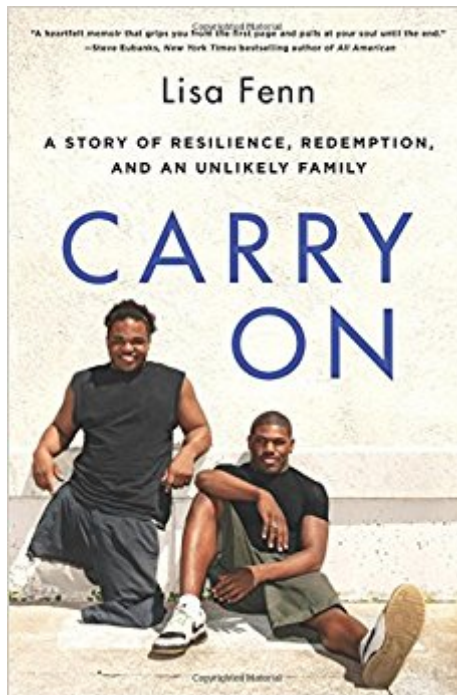




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Carry On: A Story Of Resilience, Redemption, And An Unlikely Family



Synopsis

NAACP Image Award Finalist, and Winner of the 2016 Friends of American Writers Literary Award and the Christopher Award—A deeply moving memoir about the unexpected bonds that would transform three lives. Lisa Fenn produced human-interest features for ESPN for over a decade, but one particular story came into her life and never left. After seeing a newspaper image of two young wrestlers from one of Cleveland's toughest public high schools, Lisa followed a hunch and flew back to her hometown to meet the boys that very day. What she found caused her spirit both to sink and to soar. Leroy Sutton, who lost his legs in a childhood train accident, could often be found riding on the back of Dartanyon Crockett, who was legally blind and had no permanent place to call home. Initially drawn together by their handicaps, the boys soon developed a brother-like bond. When one wrestled, the other sat on the edge of the mat, and their cheerful friendship was a source of inspiration throughout the halls of their high school. As Lisa filmed her feature about this remarkable friendship for ESPN, she grew to understand the suffering Leroy and Dartanyon had endured, and she fought for their trust and their confidence. The three formed a surprising and meaningful connection—and once the television story ended, Lisa realized she couldn't just walk away. Though Leroy's and Dartanyon's futures were limited by abject poverty, Lisa resolved to give them the chance she knew they deserved. She worked tirelessly to see them through school and athletic pursuits, broken hearts, phantom limbs, and the bewildering obstacles that, at every turn, tested their individual strengths even while strengthening the bonds between them. More than a story of two underdogs overcoming innumerable hardships, *Carry On* is a touching tale of an unlikely family forged through barriers of race, class, and disability. It is a powerful memoir about grit, love, hope, and faith—and the courage to carry on, even in the most extraordinary circumstances.

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Customer Reviews

“A poignant memoir by an ex-ESPN producer who befriended two disabled inner-city wrestlers as they struggled to rise.” (Sports Illustrated) “Carry On is an incredible life-affirming story that would not be believed if it weren’t true.” (Family Circle) “An engrossing tale that is equal parts despair, hope and triumph.” (Ohio Magazine) “Carry On is a surprising book, not only due to the tremendous hearts within these two young men, but because the failures and triumphs in their stories don’t align with typical narrative rhythms. They arise suddenly, jaggedly, too often shatteringly, as occurs in real life. And as in real life, the moments of understanding, of healing, of unbounded joy will astonish you with the scope of their power.” (Jeff Hobbs, author of the New York Times bestseller *The Short and Tragic Life of Robert Peace*) “A profoundly moving memoir about two boys who become men in the face of life’s toughest challenges: disability, poverty, and torn families. We see the many ways in which one person can carry another, and we are inspired to do the same.” (Tim Howard, author of the New York Times bestseller *The Keeper*) “If you want something you never had, you must be willing to do something you’ve never done.” This is the philosophy of *Carry On*, an astonishingly beautiful tale about the love we never knew we could experience. And like *The Blind Side* or *Same Kind of Different As Me*, Lisa Fenn’s work forces us to reframe our definition of family. By the end, Leroy, Dartanyon, and Lisa had me asking the question that prods us to be better humans: What would you do for a friend? (Kevin Salwen, author of *The Power of Half*) “Great sports stories are never about sports. They are always about the trials and triumphs of the human spirit, regardless of the numbers on a scoreboard. No one knows that better than Lisa Fenn, whose heartfelt memoir of faith and the creation of an unlikely family grips you from the first page and pulls at your soul until the end. You need never have watched a second of wrestling, or any sport for that matter, to love this story, and to admire the woman who wrote it.” (Steve Eubanks, New York Times bestselling author of *All American*)

Christopher Award Winner Friends of American Writers Award Winner Nautilus

Award Winner NAACP Image Award Finalist After seeing a newspaper photo of two wrestlers from one of Cleveland's toughest public high schools, ESPN producer Lisa Fenn followed a hunch and flew back to her hometown to meet the boys. Leroy Sutton, who lost his legs in a childhood train accident, could often be found riding on the back of Dartanyon Crockett, who was legally blind and had no permanent home. Initially drawn together by their handicaps, the boys had developed a brother-like bond and cheerful friendship, even in the face of innumerable hardships and poverty. As Lisa filmed an ESPN feature on Leroy and Dartanyon's extraordinary friendship, she grew to understand the suffering they had endured, and she fought for their trust. The three formed a surprising and profound connection and once the taping stopped, Lisa knew she couldn't just walk away. She resolved to give Leroy and Dartanyon the chance they deserved, and embarked on a journey that tested their individual resolve while strengthening the bonds between them. *Carry On* is a powerful memoir about an unlikely family forged through barriers of race, class, and disability. It is a story of grit, love, hope, and faith and the courage to persevere, even in the most extraordinary circumstances.

