

Discussion Questions

1. Before reading this novel, what did you know about America's pre-war eugenics practices? After reading it, has your perception of our history changed?
2. How does the book portray the issues of immigration, fertility, and motherhood? Did it make you reconsider your views on these topics? How does this resonate with current events?
3. How does the author handle the theme of reproductive injustice? In what ways does this theme connect to the experiences of both Jessa and Carrie?
4. Jessa's story involves a fight against medical malpractice within a detention facility. How does this storyline make you reflect on the current state of healthcare and justice for immigrants?
5. Carrie's story is based on a real-life person and a landmark Supreme Court case. Does knowing this fact influence your perception of her character and her struggles?
6. How does the novel challenge societal expectations of women, particularly in relation to motherhood and career?
7. In what ways does the revelation about Jessa's family history impact your understanding of her character and her motivations?
8. How does the novel explore the concept of self-determination, especially in the context of the two women's stories?
9. The novel is described as a compelling exploration of empowerment. What are some ways the characters in the book embody this theme?
10. Does the author's use of dual timeline storytelling impact your understanding of the issues presented in the book? How does this connection affect your perception of their individual stories?
11. The book explores the theme of women charting their own paths professionally and personally. Discuss the importance of women helping women in the book. Can you provide specific examples of this theme in action?
12. How does the book challenge societal expectations of women, particularly in the context of motherhood and fertility?
13. Discuss the relevance of the Supreme Court Case allowing forced sterilization in 1927 to the events in the book. How does this historical event impact the present-day narrative?
14. How does the author explore the theme of self-discovery and change in the characters' lives? How do these transformations affect their decisions and actions?
15. How does the topic of reproductive injustice intersect with the issues of immigration and eugenics?

16. How does the author use the character of Jessa to explore the idea of family in different forms?
17. After finishing the book, what key themes, takeaways, or emotions stayed with you? Why?
18. How does the author use the cover design to elicit a sense of intrigue? Did this contribute to your reading experience?