

White People by Allan Gurganus

Mission: The school community will unite in an educational project expanding the walls of the school to include parents, feeder schools and businesses. This book project will facilitate the community's view of literature as an important part of our culture and a catalyst for social exchange.

Goals:

The students, staff and community will

- A. Share a common experience.
- B. Encourage interdisciplinary connections and curriculum sharing.
- C. Experience meaningful learning through a true to life lesson.
- D. Open a dialog among members of the school community.
- E. Design activities to support the SOL and the SIP.
- F. Understand that a work of fiction can be a parable and an opportunity for people to read and discuss deep issues.

Why this book?

This book because of the:

- A. Values it espouses - core values of respect, responsibility, honesty and accountability
- B. Cross-curricular connections
- C. Life-long learning theme
- D. Relationship issues
- E. SOL connections

Timeline:

June 2004	Acquire books for staff
June 2004	Preliminary information to parents/ongoing
Summer 2004	Staff reads book
August 2004	Workweek – brainstorm curriculum/enrichment connections
September 13th	Compile list and suggested dates for activities
September 27 th	Begin distributing books
Sept. 27 th to Oct. 31st	Read books – readings to correlate to curriculum
November 1st – 12th	Focus weeks for activities
November 19 th	Evaluation and wrap-up

Editorial Reviews of White People by Allan Gurganus

Book Description

In these eleven stories, Allan Gurganus – author of the highly acclaimed Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All – gives heartbreaking and hilarious voice to the fears, desires and triumphs of a grand cast of Americans.

Here are war heroes bewildered by the complex negotiations of family life, former debutantes called upon to muster resources they never knew they had, vacationing senior citizens confronted by their own bravery, and married men brought up short by the marvelous possibilities of entirely different lives. Written with flair, wit, and deep humanity, this award-winning volume confirms Allan Gurganus as one of the finest writers of our time.

From Library Journal

Gurganus's colorful collection of stories and novellas, written from the mid-Seventies to the late Eighties, is a fine follow-up to last year's best-selling novel Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All (LJ 5/1/89). Many of the stories are personal, even dedicated to family members, and they have decidedly autobiographical overtones. "Minor Heroism" tells of a war-hero father's awkward relationship to his creative, sensitive son. In "Breathing Room," the older son watches as his once pale, asthmatic little brother eclipses him in size and strength. In "A Hog Loves Its Life," Grandfather tried to pass on some country wisdom to his bookish grandson. Gurganus has a fluid, humorous style that gently pokes fun at and yet honors his Southern roots. This is a poignant, entertaining collection. Recommended. Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 9/1/90.

Ann H. Fisher, Radford P.L., Virginia

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From Publishers Weekly

With the publication of this virtuoso collection, Gurganus (Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All) has again produced a book of literary merit that deserves wide readership. In 10 stories and two novellas written over the last two decades, we meet a delightful array of characters who share the common denominator of white skin, if little else. Narrated almost entirely in an astonishing range of first-person voices, this fiction displays the depth and breadth of Gurganus's skill as a gifted raconteur. In "Condolences to Every One of Us" a woman describes a disastrous African package tour that leads to the death of two tourists. "Breathing Room" is the story of a man who is overtaken by a once sickly younger brother. At age six, he "ached to simply arch right over him, to settle like a jar with air holes and enough floor space so he'd not be bored." But the story ends in a melancholy tone: "Bradley's thirty-four, and thriving; that makes me thirty-six." "America Competes" is a hilarious send-up of arts competitions. "Reassurance" is a delicate letter from the grave of a Civil War casualty that takes up at the final line of Walt Whitman's letter "Death of a Pennsylvania Soldier." The final piece, "Blessed Assurance," is a funny, sad, confessional tale told by a man reflecting on his traumatic youth, when he collected funeral insurance premiums from poor blacks. Gurganus is a champion storyteller with particularly American roots, in the tradition of Mark Twain. This is a collection to be savored and reread while we wait for more. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. – *This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.*