



Whatever...Love Is Love: Questioning the Labels We Give Ourselves

By Maria Bello

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The acclaimed actress and dedicated activist shares her personal journey of discovery, and destroys outdated ideas about partnership, love and family that will resonate with anyone in an unconventional life situation.

Actress and activist Maria Bello made waves with her essay, “Coming Out as a Modern Family,” in the *New York Times* popular “Modern Love” column, in which she recalled telling her son that she had fallen in love with her best friend, a woman—and her relief at his easy and immediate acceptance with the phrase “Whatever Mom, love is love.” She made a compelling argument about the fluidity of partnerships, and how families today come in a myriad of designs.

In her first book, Bello broadens her insights as she examines the idea of partnership in every woman’s life, and her own. She examines the myths that so many of us believe about partnership—that the partnership begins when the sex begins, that partnerships are static, that you have to love yourself before you can be loved, and turns them on their heads. Bello explores how many different relationships—romantic, platonic, spiritual, familial, educational—helped define her life. She encourages women to realize that the only labels we have are the ones we put on ourselves, and the best, happiest partnerships are the ones that make your life better, even if they don’t fit the mold of “typical.”

Throughout this powerful and engaging read, Bello shares intimate stories and lessons on how she has come to discover her happiest self, accept who she is, and live honestly and freely, and tells the stories of those who came to her after her *Times*’ columns, grateful that someone gave voice to their life choices.

Whatever...Love Is Love is not a memoir about an actress. It is a frank, raw, and honest book about the way every woman questions the roles she plays in love, work, and life, filled with wisdom, questions, and insights relevant to us all.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Maria Bello has written a book that is honest, which comes as no surprise as Maria is one of the most honest people I have ever met. In *Whatever ... Love Is Love*, Maria reveals her personal and radical self-exploration and questions the status quo imposed not just by her but also by society in general. Never preachy, in this book she diligently and methodically deconstructs where her values have come from . . . Personal, provocative, and inspiring." --Patricia Arquette, Academy Award-winning actor

"With clarity and exquisite honesty Maria Bello manages to be both vulnerable and self-deprecating. *Whatever ... Love Is Love* is a must-read for anyone tired of old habits and labels, and is looking to grow in a way that works for themselves and the people in their lives. I feel sure this conversation has only just begun." --Pat Mitchell, editorial director and host of TEDWomen, advisor to the Paley Center for Media, and chair of the Sundance Institute

"An important, timely, and brave exploration of self that questions the human tendency to label and stereotype, and shows how existing labels may fail to capture the current human experience." --Yasmeen Hassan, global executive director of Equality Now

"Maria Bello has written the greatest testimony about living an authentic life...free from labels, restrictions, and other people's opinions of who you should be. *Whatever ... Love Is Love* is a heroic journey that will both inspire and change, and Maria reminds us of the purest definition of love and of the greatest privilege of all . . . becoming who you truly are." --Viola Davis, Academy Award-nominated actor

"Maria's mind, her soul, and her heart are all committed to drinking deeply of life in all its complexity and wonder. This book is the beautiful - honest, deep, brave, heart-wrenching, funny, real - document of that pursuit. Maria is one of the fierce ones whose journey sheds light for all of us." --Mariska Hargitay, actor

"Bold, brilliant, and passionate, Maria is incapable of ["b-s"-ing]. Her story is somehow both relatable and wildly unique. She isn't afraid to ask herself the tough questions, and by doing so, dares us to do the same." --Olivia Wilde, actor

From the Back Cover

Am I damaged?

Am I resilient?

Am I enough?

Questioning the labels we wear when it comes to partnership, career, love, and sexuality is at the heart of Maria Bello's *Whatever . . . Love Is Love*.

Written as a series of provocative questions and thoughtful answers, *Whatever . . . Love Is Love* is filled with deeply personal, often funny, and even passionate stories, stories in which Maria bares her soul and shares what she's learned—not only about romantic love, but also about her relationship with her parents, her

feelings about spirituality, her sexual identity, the highs and lows of her career, her humanitarian work, and her worth as a mother.

Using her experiences as a gateway to a larger conversation, Maria encourages you to think about the life you lead, who you love, what you do, what you believe in, and what you call yourself . . . and helps you to realize that the only labels that matter are the ones we place on and accept for ourselves, even if they don't fit the mold of "typical."

"Whatever . . . Love Is Love isn't your typical celebrity memoir. . . . Instead, each chapter, through charming candor and humor, challenges a series of 'labels' that represent impossible standards to which we hold ourselves."—*Marie Claire*

"Never preachy, in this book [Bello] diligently and methodically deconstructs where her values have come from. . . . Personal, provocative, and inspiring."—Patricia Arquette, Oscar®-nominated actor

About the Author

Maria Bello is an activist, actor, and writer. Her essay "Coming Out as a Modern Family" was one of the ten most popular to appear in the *New York Times*'s Modern Love column. She lives in Los Angeles, California.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Christa Nisbet:

The book untitled Whatever...Love Is Love: Questioning the Labels We Give Ourselves contain a lot of information on this. The writer explains your ex idea with easy technique. The language is very clear and understandable all the people, so do not necessarily worry, you can easy to read the item. The book was compiled by famous author. The author gives you in the new period of time of literary works. You can read this book because you can please read on your smart phone, or gadget, so you can read the book with anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can open up their official web-site in addition to order it. Have a nice read.

Eden Cohn:

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Della Ferguson:

What is your hobby? Have you heard that will question when you got pupils? We believe that that query was given by teacher for their students. Many kinds of hobby, All people has different hobby. And also you know that little person similar to reading or as reading become their hobby. You need to understand that reading is very important and also book as to be the thing. Book is important thing to include you knowledge, except your current teacher or lecturer. You get good news or update with regards to something by book. A substantial number of sorts of books that can you decide to try be your object. One of them is this Whatever...Love Is Love: Questioning the Labels We Give Ourselves.

Corey Watts:

A lot of people said that they feel weary when they reading a publication. They are directly felt the item when they get a half parts of the book. You can choose the particular book Whatever...Love Is Love: Questioning the Labels We Give Ourselves to make your own personal reading is interesting. Your current skill of reading ability is developing when you such as reading. Try to choose simple book to make you enjoy to learn it and mingle the feeling about book and looking at especially. It is to be very first opinion for you to like to open up a book and go through it. Beside that the guide Whatever...Love Is Love: Questioning the Labels We Give Ourselves can to be your new friend when you're truly feel alone and confuse in what must you're doing of the time.

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