

Virtual Book Club

Discussion Questions

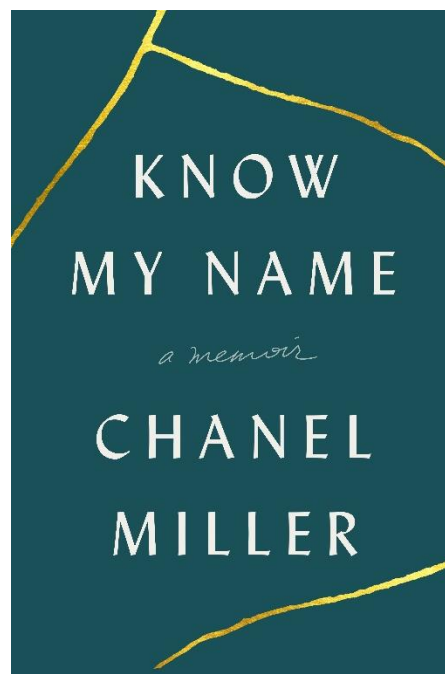
KNOW MY NAME BY CHANEL MILLER

Did you know [Alpha Chi Omega hosts an online book club](#) just for alumnae? Each month, they read a new book and host virtual discussion posts and live video discussions to chat “face to face.”

The Alumnae Book Club chose *Know My Name*, written by Chanel Miller, as its April 2020 book. To check out the Alumnae Book Club’s discussion posts, [click here!](#)

This resource was created in 2021 with the intent for groups of Alpha Chi Omega members to continue this effort started by the Alumnae Book Club to discuss their thoughts after reading *Know My Name*. The questions below were sourced from the Alumnae Book Club discussion in April 2020.

In preparation for your own book club discussion, please consider sharing the following content warning with those interested in reading and discussing the book.



CONTENT WARNING: This discussion contains information about sexual assault and/or relationship violence which may be triggering to survivors.

- Do you remember this case as it unfolded in the news? Did you follow it at all?
- Did you read Chanel’s [victim impact statement](#) when it went viral on Buzzfeed? Why do you think Chanel chose to include it as an appendix at the end of the book, rather than include it in the chronological telling of her story?
- Was there anything about Chanel’s story that surprised you?
- Was there anything about the legal system and process from a victim’s perspective that you found surprising?

- In what ways do you think the legal system failed Chanel? What – if anything – do you think was done well?
- Chanel writes, “They seemed angry that I’d made myself vulnerable, more than the fact that he’d acted on my vulnerability.” Much was made of the fact that Chanel never said “no” – despite the fact that she was unable to do so. How can we change the conversation about consent?
- In many ways, pressing charges was a dehumanizing experience for Chanel. Discuss how victims are dehumanized, and how Chanel counters this by humanizing herself in this book.
- One of the arguments against punishing Brock beyond six months in jail is that serving a prison sentence would ruin his life. And yet, Chanel asks in this book, “What about my life?” Hers is not the only life affected, though. Discuss how this experience affected Chanel and her loved ones.
- Chanel also writes, “Most of us understand that your future is not promised to you. It is constructed day by day, through the choices you make. Your future is earned, little by little, through hard work and action. If you don’t act accordingly, that dream dissolves. If punishment is based on potential, privileged people will be given lighter sentences.” Do you agree or disagree with this evaluation?
- Discuss the power of names in Chanel’s memoir. Chanel talks about the name she was given during the investigation and trial, her use of names throughout the narrative and the power of claiming her own name. Why do you believe it’s important to her that people know her name? How does trauma take away someone’s identity?
- Chanel discusses the idea of forgiveness both during her account of speaking with the parole officer and at the end of the book. Discuss how she defines forgiveness and how the parole officer interpreted Chanel’s wishes for Brock’s prosecution.