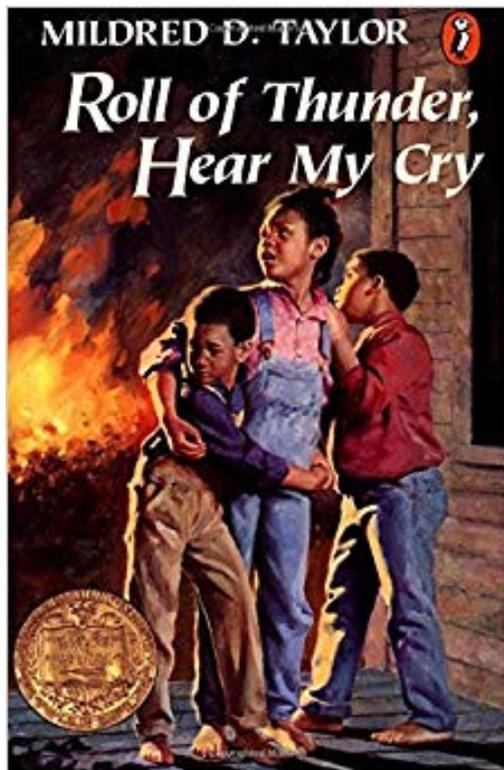


Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor



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Winner of the Newbery Medal A New York Times Book Review Best of Children's Books A National Book Award Nominee

Why is the land so important to Cassie's family? It takes the events of one turbulent year—the year of the night riders and the burnings, the year a white girl humiliates Cassie in public simply because she's black—to show Cassie that having a place of their own is the Logan family's lifeblood. It is the land that gives the Logans their courage and pride—no matter how others may degrade them, the Logans possess something no one can take away."Taylor . . . writes not with rancor or bitterness of indignities, but with pride, strength, and respect for humanity."—*The New York Times Book Review*



Reviews of the [Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry](#) by Mildred D. Taylor

Twentyfirstfinger

Great book depicting the life of a Southern black family struggling to keep their land, their dignity and their lives in the middle of the Great Depression. This is the first Logans novel, but I picked it after I'd read *The Land*, the latest entry in the series. Fortunately for me, *The Land* is also the prequel to the whole series, so there is nice continuity between two books.

Roll of Thunder is a children's book and the narrator, Cassie Logan, is a smart, bold and resourceful 9-year-old girl. Cassie is aware of racism to some extent (she and her brothers go to a blacks-only school, after all), but her parents try their best to shield their children from it. As the plot unfolds, however, Cassie is faced with scorn, intimidation and bullying from white people; she also learns from adults about much scarier stuff like beatings and night riders. Both Cassie and the gentle reader are spared the most horrific details, but if you know a bit about this period of US history, you can easily fill the missing blanks.

Despite its bleak subject and target audience, the book never indulges in black-and-white (ahem) morality, and its portrayal of characters is far from simplistic. Even the most vile racists in the book are portrayed realistically, with plenty of attention to detail; you can tell they were not born monsters, but became monsters of their own free will. Even the ending is ambiguous, a hard-won victory that feels more like a minor respite and may yet prove futile in the long battle for equality. For a children's book, this is a surprisingly grown-up outlook. I like it and if I ever have kids I'm looking forward to reading this book with them.

Wymefw

I listened to this book as an audiobook in middle school for part of my history curriculum. That was more than ten years ago, and several sections of the story just stayed with me this long. A month ago I had a bad day, saw this book for less than a dollar on kindle, and decided some literary therapy was in order. IT was as good as I remember it being. RELatable, real, passionate, clear and honest as a child trying to understand the world. It's a story that stayed with me for more than ten years, I suspect it will stay with me a lot longer than that. And I just learned there are more books in the series!

Hi_Jacker

Growing up can be hard, with almost impossible lessons to learn. Children growing up in the South needed to learn some survival lessons, such as when to speak up, and when to remain silent. The prejudice was so real it could become deadly quickly.

Mildred Taylor takes us through a culture of violence and prejudice, and some tools in how to survive these atrocities in strength and grace. The night riders were real. But there were also others who refused to take part in such activities. Tawdry drinking establishments were just as real, but there were some who learned to avoid those traps. There were traps of vengeance, of easy money, of false friendships.

The children in this family also learned to stand for what was right, even when it cost them dearly. We could all learn these lessons, no matter the color of our skin. These are transferrable values, how to stand for righteousness and justice, what makes up a true friendship, even how to make honorable living work when everything seems to lean the other way.

I would recommend this book, not only for this historical value in the black-vs-white issues that still plague our nation, but in how to be honorable when all those about you seem dead set against you. I have heard that one elementary school has chosen to remove this award-winning book from its library. That is a shameful decision.

As a result of that decision, I chose to buy the book and review it. It is a book well worth reading, one that still speaks to our time.

Gogal

This is one of the first novels I've ever read that was about Black people in America, and NOT about slavery. Mildred Taylor delivered a classic with this one, and I credit her with being one of the people who inspired me to write.

Keath

My daughter read this in sixth grade and I read along with her. Beautifully written in a way that captures the era and cultural mindset of the time. We had great dialogue.

Kekinos

This was an ok book. The story was pretty boring at the beginning but started to clear up a bit towards the end. When I read it some of the chapters were confusing. What made it more confusing was that it kept on talking about land and money witch kind of gave me a headache. All in all I do not recommend this book for future 6th graders.

Quendant

One of my all time favorite books detailing a African American families struggles during segregation and racism. Love this series. It makes you angry and frustrated and it also opens your eyes to the struggles during those times. It can even make you cry. I got this for my son to read since he is older. Definitely recommends.

This perennial young adult favorite tells the story of the Logans, a black family living in rural Mississippi in 1933. Cassie, the lone daughter in the Logan clan, narrates her family's tale of privation and discrimination through her 9 year-old eyes. The episodic narrative captures the clear injustice of racially segregated schools and post-WWI economic inequality among Southern black sharecroppers.

Although the tropes that Taylor uses are by now familiar to many readers—the strong matriarch, the family's profound connection to the land, the irredeemably racist white folks (as well as the supportive and empathetic white folks)—her depiction of them through Cassie's young but sensitive perspective lends them an authenticity and an impact that's difficult to deny.

The plot might also be rather predictable, but the novel itself succeeds as an accessible way for young readers to understand the social injustices of early twentieth century life for southern blacks.

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