



Carrie Pilby

Caren Lissner

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SOON TO BE A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE! Don't miss the book that the *New York Times* calls "Hilarious," featuring a heroine that *Booklist* says is "utterly charming and unique." Teen Genius (and Hermit) Carrie Pilby's To-Do List: 1. List 10 things you love (and *do them!*) 2. Join a club (and *talk to people!*) 3. Go on a date (with someone you actually *like!*) 4. Tell someone you care (your therapist *doesn't count!*) 5. Celebrate New Year's (with *other people!*) Seriously? Carrie would rather stay in bed than deal with the immoral, sex-obsessed hypocrites who seem to overrun her hometown, New York City. She's sick of trying to be like everybody else. She isn't! But when her own therapist gives her a five-point plan to change her social-outcast status, Carrie takes a hard look at herself—and agrees to try. Suddenly the world doesn't seem *so* bad. But is prodigy Carrie willing to dumb things down just to fit in?

Carrie Pilby Details

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From Reader Review Carrie Pilby for online ebook

Holly says

Why I loved this book:

- Carrie is smart
- She's pretty much anti social
- She loves to read
- She looks everything up in the dictionary
- She cracks herself up
- She's not one of those annoying airhead girls
- NYC!!
- The cover is friggin' cute
- Her favorite thing to do is sleep

I love her because (aside from her being a genius) she's a lot like me.

Evelyn Romp says

ik zeg het niet vaak, maar het omslag van dit boek past echt totaal *niet* bij het verhaal.
het verhaal is filosofisch, en treurig. Carrie Pilby heeft echt totaal geen makkelijk leven. ik snap werkelijk
niet waarom Harper Collins "hilarisch" op het omslag heeft gezet, want er valt echt niks te lachen. ik wilde
Carrie het liefst als een verloren asielkatje adopteren en voor haar zorgen.
echt bizarre, hoe slecht gekozen dit omslag is. what a mindfck.
overigens vind ik het verhaal wel erg mooi. de schrijfster moet wel mega slim zijn om dit op papier te
kunnen zetten.

Nafiza says

I was expecting a fun, light, quirky read. The cover certainly leads you to believe so and I have a feeling that had I known that the book was way more serious than I was bargaining for, I would have been better prepared to read it. Because Carrie Pilby is most certainly not chick lit.

As the synopsis reveals, Carrie is a genius. A genius who has trouble fitting in, getting along; indeed she doesn't understand the need for her to do so.

Well okay, I'll just come right out and say it: I didn't like the book.

It doesn't mean that the book is horrible but it's just that I couldn't relate to the protagonist and for me, that is a total necessity. The writing itself is interesting. Lissner's observations on the world are spot on and her descriptions about being alone and not fitting in – not being able to fit in – ring poignantly true.

The story is not a story. Not in the traditional sense of the word. It is, as a fellow reviewer said, a “character study.” And I was not prepared to be barraged by the overwhelming details – it was actually exhausting. I understand the need for internal monologues, I do. A discourse on the world today and all the ten thousand things wrong with it. But there was seriously too much of it. Things done in moderation have a more piercing effect. In fact, my eyes sort of started glazing over.

And Carrie – the so called genius – well, she graduated from Havard at 18, so she is a genius – just annoyed me. Really, really annoyed me. She is an elitist who believe that the only people worth socializing with are those with an IQ as large as hers. The rest of the people are beneath her with their stupidity making them unable to maintain a conversation with her. She also thinks the rest of the world is immoral, has too much sex and again, beneath her because of their immorality. I understand that these thoughts might be her way to safeguard herself from rejection by people but frankly, it doesn’t endear her to me one bit.

She refuses to get a job (make use of all that genius) and lives on her father’s money to which she feels entitled because he tells her a Big Lie (which seriously does not even register on the lie-o-meter). She had an affair with her 40-plus English Professor when she was 16 (skeevy!) and then got dumped because she refused to say a certain word or phrase he wanted her to say while they were getting steamy under the sheets (again, skeevy).

The book contains a thwarted lesbian experience, other sexual experiences of some variety and perhaps a certain thawing in her opinion of the world.

I really wanted to like this book. But other than its misrepresentation as a Chick Lit (it reads nothing like the cover would have you believe), and the waspish voice of its protagonist, I didn’t come away with much. Sadly.

