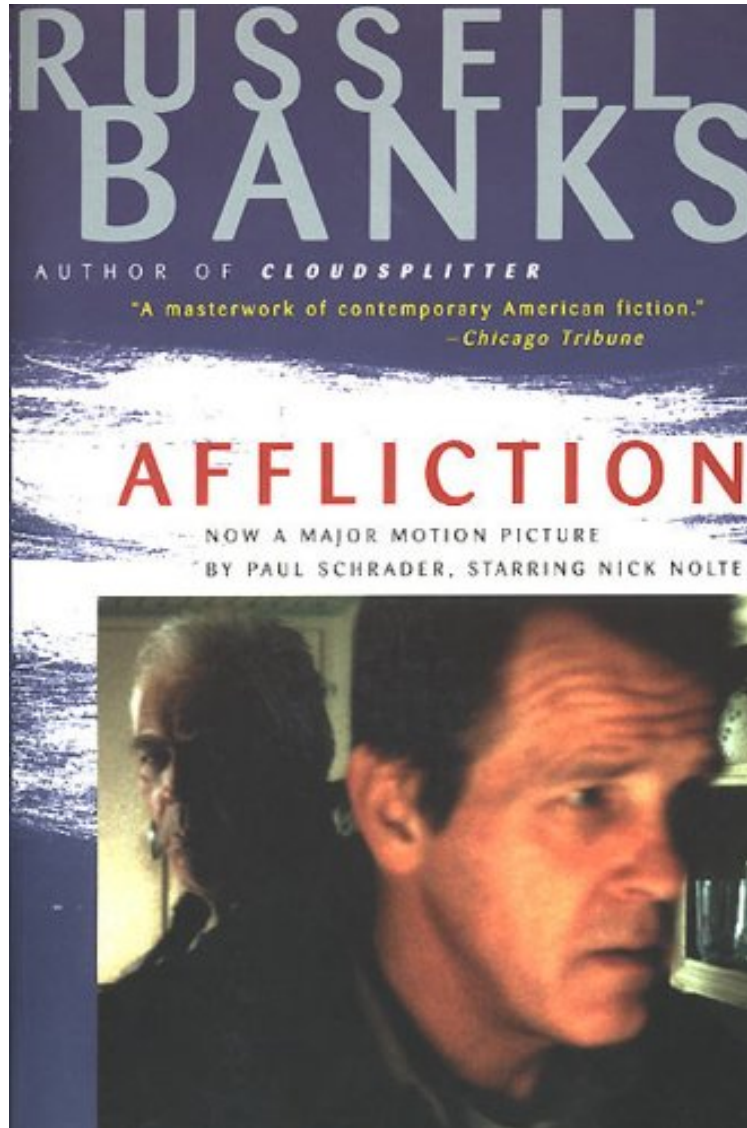



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## Affliction

Von Russell Banks

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**Von Russell Banks : Affliction** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Affliction:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. great bookVon Ein KundeI think this is a great book but I disagree with the critique below that talks about the class aspects of the book. I think Banks shows us that the intellectual brother didn't escape anything (though he deceives himself into thinking that he did). Unmarried, childless and unable to relate to people on any intimate level, Rolfe has chosen to completely shut himself down in the face of the brutality he grew up with. He's just as afflicted as Wade, but maybe

