

Discussion Questions for *Light, Which Impresses*

1. What is the significance of the book's epigraph: "The first thing to remember is that the light which impresses the photographic image upon the sensitive film in a fraction of a second when it comes through the lens, can destroy the film as quickly as it makes the picture" (*Picture taking with the No. 3A Autographic Kodak*)?
2. The novel is divided into five parts with each part framed by an interview occurring in 1983. What role does the frame serve?
3. Is Sarah a static, unchanging character, or a dynamic character changed by events in her life? Is Cata a static or dynamic character?
4. Describe Sarah's relationship with Samuel, A. J., Timothy, and Paola. Does Sarah's relationship with each of them change her? If yes, how? Describe the relationship Sarah has with Kayla and Abel. Does Sarah change because of this relationship? If yes, how?
5. How are Sarah and Cata similar? How are they different? Do the similarities and differences contribute to their relationship? Explain.
6. What is the significance of Cata and Sarah's toast to "women warriors"?
7. What role does race play in the novel?
8. The novel is set in the El Paso region along the US-Mexico border. What literal and metaphorical roles does the Border play in the novel?
9. What is the literal and the metaphorical role of photography?
10. What political/social issues does the novel address? Are these still issues today? Explain.
11. What do historical figures such as Generals Pancho Villa, Hugh Scott, and John J. Pershing add to the novel? What is their relationship with Sarah?
12. What does Sarah mean when she says that Abel and Kayla have allowed her to "rewrite the history" of her life?