Jonathan Maas says

All right! First things first:

- Carrie Pilby is hilarious – I’m not talking beach read mild chortles here, I’m talking ‘Gilbert Gottfried roasting your best friend after you’ve had the optimal glasses of wine’ funny. It really makes you laugh, and has a P.G. Wodehouse level of consistency throughout. It reminds me also of Josh Wolf’s book *It Takes Balls: Dating Single Moms and Other Confessions from an Unprepared Single Dad* - much of its humor hits you when you least expect it, and that gives it a strange power.
- Carrie Pilby is insightful – I read this slower than I should because I didn’t want to miss any of Carrie’s trenchant insights. It reminds me of John Updike’s *Couples*: yes the character here is somewhat dysfunctional, but she sees through the cracks of existence, and lends her knowledge to us, the reader. Caren Lissner puts her insights in every paragraph, so like Updike, you have to slow down because you don’t want to miss anything.
- Carrie Pilby is a page turner – Though the subject matter is vastly different, it reminds me of Gillian Flynn’s three books – you can’t put it down. Considering that there is no underlying murder or twists waiting around every corner, props to Lissner for finding a way to bring the reader in without having to rely on heavy plot tropes.

So, I got into this book after seeing the trailer for the movie. I thought 'I want to see the movie. I identify with the character, even though I am not a prodigy myself. I identify so much I must read the book first and then see the movie.'

So I got the book from the library, and it's great. I needed a five star level book after reading the brutally effective *The North Water* and then the heartrending *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi.

Note – both those books are incredible. You should read them. My point is that *Carrie Pilby* is just as good, and just as insightful, but a lot lighter in tone.

I'm not a prodigy myself, but I've known a few in my day, and like *Carrie Pilby*, they're not without problems. *Carrie*'s problem is 'what happens when the tests run out?' Life stagnates a bit, and what's next for her? She's left in New York as a 19-year old adult with no friends, no ability to make friends, and - that's about it.

But she's likeable all right. Though she's not without flaws, she's supremely self-aware, and self-awareness is the shortcut to likeability. It's what separates flawed characters like Marc Maron (self-aware, self-effacing, likeability off the charts) and the Kardashians of the world (or at least the non-self-aware characters they are deliberately playing), and what separates some of the prodigies I've known (hard to like at times) and *Carrie Pilby* (likeable from page 1).

All right parenthetical run-on sentence over, and we can continue.

Great book, and I especially loved the scene where she is trying to make friends at the Harvard Club. We've all been there, socially-clueless prodigy or not.

Great book, and though it might appeal to YA audiences, it's more than that. If the movie is half as good (and judging from the trailer it will be) – it's sure to be 5 stars as well!

Hilarious, insightful, and a page-turner, Caren Lissner's *Carrie Pilby* is a winner!

Karissa says

When I read the synopsis of this book I had to have it. It's not the type of book I generally read, but it just sounded like something I would really like. I got an advanced reading copy through netgalley(dot)com to read. It was a great read, a fun read, and the kind of read that really makes you think about the way you interact with the people around you.

Carrie Pilby is a genius. She skipped three grades in elementary school and graduated from Harvard with a degree in philosophy at the age of 19. Although her mental development is outstanding, as with many super smart people, her social development is severely lacking. She is living in an apartment her dad pays for, with no job, she spends most of her time sleeping and reading with no real interaction with others. She is, as everyone in New York City is (according to her), seeing a therapist. Her therapist makes her write up a list of things she will do to be more socially active. This list has items on it like "join a group" and "go on a date". *Carrie*, who is not used to failing an assignment, sets out to fulfill this list and finds out a lot about the people around her and even more about herself.

This book is very funny and very heartfelt. Carrie is the type of person who has a direct line from her brain to her mouth and it makes for hilarious situations. She is a great character, someone you can really care about but she is also kind of a jerk sometimes and has her faults. Carrie has a serious chip on her shoulder about humanity; everyone is too dumb to be friends with, no one gets her, and there is no one out there that she should waste her precious intelligence getting to know. I think a lot of people will relate to Carrie, especially those that are a bit more introverted. I know I remember going through some of the things that Carrie goes through, for example walking into a room full of people and feeling completely alone or having a brain to mouth moment where everyone looks at you like "Oh My God, where did she come up with that."

Carrie also deals with a lot of moral issues. She is a late bloomer sexually and has never seen the appeal of the over-drinking, sex-obsessiveness, and drug use that (supposedly) comes with the college experience. It has always left her feeling a bit morally superior, yet left out. I also related to this, and I am sure other people will. I didn't drink in college and wasn't all that interested in boys in high school; there were just so many other interesting things to learn. Carrie captures the awkwardness of being this type of person yet trying to fit in with "normal" people in their 20's really well. She also has some interesting relationship baggage. She got involved in a relationship with one of her professors in college and questions the rightness of that. At one point she also gets involved with a guy who is seeing her even though he is engaged to someone else. This really makes her question the morality of humans in general and question what is actually right.

