



BAD INDIANS BOOK CLUB

Discussion Guide

INTRODUCTION – AANIIN

Patty Krawec was taught to introduce herself with her name, clan, community, and nation. Together these tell the story of her connection to the place where she lives. What is the story of your connection to this place? Introduce yourself with that story.

CHAPTER ONE – DAWISIJIGEM

on our willingness to clear mental space

“Curiosity encourages us to make room for new ideas to permeate into our thinking rather than to just let them float to the surface.” pg. 20

1. Get curious about your bookshelf. Are there any obvious gaps in your reading that you notice?

CHAPTER TWO – MASHIKIKI

on science and nature writing

“If medicine is strength from the land, what kind of medicine do we get from a starving relative?” pg. 36

2. What do you think our responsibility is as readers in a time of climate and ecological crisis? How has reading *Bad Indians Book Club* shifted your thinking on the climate crisis?
3. Is your community connected with the natural world? How? What are the barriers to connection? Does everyone have the same access to connect? What do you think your community needs to connect better with the natural world?

CHAPTER THREE – BISKAABIYAANG

on history

“History is the stories people tell about us, and it is worth considering the purpose and intentions of those who would invent us.” pg. 62

4. The victors don’t write history; they just decide whose story about the past gets official approval. As we watch history being rewritten again, how can reading history written by marginalized writers help us challenge this pattern? Have you ever challenged history in a classroom setting? Have you ever stayed silent? How did that feel?

5. Can you think of a piece of history or writing where marginalized peoples are pushed to the backdrop as “ghosts” as in the Martha Ballard tale?
6. How do you feel about the idea that there could not be a single correct story about history?

CHAPTER FOUR – NIINWI

on gender and refusing the patriarchy

“We aren’t going to fix a flawed system with more inclusion and more participation. We have to confront it.” pg. 98

7. Krawec describes the chapter title term as an “us but not you” that can be both destructive and constructive. What are some of the ways she points out that are destructive? Constructive?
8. Have you heard of the term “kyriarchy” before? How is it different than patriarchy? What does it encompass beyond patriarchy?

CHAPTER FIVE – N'DADIBAAJIM

on memoir

“There is nothing like reading memoirs about marginalized people to understand my own relationship to them a little better.” pg. 113

9. This chapter especially emphasizes memoir and storytelling. What are some of the stories passed down in your family? Do any of the stories contradict or enrich each other? How are these stories framed, captured, and then interpreted?
10. Krawec speaks about gaps in history, in storytelling, in our perspectives. Look for gaps in your own spaces, in your memories. Who might be missing? Why?
11. What are some of the risks in reading memoir as a way to understand marginalized people?

CHAPTER SIX – ANISHAA DIBAAJIMOWINAN

on novels

“These fictions tell the stories of how we measure the earth with our bodies, our feet, asking again and again if the gods of this place know us.” pg. 145

12. What are some books that you have returned to for comfort, for a sense of groundedness? Is there a sense of place in these books? If you are studying in a group setting, can you find any commonalities or differences about which works you return to based on your lived experiences?
13. How can we pause and think before rushing headlong into questions and discussions about work from an unfamiliar perspective?
14. Krawec wrote about needing to be reminded to read fiction. What can fiction written by marginalized writers teach us that nonfiction might not? How do they work together?

CHAPTER SEVEN – ZEGAAJIMOWINAN

on horror

“If horror is the exploration of things that frighten us, then the things that frighten those who have been violently pushed to the margins will be different from the things that frighten those who did the pushing.” pg. 161

15. Krawec explores how subaltern writers are turning horror tropes on their heads, such as Chicana writers reclaiming La Llorona or how Stephen Graham Jones subverts the final girl stereotype. Can you think of other tropes or stories that marginalized writers are turning on their heads?
16. Think about what happens to the monsters at the end of the horror stories you know and love. Are they destroyed or do they endure? What do we lose when they are destroyed? What can we gain when they remain?

CHAPTER EIGHT – DAZHINDAM ANG GE-IZHI-BIMAADIZIYANG

on speculative fiction

“Our job is to be ready for whatever world comes next and our new role within that world.” pg. 187

17. How can we “prepare the path” for future generations, as Krawec explores in chapter 8?
18. How do futures imagined by marginalized writers differ from mainstream writers, even if they include marginalized people in their vision of the future? What about books that explore alternate worlds or timelines?

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19. Think about the last book that you read. Does this story say anything different to you now in light of what has been discussed in *Bad Indians Book Club*? What could this story tell you about how we can imagine our future?
20. Poetry was threaded throughout the book. Which poems spoke most clearly to you or clarified the feelings that emerged from the various topics?
21. Who taught you to love reading?