

"You Feel You've Witnessed Nothing Less Than the Birth of a Soul."

—New York Times, ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

Mo'Nique

Paula Patton

Mariah Carey

Lenny Kravitz

with
Gabourey Sidibe



OPRAH WINFREY AND TYLER PERRY PRESENT
A LEE DANIELS FILM

precious

BASED ON THE NOVEL PUSH BY SAPPHIRE

LONGGATE in association with OPRAH WINFREY AND TYLER PERRY PRESENT A LEE DANIELS ENTERTAINMENT / SMOKEWOOD ENTERTAINMENT GROUP PRODUCTION
A FILM BY LEE DANIELS "PRECIOUS" BASED ON THE NOVEL "PUSH" BY SAPPHIRE. MENAQUE PULLA-PETTON, MARIAH CAREY, PAULA PATTON, LONNIE RAYMOND, LONNIE RAYMOND
CASTING BY GABRIELLE SORREY. COSTUME DESIGNER AND JESSICA KELLY. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: MICHAEL BILAL, NINA GOLD, JEFFREY FLETCHER, LEE DANIELS
PRODUCED BY LEE KLOTZ. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: ANDREW STAN, B.S.C., JESSICA HESSMAN, ANDREW E. MACHES, GEMINE SHEFFIELD
CASTING BY OPRAH WINFREY, TYLER PERRY, LISA COOPER, TONY HELLER. COSTUME DESIGNER: LEE DANIELS, SARA WELLS, MADNESS, GARY MADNESS
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: LEE KLOTZ, ANDREW STAN, B.S.C., JESSICA HESSMAN, ANDREW E. MACHES, GEMINE SHEFFIELD
COMING SOON
www.precious.com
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DISCUSSION GUIDE

Developed by Heartland Truly Moving Pictures to accompany *Precious: Based on the Novel Push by Sapphire*, recipient of the Truly Moving Picture Award, an honored distinction given to films that unlock the vast potential of the human spirit and enable us to view stories that display courage, integrity and hope, taking entertainment to a higher level.

TrulyMovingPictures.org

WeAreAllPrecious.com



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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Discussion Questions	
From the Book to the Screen	3
We Are All Precious	4
Take Action	5
Moving Moments	6



Nurse John (Lenny Kravitz) and Precious (Gabourey Sidibe) in PRECIOUS: BASED ON THE NOVEL 'PUSH' BY SAPPHIRE.
Photo credit: Anne Marie Fox

p r e c i o u s

One Film Can

Heartland Truly Moving Pictures, a non-profit organization, recognizes and honors filmmakers whose work explores the human journey by expressing hope and respect for the positive values of life. We believe that one film can move us to laughter, to tears, or to make a difference. *Precious: Based on the Novel Push by Sapphire* is a film that demonstrates that One Film Can.

Synopsis

Lee Daniels' *Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire* is a vibrant, honest and resoundingly hopeful film about the human capacity to grow and overcome.

Set in Harlem in 1987, it is the story of Claireece "Precious" Jones (Gabourey Sidibe), a sixteen-year-old African-American girl born into a life no one would want. She's pregnant for the second time by her absent father; at home, she must wait hand and foot on her mother (Mo'Nique), a poisonously angry woman who abuses her emotionally and physically. School is a place of chaos, and Precious has reached the ninth grade with good marks and an awful secret: she can neither read nor write.

Precious may sometimes be down, but she is never out. Beneath her impassive expression is a watchful, curious young woman with an inchoate but unshakeable sense that other possibilities exist for her. Threatened with expulsion, Precious is offered the chance to transfer to an alternative school, Each One/Teach One. Precious doesn't know the meaning of "alternative," but her instincts tell her this is the chance she has been waiting for. In the literacy workshop taught by the patient yet firm Ms. Rain (Paula Patton), Precious begins a journey that will lead her from darkness, pain and powerlessness to light, love and self-determination.

An Official Selection at the 2009 Cannes Film Festival - Un Certain Regard, and winner of three awards at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival including the Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award in the U.S. Dramatic Competition, *Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire* stars Mo'Nique, Paula Patton, Mariah Carey, Sherri Shepherd, Lenny Kravitz and introducing Gabourey Sidibe.

Lionsgate in association with Oprah Winfrey and Tyler Perry present A Lee Daniels Entertainment / Smokewood Entertainment Group Production of *Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire*, directed by Lee Daniels from a screenplay by Geoffrey Fletcher based on the novel *Push* by Sapphire.

