

Skokie Public Library's Book Discussion Guide

LOVE MEDICINE **by Louise Erdrich**

- The novel deals extensively with the love-hate relationships between family members. What are some of the different kinds of familial bonds, positive and negative? What themes are explored through these relationships? What does this novel suggest about the nature of families?
- One theme of the novel is the unavoidable impact of the non-Indian world (for instance, Catholicism, alcohol, intermarriages, the Vietnam War, capitalism, the legal system) on the Chippewa. How does the interaction with outsiders affect specific characters? What does the novel suggest about the difficulties and consequences of dealing with a mixed world?
- Why do you think Erdrich chose to write her novel in the way she did, using time leaps and a series of different narrators to recount their own tales? What do you think is gained by this form of narrative? How might the form's emphasis on individual storytelling relate to the novel's larger themes?
- Why do you think the section "Love Medicine" was chosen as the title story of the novel? Would you have chosen another section on the basis of a strength or unifying theme?



Skokie Public Library

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