Carrie changes throughout the book; although she still has a lot of things to work on by the end of the book. I thought the overall message delivered was a good one and a valid one; people need to remember that no matter how different we all are most people have something good and interesting about themselves to share, you just need to give them a chance. The characterization in the book was excellent (very realistic people) and the plot well organized; making for a wonderful read that was hard to put down.

Overall I absolutely loved this book. I related to what Carrie went through as a character and enjoyed watching her make the journey to a better socialized nineteen year old. I loved the message that we, as humans, should be a bit more tolerant and accepting of each other. I really enjoyed Lissner's writing style; it was fun, witty, very readable, and engaging. I will be keeping an eye out for future books from her.

Romie says

I read this book because my favourite movie is based on it and, as planned, I like the movie more.

Now, this book was written in 2003 and the movie is from 2017, so of course there is a huge difference. I'm not saying the book is bad, obviously I still liked it a lot, but there were times Carrie said things that are just unacceptable.

I liked that Carrie talks about asexuality, wondering if she's asexual or not, I also liked that her friend Kara is bisexual, but then again, you can tell it was written at a time people didn't really care if they were being nice towards the lgbtqiap+ community. At the end of the story, you still don't know if she is asexual or not, and I guess it's not the point of the book, but still I would have love for this book to have a positive asexual rep.

But yes, still liked the book, although I think the last 1/3 was better than the first two. I liked how Carrie started to realise that just because people aren't exactly like her doesn't mean that they're not worthy of her time.

MyLan says

Not terrible, but kinda dumb.

Nina says

Carrie Pilby has become officially one of my favourite books of 2010. I adored the character and the story kept me hooked to the pages from beginning till the end.

Carrie is a 19 year old teenager who is very intelligent. She doesn't understand the world completely and in her eyes the world doesn't completely understand her. She lives in an apartment in New York City, and daddy is paying everything for her. She got no motivation whatsoever to find a job and one of her favourite things to do is sleep. Even with this description that sounds like she is a total brat, I loved this character. She's also very sarcastic, socially awkward, but just so cool.

Her therapist is another great character in this book. He felt like a honest man who wanted to help his friend daughter with her social skills. Even though she feels like she doesn't really need him, I felt that without him she would be a lost puppy. I mean to whom could she talk too and tell all her weird thoughts.

The next best thing was that the writing flows easily and that a lot, well almost everything is relatable to everyday life. The problems that Carrie has are problems that not only a teenager but also an adult could have. And with the humor and the natural flow it does not feel like a heavy read.

And talk about cover love! I love this cover, it's adorable and it truly stands out. I don't think the girl is really Carrie, because she would never wear such a cute girly dress. But that's not that important.

Carrie Pilby is a wonderful coming of age novel about a 19 year old girl who has to learn that being smart does not mean you immediately are on top of the world. Carrie Pilby has everything I look for, great characters, originality and a plot that keeps you turning pages.

Chrystral says

Carrie Pilby, a nineteen-year-old prodigy and Harvard graduate, is socially awkward and having a very hard time meeting people that she can befriend or even relate to on a basic level. She consistently looks down on others when they come across as hypocrites based on her moral code or unintelligent based on her search for 'fellow genius'.

At first I had a very hard time getting into the book, because I found Carrie to be annoying with her constant judgment of others. She has strict ideals of what people should be like and when someone fails to follow her 'holier-than-thou' code, she judges them instantly and puts them in the immoral/hypocrite pile never to be spoken to again.

After you reach the middle of the book, Carrie soars! The one thing that made me continue reading was the list that her psychiatrist, Dr. Petrov, makes for her to complete. I was intrigued by the list and wanted to see if she could overcome her outcast status and finally make some friends.

Following Carrie through the list is the fun part. She finally learns to just try things and that everything isn't truly black and white or good and bad, that there are things she can experience that don't completely break her code. I think the most interesting things to see her try are; joining a church because she feels she can expose them as a cult and she finally gets a temp job where she meets people that accept her for her intelligence and unorthodox behavior.

In the end, following Carrie through her self discovery is amusing and intriguing. She is witty, sarcastic and charming in her social awkwardness. I think in the end you will fall in love with her quirkiness – I know I did.

I think Carrie grew up too fast and was too serious about life at a young age, so she did not have the same youthful experiences that others her age have had. Once she finally works on this list, she truly sees what is it like to live. And well, her Dad was right, "You're cursed. Cursed with a mind. Use it. Don't fear it. But don't let all of your thinking destroy you."

Reviewed for Aurora Reviews (to be published shortly)

Jessica Dillema says

Als je dit boek ingaat met het idee dat het een luchting boek zal zijn, vol hilariteit, en een beetje chicklitachtig, dan zal dit boek je mogelijk tegenvallen. Ga je dit boek echter in omdat je houdt van filosoferen, dan verwacht ik dat je dit boek erg leuk zal vinden. Ik had echter voor mij – als niet-filosof – graag een bevredigender einde gezien. Het boek is wat betreft vraagstelling wel rond, maar ik had graag nog wat meer gezien van bepaalde personages en hoe bepaalde situaties zouden aflopen. Al met al vind ik het een slecht boek en is de schrijfstijl prettig leesbaar.

