

## Discussion Guide



*Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives and on the Health of Our Nation*  
Linda Villarosa

Doubleday Books  
2022  
288 pages  
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Black Maternal Health

### Summary

"The first book to tell the full story of race and health in America today, showing the toll racism takes on individuals and the health of our nation, by a groundbreaking journalist at the New York Times Magazine" -- Provided by publisher

### Questions

1. Have you ever experienced bias from a healthcare provider? If so, how has that affected your healthcare?
2. Do you relate the author's exploration of the burden to take care of everyone, including yourself? In what ways do you think that burden affects health outcomes? Do you think it can be relieved or improved?
3. What surprised you most about the book?
4. What section helped you better understand the challenges black families face around medical care?
5. The author brings up medical myths around skin color such as pain tolerance or skin thickness. Can you think of any other medical assumptions that exist due to long held, but unproved beliefs?
6. How does the title relate to the contents of the book? Do you think the title is a good choice?
7. Are there any parts of the book you disagree with or are having a hard time with?
8. If you could meet with the author, what would you ask?
9. Who do you most want to read this book and why?
10. How did reading this book affect the way you think about equity in healthcare? Why? Did it make you want to do anything or change anything?
11. The author's final chapter is about hope but is mixed with difficult realities. After reading this book, are you optimistic that health equity will improve? Why/why not?
12. How did reading this book impact you? Do you think you'll remember it in a few months or years? Would you ever consider re-reading it? Why or why not?