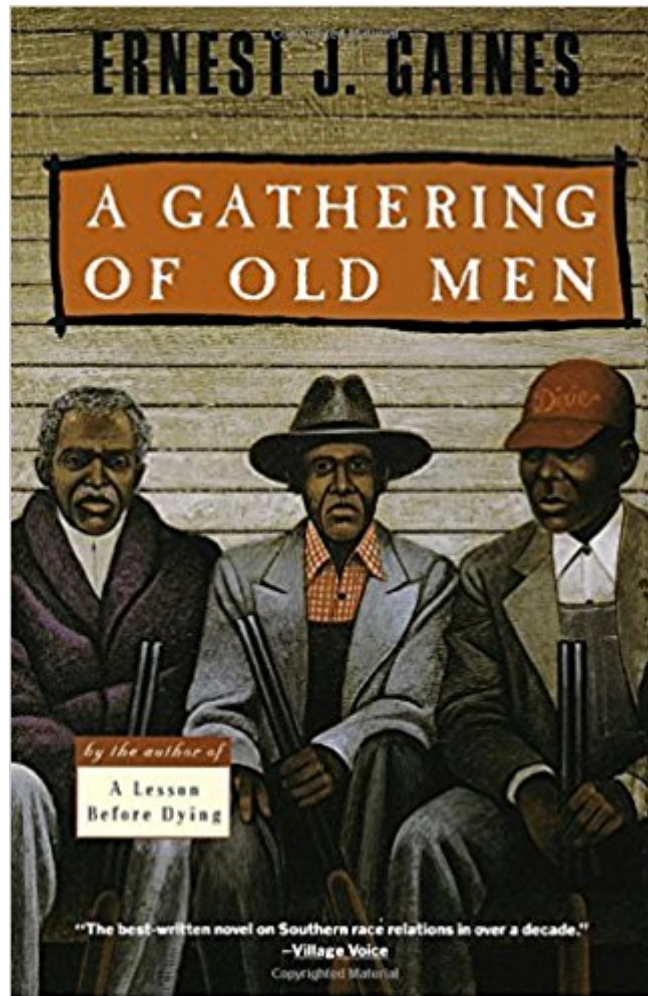




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A Gathering Of Old Men



Synopsis

Set on a Louisiana sugarcane plantation in the 1970s, *A Gathering of Old Men* is a powerful depiction of racial tensions arising over the death of a Cajun farmer at the hands of a black man.

Book Information

Paperback: 213 pages

Publisher: Vintage; Reissue edition (June 30, 1992)

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Customer Reviews

“Gaines knows how to tell a story. . . . [He writes] with humor, a strong sense of drama and a compassionate understanding of people who find themselves in opposing positions.” —Jonathan Yardley, *Washington Post* “Poignant, powerful, earthy . . . a novel of Southern racial confrontation in which a group of elderly black men band together against whites who seek vengeance for the murder of one of their own.” —Booklist “Early in this eloquent novel . . . a sheriff is summoned to a sugarcane plantation, where he finds one young white woman, about eighteen old black men, and one dead Cajun farmer. The sheriff is sure he knows who killed the Cajun — although each of the men is toting a shotgun only one of them could hit a barn door — but threats and slaps fail to change their stories. Each one claims guilt, and all but one promise to provoke a riot at the courthouse if the sheriff tries to make an arrest. In the meantime, they wait for a lynch mob that the dead man’s father — like the son, a notorious brute — is sure to launch. . . . Before it is over, everyone involved has been surprised by something; the old black men not least of all, by their first taste of power and pride.” —*The New Yorker* “A fine novel . . . there is a denouement that will shock and move readers as much as it does the characters, and a multiplicity of themes that raises

a simple tale to grand significance. —David Bradley, Philadelphia Inquirer

7 1-hour cassettes --This text refers to the Audio Cassette edition.

I read this years ago when I was a librarian living in Texas and it was newly published. I reread it living in California for book club. It was marvelous the first time and marvelous the second time. People behaving as people, doing what they've learned and continuing to do so until a killing of a white man by a black man calls people to act and not react. Old men can learn new tricks, new ways of behaving and thinking, drawing closer to one another while appreciating those who have looked out for them in the past. Their learning and developing enabled others to grow also. A book to read and enjoy and learn from so that the reader perhaps can apply and learn new tricks.

In another amazing novel by Ernest Gaines, we witness and fall in love with the characters who come from the pages and wrap you up in their stories and in their strong arms. A GATHERING OF OLD MEN is a hilariously dramatic story of old men who share love, pride, anger and history. When Beau Boutan, a Cajun man, is found 'laying on his back in Mathu's yard', the old men gather... on both sides of the St. Charles River. Strong black men unite and share their stories. In Cajun country, William Fix Boutan and his old friends gather to mourn and make a decision. The tales are interestingly funny yet create provocative thought... not anger. "But they comes a day..." I highly recommend this novel and other novels by Ernest Gaines. Read and enjoy A GATHERING OF OLD MEN; experience the rich storytelling of the old men of the quarters as penned by a wonderful novelist.

Loved this book!

Compelling read. The characters are well crafted. The multiple narratives weave the past and present together in a way that gives rich insight into the history and racial issues of the town while keeping the reader in full suspense.

Very well written and captivating. It is one for readers now more than ever.

Summer reading list at our high school. My daughter wasn't very excited she has to read it but I am always happy to find these books at great deals at

This is a beautifully written story that addresses race issues and the family dynamic in an era when many attempted to cling to the old ways. Told from the perspective of many characters, the reader will feel like a fly on the wall. I look forward to reading more of the author's books.

My youngest daughter - in college - seems very well pleased with this selection... like the professor gave her a choice, right?

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