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Recensie volgt op www.reviewsandroses.nl

MTK says

Καλογραμμ?νο, αλλ? αποτυχημ?νη προσπ?θεια τελικ?. Το θεμα αταν γρ?φεις σε πρ?το πρ?σωπο ε?ναι ?τι ο ?ρωας πρ?πει να ε?ναι πειστικ?ς και να γ?νεται ?στω και λ?γο συμπαθ?ς, αλλι?ς δεν πετυχα?νει. Εν προκειμ?νω, η ηρω?δα υποτ?θεται ?τι ε?ναι μια ασυμβ?βαστη ιδιοφυ?α, ?μως οι συλλογιστικ?ς της θυμ?ζουν αν?ριμο δωδεκ?χρονο και οι υποτιθ?μενες αρχ?ς της λ?μπουν δια της απουσ?ας τους. Γενικ? δεν πε?θει ο?τε ως ιδια?τερα ?ξυπνο ατομο, ο?τε ως ?ριμη προσωπικ?τητα, ο?τε ως αδ?καστος κριτ?ς των π?ντων. Η ιστορ?α ε?ναι ενδιαφ?ρουσα, αλλ? με ?ναν τ?σο "λ?γο" πρωταγωνιστ? δεν μπορε? να λειτουργ?σει.

Terrie says

I'm perplexed why this was a Red Dress Ink imprint, because the only thing "chick lit" about it is the fact that the protagonist is a 19 yo female who lives in NYC. Really an excellent novel.

Jamie says

I feel like chick lit does have a chance to get a bad rap. I read this book years ago and it never really left my mind; I picked it up yesterday to reread it and I realized that Lissner wrote a strange little literary novel that just happened to come out in the height of the time when all books my women about young women had to have pink and turquoise slapped on the cover so it could be marketed as chick lit.

"Carrie Pilby" isn't really like that. It's about Carrie, a 19-year-old prodigy who has already graduated Harvard and now has to find her way through the world. She has a little romance by the end of the book, sure, but there's almost 300 pages before you get to it. Instead, Carrie is concerned with morality, with figuring out how she can be friends with someone if they aren't necessarily as smart as her (which no one could ever really be). She starts the book 19-going-on-45, but by the end she's just a frighteningly smart young woman. She's tried out religion, and she's questioned everything about that religion. She's tried out a typical New Year's Eve party. She spends the entire book pondering existential questions - funny questions, interesting ideas, things that make me feel like Caren Lissner is probably a very very smart lady herself.

I feel like I'm having to justify reading this, but oddly enough I think I appreciated it the second time around even better than the first, despite the fact that I haven't read chick lit in years.

Vivian says

Goed boek! Niet luchting en hilarisch zoals de flaptekst en titel (en cover) doen vermoeden, maar juist filosofisch en diepgaand, en ook nog eens herkenbaar voor iedereen die heel slim en/of sociaal onzeker is. Het is een boek waardoor je als lezer een beetje uitgedaagd wordt, en dat vind ik tof! Uitgebreide recensie: <http://thebookreview.nl/recensies/con...>

Donna says

DNF.

It sounds pretty quirky and fun but when I got into it, all I got was an irredeemable character that was too good for everyone else and really wasn't willing to change.

I wanted to like Carrie. I really did. But I hated being in her head. I just can't empathize with someone that's genius enough to give Stephen Hawking a run for his money but can't figure out how or why she needs to NOT be a douche to people. Maybe it's because I'm not smart enough to understand that kind of smart. Or maybe I refuse to believe that someone that smart is so lacking in common sense. I've heard the notion that people that smart are void of street smarts and common sense. Maybe I'd like to think a person's parents

would do a better job of raising their kid to not be such a prick despite their intelligence. I don't know.

Just her entire perspective on life, how she viewed other people, how she treated other people, how she felt it was her mission to right people and put them in their places, it really bothered me. I can guess that she sees the light at the end of the book but I couldn't stick around to find out. Maybe if the book were in third person it would be a little more tolerable but actually being in first, and being inside her head, I just couldn't get over how crappy of a person she was.

Of course there are multiple sides to a story and I liked the way this story was told; just not who it was about. If you can hang in there long enough you might just like it. You're going to have to put up with a pretty lame person, though. And it's not someone that's lovably lame. Carrie's just ick. I couldn't relate in the slightest. I couldn't see redemption for her and I couldn't hold out any longer.