his education gives him a veneer of normalcy in contrast to his more-obviously troubled brother. In any event, Banks does a great job of delineating a horrifying example of the ongoing chain of father-son damage -- I haven't seen any other author do it as well.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Slow start, leave-you-hanging end, but meaty middle!!Von Ein KundeI just finished reading this book, mere weeks before the movie version is to be released (The Sweet Hereafter transferred nicely to the big screen, looking forward to Nolte's interpretation of Wade). Therefore, I think it's appropriate to post a review of the book BEFORE I see the movie.Affliction, especially for Banks fans, is a must read. But a little warning: be patient with the first 5 chapters or so. One could practically start with the 6th chapter and not miss much more than scenery, a little background and father-daughter tension that is more than reiterated later. That said, the slow-start hurdle was more than worth it, soon finding myself an invisible and helpless spectator to Wade Whitehouse's predicament-laden day to day life in his small northern NH hometown. Though the book covers only a couple of weeks time, you're provided with enough flashbacks (courtesy of Wade's brother Rolfe, the narrator) and insight to the tension within the pitiful Whitehouse family to feel like you've grown up in Lawford right along with Wade. A toothache, trouble over custody of his daughter, drilling wells and directing school bus traffic as the town "cop" for wages next to nothing, and--along with his father--an unending need for alcohol, all threaten to drive Wade over the edge as he suspects a conspiracy taking place stemming from what he thinks was a murder neatly covered up as a local hunting "accident". It's Wade's ignorant determination to get to the bottom of it all that makes you want to buy him a plane ticket out of Lawford, give him a job and an apartment, and help him start over. But then you remember that it's just a book.Banks' pacing can be frustrating, and at times the assumptions made by Wade's brother Rolfe the storyteller--from his "investigation" of the incident--seem far too detailed and insightful to be realistic. But his ability to pull you into Wade's world of frustration culminating into violent anger over circumstances he's unable to control makes it all excusable, as well as finding it in your heart to forgive the author for a second-rate ending.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Brutality in Working-class Masculine CultureVon CustomerBanks' thesis in this novel is, that through tens of thousands of years of history, men have inherited a culture of brutality from their fathers and from other male role models. He goes on to demonstrate that those men who belong to the working class, like the protagonist Wade Whitehouse, are most afflicted by this culture. This is probably due to the greater similarity of manual labor today to the (primarily male) hunting culture of pre-agricultural society. In contrast, the more intellectual professions are often seen as more stereotypically feminine in that they rely upon cooperation and consensus, rather than hierarchy and domination. Banks deftly demonstrates this through the contrast of Wade with his intellectual and articulate brother, who narrates this novel. Through he who escaped the male affliction -- hierarchy imposed through brutality, devaluation and domination of women, an incapacity for tenderness -- we see one who is bound up and eventually destroyed by it. Banks' use of language is taut and spare, and his description of the terror of domestic violence is unparalleled. This is an important work of literature for anyone who wants to understand the interaction between class and gender in an anthropological context.

KurzbeschreibungWade Whitehouse is an improbable protagonist for a tragedy. A well-digger and policeman in a bleak New Hampshire town, he is a former high-school star gone to beer fat, a loner with a mean streak. It is a mark of Russell Banks' artistry and understanding that Wade comes to loom in one's mind as a blue-collar American Everyman afflicted by the dark secret of the macho tradition. Told by his articulate, equally scarred younger brother, Wade's story becomes as spellbinding and inexorable as a fuse burning its way to the dynamite..delf Russell Banks hadn't become a writer, he thinks he would have wound up stabbed to death in a barroom brawl. He is the son of a two-fisted, drunken New England plumber, and the grief of fatherly combat resonates through his work like the background radiation of the big bang. Banks became a violently drinking plumber himself--and then a Pulitzer Prize-nominated Princeton literary giant and one of the luckiest Oscar-buzzed writers in Hollywood history. (The Atom Egoyan adaptation of Banks's brilliant novel The Sweet Hereafter perfectly captures its brooding beauty, and Affliction may be Paul Schrader's finest film since he wrote Taxi Driver.) Affliction transmutes Banks's painful past into fiction. His divorced protagonist, Wade Whitehouse, 41, is imprisoned by fate in Lawford, New Hampshire, a hell frozen over. He digs wells for chump change, lives in a trailer, drinks, and alienates his daughter by dragging her to a miserable Halloween costume party. In two weeks' time, Wade demolishes his pitiable hopes of family happiness, drawn into a rigorously plausible series of disastrous deaths. In flashbacks to his Dad-abused youth, we see how Wade wound up such a Dostoyevskian clown. Banks has a mind of winter: when Wade sees his dead parent, the scene unfolds with the cold logic of ice-crystal formation. The story is narrated by Wade's kid brother, the family's sole escapee to college, in a cool, distanced way. Both brothers contain aspects of Banks, but each breaks free of autobiography. This is one haunting novel.Pressestimmen"Everything about Affliction is impressive-- [It] will not let go of you, I swear, until you turn the last page." -Elmore Leonard"With Affliction, Banks has become the most important white male American on the official literary map, a writer we can actually learn from, whose books help and urge us to change." -The Village

Voice "A powerful and often astonishing novel of which it can safely be said that it should be read over and over for many years to come." -The Kitchener-Waterloo Record From the Trade Paperback edition.