

GOOP BOOK CLUB

A Reading Guide for *Carry* by Toni Jensen

Sure, you might get made fun of if you underline your books. But we like being able to look back at the passages, scenes, words, quotes, and turns in a story that affected us. And we like being able to talk about them with you. Let us know what you think in our book club Facebook group.

Here, we've picked some of the most poignant moments from *Carry*. What do they evoke in you?

1. Page 26: "When I show him day drinking, then, please note there are other day drinkers lined up beside him on their stools. Please note all of them are this thing America calls white. They are all striving to be better at whiteness, at prosperity. They are all failing."
2. Page 28: "It's okay, I've learned, to love the things that make you, even if they also are the things that unmake you."
3. Page 30: "I walk around each day, including this one, in my white-privilege raincoat. It doesn't matter much that the sleeves are too short, the shoulders tight; I know I'm wearing it."
4. Page 46: "My whole life this will be what I want from friendship, from love: movement in sync with language, language in sync with movement and laughter. My whole life I will want these pieces unified, together, a trinity most holy in its ordinary magic."
5. Page 52: "Of course, I knew she was Kiowa. Of course, I objected to the language, the 'part.' Which part? The back of the left knee? The curve of the right ankle? The crook of an elbow? How many ways do we carve ourselves up and portion out our parts, our bodies for other people's comfort?"
6. Page 57: "He was trying to tell me the student is difficult, is trouble, is to be avoided. But the phrase 'bag of snakes' and his casual delivery made me want to defend her. I thought, if this is how her faculty are, how brave she must be to have brought with her only one bag of snakes. I thought, She needs to go home on the weekend and collect the other three bags."
7. Page 61: "To study the tangled, contested history of this space considered campus is to enter into a deep conversation about why some spaces are considered hallowed when they are, in fact, stolen."

8. Pages 102–103: “In our country, the myth of individualism pushes us to ignore structures that create tensions and pressures in individuals, yes, but also in families, in communities. But that’s not how people are made, in isolation, with only some notion of character or goodness to form them.”
9. Page 111: “When we police a woman’s affect, when we privilege it or equate it with her actions, with what she actually does, we’re engaging in our most pervasive and yet our most quiet form of sexism, our most quiet form of everyday violence.”
10. Page 129: “This is in the early 2000s, and it amuses me, nearly twenty years later, when people write about the new gig economy, the new second job, the new hustle. There’s nothing new, of course, about any of it. What’s new is how members of the upper middle class now are part of this experience. Once it’s theirs, it’s a subject to be studied and written about endlessly. It’s a situation, an epidemic, an important cultural shift.”
11. Page 139: “But I’m suggesting once a woman’s labeled difficult, she’s put on a shelf, untouchable—and not in the Madonna/whore sort of way. Rather, she’s put up on a high shelf, rendered literally untouchable, as in—don’t touch, don’t speak to, don’t vote for—ignore, ignore, ignore at all costs.”
12. Page 147: “If you have a room full of women and a separate room full of men, all but one of the women not only will know what I mean by the phrase ‘arrange her face,’ but also, as the words are spoken, she will execute the maneuver.”
13. Page 232: “If more wealthy Americans own guns than do those living in poverty, why do we have such difficulty fitting this fact into our collective gun narrative?”
14. Page 233: “I’m proud of her and then sheepish about this pride. In other words, I don’t know what to feel or how to feel. I’m an American, perhaps, after all, complicit and conflicted and worried.”
15. Page 258: “It’s important for Americans to begin to see these men as our neighbors, our co-workers, our sons—because they are. Before they act, they are often considered the good guy with the gun. We do ourselves no favors by pretending otherwise.”
16. Page 263: “What’s right with people, though, of course, sits alongside what’s wrong. What’s right is found in the simple ways we work despite contagion toward connection.”