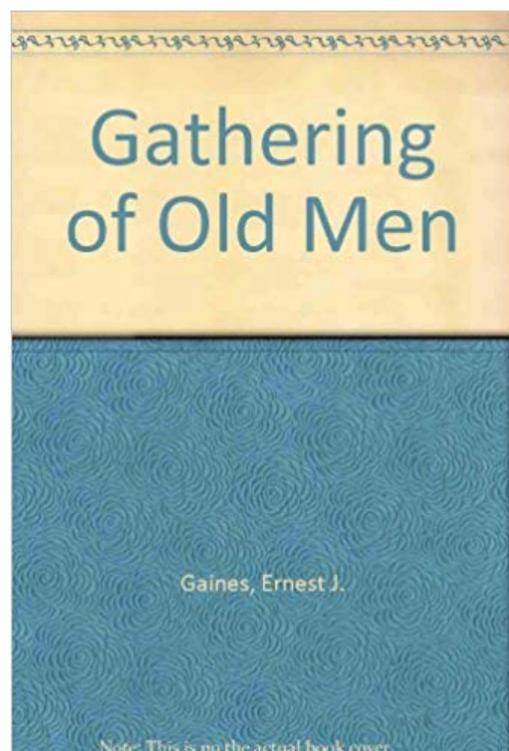


Gathering Of Old Men *by* ERNEST J. GAINES



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Reviews of the *Gathering Of Old Men* *by* ERNEST J. GAINES

Envias

'But I would like people to know that we aren't who they think we are. They all expect us to ride tonight. They're all waiting for that. I say let them wait. Let them wait and wait and wait.'

Set in Louisiana in the 1970s, *A Gathering of Old Men* opens with one member of the community, Beau Boutan, having been shot and killed. There is an investigation into the how and whys of this murder that is revealed through various character perspectives, and, along with these perspectives we get a deeper sense of racial tensions that have consumed much of this community.

I was really lukewarm about Gaines' *A Lesson Before Dying*, but really enjoyed *A Gathering of Old*

Men. I thought it was a powerful book with a powerful message about racial conflict/injustice and Gaines writes in a very symbolic, poetic way. I really thought the varying character perspectives really enhanced the viewpoints. I also thought the characters were complex and very realistically developed given the circumstances of the plot.

One of the key themes that drives the novel is the idea of change, or moving forward. Change can come in various forms. There are points where several of the characters focus on the idea that we need to move on from old ideas. We need change; we cannot simply follow blindly ideas of the past that out of accord with racial harmony. There is a disconnect in racial harmony; and, therefore many character take a stand, both literally and symbolically, against this disconnect, this disharmony.

A powerful book with an important message about racism in the deep South.

Swift Summer

This is a classic that I had never read. The novel is set in Louisiana in the 1970's, and it involves a white man being shot. A group of "old men" all claim they shot the white man so that no one man can be proven guilty. The incident is an opportunity for the old men to finally stand up against the white establishment that has oppressed them for their entire lives. A unique aspect of this book is that each chapter is narrated by a different character so the reader gains many perspectives as the plot develops.

The book was required reading for my high schooler, which is what lead me to read this book. It is an excellent book, and I highly recommend it. The book leads to some excellent discussions on race relations, changes with new generations, and doing what is right regardless of the personal cost. My son had to write a paper comparing one of the minor characters, Russell, to Oskar Schindler.

If you enjoyed To Kill a Mockingbird, you are likely to enjoy this book as well.

Shalazel

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.

Shakagul

Everything arrived on time and as advertised.

Lbe

All Sheriff Mapes wanted to do on a fine October day was get in a little fishing. A call brings him to Marshall Quarters where he finds the dead body of a white farmer and a gathering of old black men with identical shotguns. All the men confess to the murder, each presenting a deeply personal motive based upon decades of inhumane treatment. Sheriff Mapes is but one of a score of memorable characters in *A Gathering of Old Men* by Ernest J. Gaines, a retired Writer-in-Residence at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Published in 1983, *A Gathering of Old Men* is a classic work of southern U.S. fiction where the 1920's and the 1970's collide.

Another gathering of men ten miles away in Bayou Michel, a place where feelings about clan and tribe run deep, the family and friends of the murdered Beau Boutan, seek retribution. Luke Will and his posse may not be classic white trash but they're not sipping mint juleps at Churchill Downs on Derby Day either. Leaving Bayou Michel, they will gather at Jacques Thibeaux' combination grocery/liquor store to imbibe a little liquid courage before the denouement.

Gaines inserts several tried and true southern archetypes into the narrative: Griffin, the obsequious deputy sheriff, Candy Marshall, an annoying white do-gooder, an ineffectual man of the cloth, Reverend Jameson and Gilbert "Salt" Boutan, the white star of a recently integrated LSU football team and the younger brother of the slain man.

To read *A Gathering of Old Men* so soon after the 2016 election is a sobering reminder that old attitudes and old hurts linger and there is no shortage of deplorable white men eager to hunker down in Mrs. Clinton's basket.

Rocky Basilisk

Ernest Gaines is the best southern writer! Gifted, real, true to his roots and sense of place. This story grabs your heart and you never forget the beautiful characters it brings to life.

Wild Python

The book *A Gathering of Old Men* is a very entertaining book, Gaines is a good author. This book is about a murder case. The sheriff is trying to decide who shot the man, everyone there which is a large group of men with guns claim each one shot the man. This is a very good book.

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 Amazon

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