

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

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The acclaimed actress and dedicated activist shares her personal journey of discovery, and destroys outdated ideas about partnership, love and family that will resonate with anyone in an unconventional life situation.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