authors had addressed in more depth: What do **35** you do when your best friend marries a man you can't stand? And what do you do when you best friend's parenting approach and values turn out to be completely different from yours?

In the end, I'm not sure who the real audience for this book is – it's not women who've maintained long-term friendships, and it's not really women who haven't, and if the

40 authors' assessment of men's relationships is correct, it's not really men, either.

Women's Friendship, July 26, 2000

Reviewer: **Mikki Ansin** from Cambridge, MA

As a friend with friends, I found this book a warm and readable affirmation about loyalty and compassion among women. I am a fan of Ellen Goodman's, and this book adds yet another fascinating dimension to her work.

1st Question: (2,0 marks)

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In what way did the authors' life stories contribute to the theme of the book?

Resposta:

The authors Ellen Goodman and Patricia O' Brien have been friends for more than 25 years. Friendship among women, the theme of the book, is explored in the light of their long-lasting friendship, which started at Harvard University.

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2nd Question: (2,0 marks)

List four positive aspects of the book pointed out in the reviews.

Resposta:

The following positive aspects of the book are pointed out in the reviews:

1. It provides “a thoughtful, deeply personal look at the enduring bonds of friendship between women”. (lines 10-12)
2. It is a good piece of writing.
3. It is “a warm and readable affirmation about loyalty and compassion among women” (lines 41-42)
4. It describes feelings, needs and situations that people have probably wanted to express but have not been able to.
5. The authors describe feelings, needs and situations with which women identify.
6. Difficulties in friendship are discussed in welcoming and easy-to-read words.

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3rd Question: (1,5 marks)

Which book review is unfavourable? Identify two arguments used by the reviewer to justify her/his opinion.

Resposta:

The review of a reader from Fort Washington, Pa USA, entitled “Too much of a Good thing”, is not totally favourable. The reviewer considers the book “disappointingly repetitive” and “not very new or thought – provoking”. Besides, she/he wonders what the real audience for the book is. There are also a couple of questions the reviewer believes should have been addressed in the book.

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4th Question: (1,5 marks)

Reference is a linguistic device used to avoid repetition in a text. For example, in “And perhaps the best testament to what these two old friends have created...” (line 20), the expression **these two old friends** refers to the “authors”. Identify three (3) cases of reference which are present in the first paragraph.

Resposta:

In the 1st paragraph we have the following cases of reference: **the two women** (line 3), **the writers** (lines 5 - 6), and **they** (line 8), all referring to columnist Goodman and journalist O'Brien.

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5th Question: (3,0 marks)

Comment on a book you have read (around 80 words).
Your text should contain:

1. A brief summary of the book.
2. The reasons why you have liked it or not.
3. A brief conclusion.

Resposta:

The text should contain:

1. A brief summary of the book (author, title and content)
2. The candidate's reactions to the book with supporting evidence and argumentation.
3. A conclusive remark to end the text.