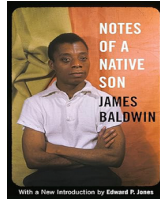


SENIOR BOX OFFICE Book Club

Wednesday, May 14, 2025 10:30 AM in 1801 Glen Keith Blvd, Room 107

Notes of A Native Son by James Baldwin



In an age of Black Lives Matter, James Baldwin's essays on life in Harlem, the protest novel, movies, and African Americans abroad are as powerful today as when they were first written. With films like *I Am Not Your Negro* and the forthcoming *If Beale Street Could Talk* bringing renewed interest to Baldwin's life and work, *Notes of a Native Son* serves as a valuable introduction.

Written during the 1940s and early 1950s, when Baldwin was only in his twenties, the essays collected in *Notes of a Native Son* capture a view of black life and black thought at the dawn of the civil rights movement and as the movement slowly gained strength through the words of one of the most captivating essayists and foremost intellectuals of that era. Writing as an artist, activist, and social critic, Baldwin probes the complex condition of being black in America. With a keen eye, he examines everything from the significance of the protest novel to the motives and circumstances of the many black expatriates of the time, from his home in “The Harlem Ghetto” to a sobering “Journey to Atlanta.”

Notes of a Native Son inaugurated Baldwin as one of the leading interpreters of the dramatic social changes erupting in the United States in the twentieth century, and many of his observations have proven almost prophetic. He was one of the few writing on race at the time who addressed the issue with a powerful mixture of outrage at the gross physical and political violence against black citizens and measured understanding of their oppressors, which helped awaken a white audience to the injustices under their noses. The essays collected here create a cohesive sketch of black America and reveal an intimate portrait of Baldwin's own search for identity as an artist, as a black man, and as an American.

Upcoming Book Club Selections for 2025:

July 9: *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus

September 10: *Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain
James by Percival Evans
(We are reading both books so we can compare the two)

November 12: *Wicked* by Gregory Maguire

