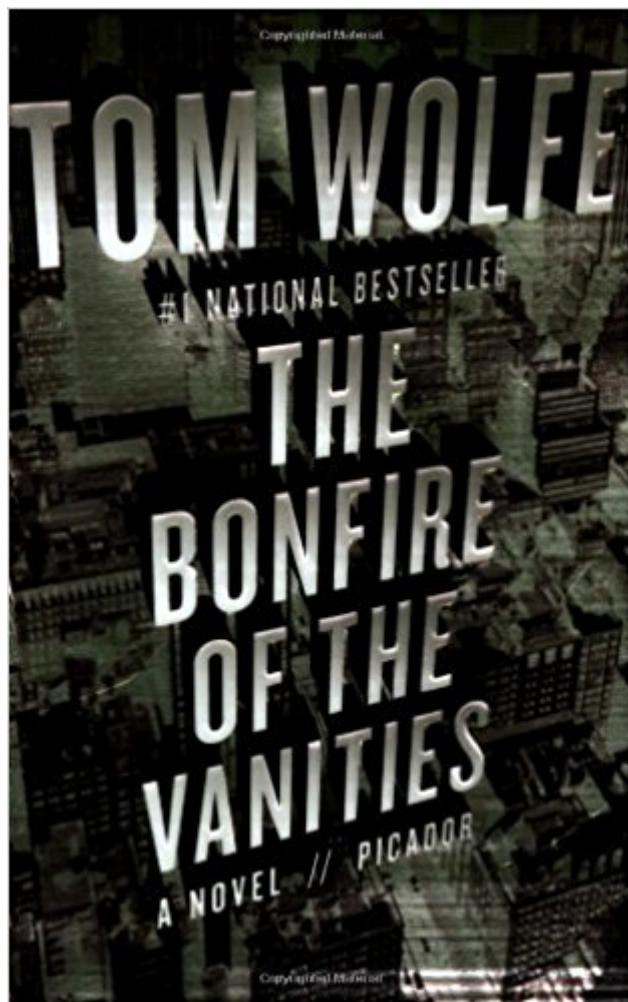


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The Bonfire Of The Vanities



Synopsis

Vintage Tom Wolfe, The Bonfire of the Vanities, the #1 bestseller that will forever define late-twentieth-century New York style. "No one has portrayed New York Society this accurately and devastatingly since Edith Wharton" (The National Review)âœA page-turner . . . Brilliant high comedy.â• (The New Republic)

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

After Tom Wolfe defined the '60s in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* and *Radical Chic* and *Mau-Mauing the Flak Catchers* and the cultural U-turn at the turn of the '80s in *The Right Stuff*, nobody thought he could ever top himself again. In 1987, when *The Bonfire of the Vanities* arrived,

the literati called Wolfe an "aging enfant terrible." He wasn't aging; he was growing up. *Bonfire's* pyrotechnic satire of 1980s New York wasn't just Wolfe's best book, it was the best bestselling fiction debut of the decade, a miraculously realistic study of an unbelievably status-mad society, from the fiery combatants of the South Bronx to the bubbling scum at the top of Wall Street.

Sherman McCoy, a farcically arrogant investment banker (dubbed a "Master of the Universe," Wolfe's brilliant metaphorical co-opting of a then-important toy for boys), hits a black guy in the Bronx with his Mercedes and runs--right into a nightmare peopled by vicious mistresses, thin wives like "social x-rays," slime-bag politicos, tabloid hacks, and Dantesque denizens of the "justice" system. If the Coen and Marx brothers together dramatized *The Great Gatsby*, Wolfe's *Bonfire* would probably be funnier. Many think his second novel, *A Man in Full*, is deeper, but *Bonfire* will never die down. You might find it interesting to compare the film *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, a