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From the Book to the Screen

In 1996, *Push* by the poet Sapphire was published as a hardcover by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. This groundbreaking novel was welcomed to critical acclaim. It is renowned in literary circles for its in-depth look at a life not typically celebrated in literature or media and for the unique writing style that defines Precious' voice.

Sapphire based the character of Precious on an adult student she taught in Harlem in the 1980s. The story she spun for Precious is a combination of different people's life experiences.

Geoffrey Fletcher, screenwriter for *Precious: Based on the Novel Push by Sapphire*, took Sapphire's novel and made the leap to the screen. While the screenplay is true to Sapphire's novel, it also adds elements to bring the audience deeper into Precious' life.

Discussion Questions:

- Both the writing in the novel and the opening credits in the film are unique. How did the style in which these were written impact you?
- Does knowing that the story is based on the author Sapphire's experience teaching in Harlem and the students she met impact your appreciation of the story? How?
- What themes and issues do you believe Precious' story intends to shed light upon? Why?
- The male nurse character played by Lenny Kravitz in the film is something that was not in the book. What element do you believe this character adds to the movie?
- Though this story is set in Harlem in 1987, what about the film is true to today? What has changed?

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We Are All Precious

The movie *Precious: Based on the Novel Push by Sapphire* speaks to the fact that we are all precious. Whether it is one's ability to overcome something horrible or finding something powerful in oneself he or she didn't know existed or the realization that one's self worth is far greater than he or she ever knew, everyone is precious.

Discussion Questions:

On the character Precious, actress Gabby Sidibe says, "She's sweet, but at the same time she's learned to be defensive. When there's trouble coming, she's ready for it. She's a warrior, I think."
Excerpted from "Precious Production Notes"

- What type of person do you believe Precious is? Based on the circumstances in her life, what would you expect from Precious?
- What about Precious' character leads her to overcome her situation and not be complacent?
- Is Precious a movie about what we all can overcome or is it merely an examination one girl's life and circumstances? Why?
- Can you relate to Precious or her life? In what way?
- The book and movie are virtually free of men. What message does this send you about roles of men and women in Precious' life?
- What are the roles of men and women, fathers and mothers, sisters and brother, and friends in your life?
- What is the role you play in other's lives?

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Take Action

Precious: Based on the Novel Push by Sapphire is a film that sheds light on many issues, ranging from sexual abuse to the education system to HIV/AIDS, and everything in between. Without the help of some individuals who invested their time and care in Precious' well-being, Precious may not have found her way out of the cycle of abuse in which she was living.

Discussion Points

- Did Precious' story make you think about what your role is to those around you, no matter how well you know them? Do you feel a responsibility to assist others?
- Like the investment of time that BluRain makes in Precious, what investment have you made in someone's life? If you haven't made that investment, what is stopping you?
- Has someone made the investment in you? Who?

Get Involved

- Like BluRain was to Precious, how can you be a mentor in someone's life? Look at organizations in your community such as Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America or MENTOR.

Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America

www.bbbs.org

MENTOR

www.mentoring.org

- Precious' situation is one that makes people confront the realities of sexual abuse. How can you get involved to make sure that Precious' story is one that doesn't continue to happen to other children around the world?

Learn more about what you can do to help:

www.darkness2light.org

www.stopitnow.org

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Moving Moments

Precious: Based on the Novel Push by Sapphire has been honored as a Heartland Truly Moving Picture Award-winning film. This award was created to honor films released theatrically that align with Heartland’s mission to recognize and honor filmmakers whose work explores the human journey by artistically expressing hope and respect for the positive values of life.

These award-winning movies are made up of moving and inspiring moments — those moments that cause you to think, see something in your life differently, be inspired to do something. It’s what makes the movie and its message remain with you well after you’ve left the theater.

Think about *Precious: Based on the Novel Push by Sapphire*. What were the moments that stood out to you? How did they make you feel? How will they cause you to think about things differently in the future? Share those moving moments with others at TrulyMovingPictures.org. Simply login, or create an account if you don’t already have one, and search the movie list for *Precious: Based on the Novel Push by Sapphire*. You can leave your review or comments about this film under the “Review” section.



Gabourey Sidibe stars as 'Claireece "Precious" Jones' in *PRECIOUS: BASED ON THE NOVEL 'PUSH' BY SAPPHERE*.

Photo credit: Anne Marie Fox