

## SJSU Campus Reading Program *The John Carlos Story*

SJSU – Academic Year 2018-19

Here are some questions to about as you prepare for discussions about this book:

1. Whom does Carlos acknowledge in his dedication? Does this give you any sense of his values or what the book might include? How so?
2. Did you know who Cornel West was when you read the Foreword? If not, and if you haven't yet, do some quick research to find why he might be an important choice to write this section. What do you take away from West's comments?
3. In his Introduction, what point is John Carlos making about survivors? About still "feeling the fire"?
4. What experiences did John Carlos have growing up in Harlem that stick with you? What lessons did he learn from these experiences?
5. How did "you have forty-eight hours" become his slogan? Have you ever had any experience like this? Do you agree or disagree with what he takes away from this?
6. What was "the Bear"? What happened at the Penn Relays to open up new possibilities for Carlos?
7. Ideas about when to marry vary across cultures, social classes, and time periods. When did Carlos marry? If you are married, how old were you when you first married, and if you are single, do you want to marry, and if so, at what age do you think is best for you? Why?
8. Did you learn anything new about track and field from this book? What about the procedures of the Olympics? Any thoughts on society and sports then as opposed to now? What has changed? Has anything stayed the same? Can we learn anything from this?
9. Reflect on Carlos's relationship with Coach Brown at East Texas State. Any thoughts on how you might have handled that differently (as Carlos, or as Brown)? Why?
10. 1968 was a big year in the cultural history of the United States. How do Carlos's comments on that year connect to what, if anything, you think of when you think of that time period? Does the book help you understand it better in any ways? How?
11. What new information did you learn about the incident on the Olympic podium in October, 1968? What about incidents leading up to that climax, or the fallout that came subsequently?
12. What happened to John Carlos's life after the 1968 Olympics? Why did he call his closing chapters "The Unraveling," "Efforts at Resurrection," and "Save Your Redemption"?
13. How is San Jose State integrated into this book? Does it convey anything about our mission and values? How does this make you feel?
14. What is Carlos's parting message and mood at the original end of his section of the book?
15. How does the discussion by Dave Zirin in the Afterword help you contextualize John Carlos's personal experience and the larger function and place of sports in American politics, economics, and society? In the added Epilogue, Carlos brings his commentary up to date. What is his stance on the Occupy Movement? What might he say about Black Lives Matter or other more recent social justice struggles? How do his perceptions, beliefs, and practices compare with your own in this regard?
16. Does the Olympic Project for Human Rights make you think of any other organizations or movements currently active in the United States or around the world? What types of similarities or differences do you see among them?