

# Skokie Public Library's Book Discussion Guide

## **SISTER CARRIE**

**by Theodore Dreiser**

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- Why was this book so controversial?
- Is Carrie a typical heroine? When does she have the clearest understanding of herself? Is she capable of achieving happiness? Is she a gold-digger?
- Why is the book titled Sister Carrie rather than just Carrie?
- What does Drouet represent?
- Would you say that Hurtswood gains nobility as he goes downhill?
- What makes Ames attractive to Carrie? Does Carrie understand his assertion that there's more to life than money?
- Are there any moral characters in the book?
- Are there any characters who know how to love or be happy?
- Dreiser was known as a naturalist. How does this apply to the book?
- What are the major images Dreiser uses?
- How is the American dream portrayed? How are the characters harmed or corrupted by the fraudulent claims of the American dream?
- What is the significance of money and what it will buy? How do the author's and the characters' attitudes differ?
- How is American society at the turn of the century portrayed?
- What is the importance of environment?
- How does Dreiser use foreshadowing?
- Are the editorial intrusions relevant to the major themes? Are they distracting or do they enhance the novel?
- How do the titles of the chapters form a commentary on theme and action in the novel?



**Skokie Public Library**

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