

Book Club Discussion Guide



Firekeeper's Daughter by Angeline Boulley, Page 1 (May 2022)

Firekeeper's Daughter

By Angeline Boulley

About the authors:

There simply are too few stories told by and about Indigenous girls and women, especially from a contemporary viewpoint.

We exist and have dynamic experiences to share beyond history books or stories set long ago.

I have been shaped by a network of strong Anishinaabe Kwewag (Native American women), who may be called auntie, friend, cousin, or nokomis.

My father is a traditional firekeeper, who strikes ceremonial fires at spiritual activities in the tribal community and ensures protocols are followed, while providing cultural teachings through stories told around the fire. He is one of my greatest teachers.

I'm proud of my career in Indian education at the tribal, state, and national levels. Most recently, I was the Director for the Office of Indian Education (OIE) at the U.S. Department of Education. Previously, I was my tribe's Education Director/Assistant Executive Director and served on the Board of Regents at Bay Mills Community College.

I am beyond fortunate to be a full-time author now. Although I currently live in Southwest Michigan, my home will always be Bahweting (the place of the rapids) in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

Book Club Discussion Guide



Firekeeper's Daughter by Angeline Boulley, Page 2 (May 2022)

Source: Author's website: (<https://angelineboulley.com/>)

About this book:

As a biracial, unenrolled tribal member and the product of a scandal, Daunis Fontaine has never quite fit in—both in her hometown and on the nearby Ojibwe reservation. When her family is struck by tragedy, Daunis puts her dreams on hold to care for her fragile mother. The only bright spot is meeting Jamie, the charming new recruit on her brother's hockey team.

After Daunis witnesses a shocking murder that thrusts her into a criminal investigation, she agrees to go undercover. But the deceptions—and deaths—keep piling up and soon the threat strikes too close to home. How far will she go to protect her community if it means tearing apart the only world she's ever known?

Source: Author's website: (<https://angelineboulley.com/>)

Discussion Questions:

1. Daunis is someone who has a lot of traditions and rituals, both formal and informal. Discuss the significance of her various rituals, and how they inform her life and give structure to her day.
2. Daunis is grieving at the beginning of the book, both the loss of her uncle and her grandmother's illness. How does Daunis let her grief and her guilt guide her decisions? Do you think her decision to stay home and attend college locally is a wise one?

Book Club Discussion Guide



Firekeeper's Daughter by Angeline Boulley, Page 3 (May 2022)

3. Daunis exists in many different worlds, and must learn how to navigate them and their various demands on her. How does she balance it all? What does she learn in trying to keep boundaries between her worlds? How does she succeed, or not?
4. Discuss identity and how each of the characters view their identities. Daunis is very aware of being biracial and feeling caught between worlds, and she and her best friend Lily also live with the weight of being unenrolled members of their tribe. How does that affect how they're treated? Jamie also struggles to feel any connection to his heritage. Discuss the pitfalls and advantages of both being aware of your background, and also oblivious to your history.
5. Discuss the concepts of justice as portrayed in this book—how does Jamie view justice? How does Daunis? How do members of Daunis's family and tribe view justice, and how does that differ from more traditional ideas of law enforcement?
6. Some of the most powerful scenes in the book occur in moments of ceremony and ritual. Discuss the significance of this, and how the author uses these moments to create tension and resonance.
7. How does Daunis learn who to trust? Discuss how she navigates her worlds, and how her decisions impact the investigation. Do you think there are times where her trust is misplaced? Discuss her motivations.
8. There are many elders in Daunis's life who give her guidance and and share wisdom. Who was your favorite? If you could have a novel about any of the, which would you choose?
9. The end of the book finds Daunis in a different place, pursuing a different future than she first envisioned. Why do you think she decided to shift her focus? What do you think about her new path?

Source: Tailored Book Recommendations (<https://mytbr.co/>)