I have to admit up front that I'm in the tank for Lisa and Dartanyon, but a lot of that is because the reason our paths even crossed thanks to their compelling story. As a journalist, Lisa is a total pro, and brings together this unbelievable story of friendship, love, teamwork and overcoming indescribable odds. As the Olympics wind down and we head towards the Paralympic Games, this is the perfect book to get you psyched for the next set of world-class sporting events set for Rio in a few weeks.

Carry On is a fascinating look at the strength, abilities, determination, and hardships of two disabled young men. The author, who met Dartanyon and Leroy while interviewing them for ESPN, soon befriended them and then grew to love them. Lisa's story of the young men's rocky journey from often hopeless childhoods to hopeful adulthoods is inspiring, intriguing, and eye-opening. Her willingness to help and her dogged determination are admirable and her insight about being born into privilege versus being born into poverty is captivating.

It's true; sports stories are never about just the sports. What elevates this book above the standard sports story is that Ms. Fenn respects Dartanyon Crockett and Leroy Sutton as complex, flawed human beings, not just characters in a morality tale. It's this exquisite understanding that probably drove her to get involved in the first place and set in motion the hugely improbable events in this

book. I'm inspired by this story to contribute to the trust, buy the book, and cheer for both young men as they maneuver through their extraordinary lives. Their story is astonishing, and Ms. Fenn brings it to life brilliantly.

An intimate revelation of incredible determination to succeed, when the odds are overwhelming to fail. Lisa Fenn told us about Dartanyon and Leroy's journey to the Olympics, intertwined with her own, so provocatively, that we become totally immersed in their lives! There are times when I was "telling Leroy not to do that" [...aloud] or cheering them on. Over and over you remind yourself: 'This the true story of their lives'! It's so hard to take in all the obstacles they live with. Well Done!

I couldn't put this beautifully written memoir down until I had finished it. This is a story of friendship between two handicapped young men living in poverty whose lives were changed by a tenacious, caring woman. Lisa Fenn writes the story in such a way that you feel that you are right there with her, knowing her inner most thoughts. As the reader she transports you into experiencing the same frustrations, struggles, heartbreaks and triumphs that she, Leroy and Dartanyon experienced. This book is a must read for parents, coaches, teachers or anyone who has ever wondered, I am making a difference in the life of others.

Although I am an avid reader, I've never been moved to review a book until I finished "Carry On" by Lisa Fenn. For me, memorable books must have: good writing - challenging but still accessible; character development that allows me to be emotionally invested in the characters; and finally, it must challenge, influence or change my perceptions or preconceived notions. "Carry On" is one of those books. This is a beautifully written memoir where the author focuses on the two young men that eventually become part of her family. What stands out are the bonds and relationships formed by Lisa, Leroy, Dartanyon, and how these bonds of love are a critical and necessary part of what is needed to try to overcome the many challenges faced by Leroy and Dartanyon (poverty and disability and everything that goes along with that). "Carry On" opened my eyes to the realities of poverty in America, and really challenged my (mis)perceptions. I found this to be an honest and unflinching look at what it really takes to overcome poverty in black America. Spoiler alert: it takes more than money. Besides that, it's a really great story about three incredible people who become a family, with a healthy dose of sporting competitions, failures and triumphs! I know that it will stay with me for a long time, and has already inspired me to seek opportunities to contribute in my own community. I

recommend "Carry On" to everyone!

This is a book that succeeds on a number of levels! First it is an inspirational tale of two amazing young men who overcome overwhelming odds to achieve incredible goals. In addition, Ms. Fenn very clearly demonstrates the power of connections and how it can make all the difference in the world. Not only are the two main protagonists of this amazing story inspiring so is the author for having the desire to reach out and make a difference. It was not an easy climb for any of them but their persistence will resonate with the reader long after they are done with the story. The point of the book is we all can make a difference and Ms. Fenn needs to be commended for doing just that as shown in this incredibly absorbing read!!

Carry on is an extremely inspiring book written by Lisa Fenn. I couldn't put the book down, and finished it in one day. I distinctly remember seeing this story on an ESPN short about Leroy and Dartanyon when it first aired in 2009; so I was ecstatic to see the story come out more detailed in print. This book dives even further into the story about the unlikely bond that was formed with three inspiring individuals. The book encapsulates the magnificent power of friendship and sport. This book is highly recommended to all people, especially to athletes.

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