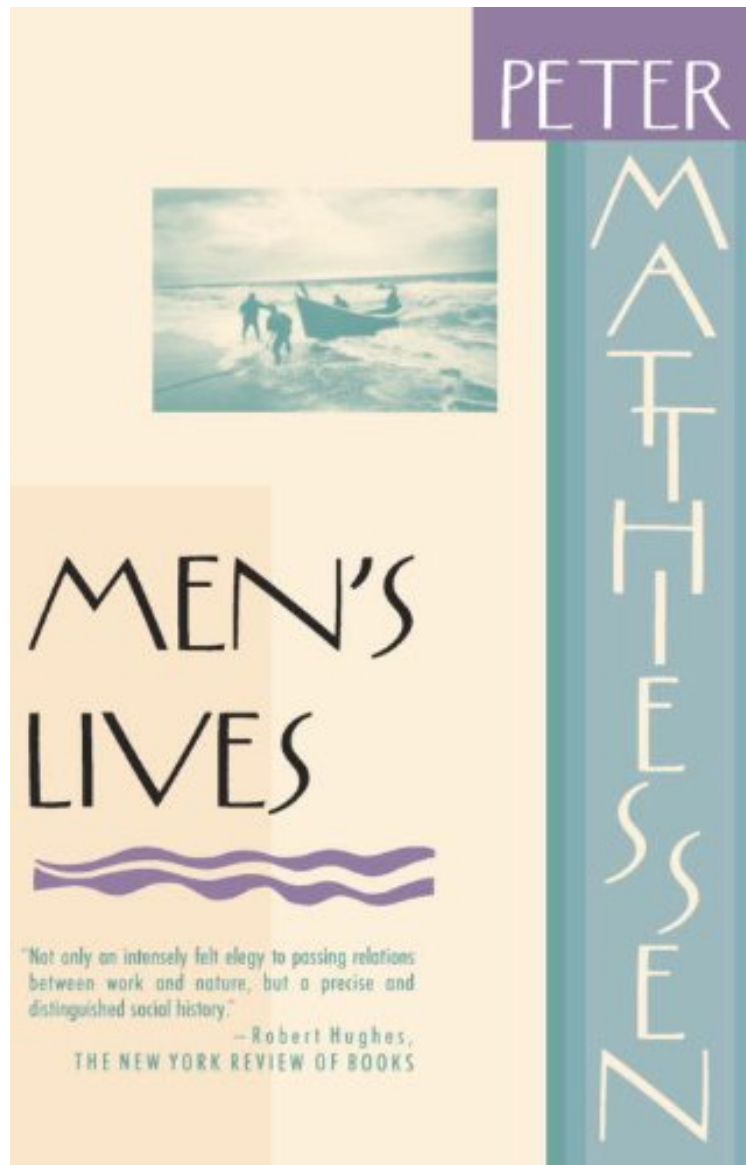


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Men's Lives

Peter Matthiessen

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Peter Matthiessen : Men's Lives before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Men's Lives:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. goodBy Brian Kennedy This mid-era Matthiessen book is amazing It feels personal for Matthiessen (and me I guess), a city kid, who worked seasonally among the Springs fishing community from 1953-1956, and earned, at least from his perspective, a right to tell their story. Matthiessen charmingly avoids structures and stock phrases traditionally used to describe fishing communities, ecosystems, and economic conflict. He uses the baymen's words to describe fish and flora, weather, and place; He pieces together

strands of interviews that grow in coherence as the book progresses and invokes a Melville-ian entomological tendency towards the thorough, describing the origins of the word 'bub' over the course of a chapter and delineating the legislative history of New York's striped bass resource. The book is also a triumph of casual environmental monitoring, his interviews and memories of old timers document fish abundance and distribution that seems impossible now--long lining for cod, gillnetting for sturgeon--at his best Matthiessen poses as an unsuspecting and literary, Long Island Ames. Ultimately, his accumulated mass of story and natural history is political. The fisherman are here and have been. That suffices--no cultural value needs to be assigned, no historic use right, no stakeholder whatever. I loved this book, for its value as a natural and cultural history and for its brave and rigorous defense of a utilitarian attitude toward the sea. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Very GoodBy Dennis UnitesThis is very good Matthiessen but not the best. He does a great job of relaying the history of the South Fork, which has become the bastion of the one percent, back to the time when it was populated by hard scrabble fishermen. The first time I read Men's Lives I had no connection to the area except an interest in bass fishing. Now the places have more meaning. I have enthusiastically recommended the book to friends that have ties to the area to give them a better sense of place. 10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Get the right versionBy Paul E GrafThere are two versions of Mens Lives. You want the one with the pictures, printed by Random House. Beware of getting the one published in the UK which looks like a kindle version without the marvelous pictures.

An eloquent portrayal of a disappearing way of life of the Long Island fishermen whose voices--humorous, bitter and bewildered--are as clear as the threatened beauty of their once quiet shore.