fascinating calamity perpetrated by the geniuses Brian De Palma and Tom Hanks, with *The Right Stuff*, one of the very best films of the '80s. --Tim Appelo --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In his spellbinding first novel, Wolfe proves that he has the right stuff to write propulsively engrossing fiction. Both his cynical irony and sense of the ridiculous are perfectly suited to his subject: the roiling, corrupt, savage, ethnic melting pot that is New York City. Ranging from the rarefied atmosphere of Park Avenue to the dingy courtrooms of the Bronx, this is a totally credible tale of how the communities uneasily coexist and what happens when they collide. On a clandestine date with his mistress one night, top Wall Street investment banker and snobbish WASP Sherman McCoy misses his turn on the thruway and gets lost in the South Bronx; his Mercedes hits and seriously injures a young black man. The incident is inflated by a manipulative black leader, a district attorney seeking reelection and a sleazy tabloid reporter into a full-blown scandal, a political football and a hokey morality play. Wolfe adroitly swings his focus from one to another of the people involved: the protagonist McCoy; Kramer, the assistant D.A.; two detectives one Irish, the other Jewish; a slimy, alcoholic British journalist; an outraged judge, etc. He has an infallible, mocking ear for New York voices, rendering with equal precision the defense lawyer's "gedoutdahere," the deliberate bad grammar ("that don't help matters") of the wily "reverend" and the clenched-teeth WASP locution ('howjado'). His reporter's eye has seized every gritty detail of the criminal justice system, and he is also acute in rendering the hierarchy at a society party. He convincingly equates the jungles of Wall Street and the Bronx: in both places men casually use the same four-letter expletives and, no matter what their standing on the social ladder, find that power kindles their lust for nubile young women. Erupting from the first line with noise, color, tension and immediacy, this immensely entertaining novel accurately mirrors a system that has broken down: from the social code of basic good manners to the fair practices of the law. It is safe to predict that the book will stand as a brilliant evocation of New York's class, racial and political structure in the 1980s. 200,000 first printing; \$200,000 ad/promo; Literary Guild dual main selection; author tour. Copyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Sherman McCoy, a 39 year-old white Wall Street bond salesman, self described "Master of the Universe" lives on Park Avenue, he is married with a daughter and is a member of high society. He also has a hot chick on-the-side Maria. On their way home one Tuesday night they make a wrong turn and end up in an abandoned seedy side of the Bronx. Two black guys walking down the street

offer their assistance "Hey buddy, you need some help?", Sherman and Maria sure they're being set-up, panic and end up bumping into one of them with Sherman's Mercedes and then speed away without reporting it. It all blows up when one of the black guys turns out to be severely injured and the press, police and the mayor get involved in political issues involving race and class. The writing is so great that even in 2010 a story that was written 20 years ago still seems fresh and relevant. Kudos big time!

This was such a good book that I couldn't possibly sing all of its praises. This gives the reader such a taste of NYC society that the characters seemed they could have been ripped from the headlines. The title sums up the book, the vanity and pride of an assorted cast of characters blowing up in their face- unfaithful Wall St. hot shot, the gold digging girlfriend, the marxist revered rabble rousing, race baiting hustler (based on Rev. Al Sharpton or Jesse Jackson), the DA with an election to win, the assistant DA desperate for glory, etc. I don't want to say more but they all tie into each other and in such a colorful way that I didn't want to put it down. Really one of the best works of fiction I've read in awhile. The story line might remind some of the Duke Lacrosse media disaster...

Great story and possibly a great writer. Beginning with the rocket men of the late 1940s and early 1950s and concluding with the NASA astronaut program it spins quite a tale. Enjoyed reading and was hard to put down.

I really enjoyed this book. I never knew the true story behind space flight. It was also interesting to understand what made these men do what they did. The wife's role was also explored in this book as well. I recommend this book to anyone interested in how the United States entered the space race.

Wolfe is one of the best of modern writers. This exciting, complex adventure shows us the vanities and corruption in the cultures of the amoral rich on Park Avenue, the criminal and demagogic elements in the Bronx ghetto, and the self-serving power-hungry members of news media, politics, and courts of law. The book is much more interesting and insightful than the movie! There aren't many heroes among the main characters, but, from the superficial social gatherings of the rich, to the wrong turn of his Mercedes off the expressway into the slums, to the terrifying hours in "unfriendly" jail cells, to the "Law and Order" drama of the courtroom, it's a real 'page-turner' which I found hard to put down. *A Man in Full* | *I Am Charlotte Simmons: A Novel* | *The Painted*

WordÂ From Bauhaus to Our House

I devoured this book; I just finished reading it on the anniversary of the moon landing. This book is a must read for anyone interested in space or for people with sheer determination to succeed & aim high in life

'Bonfire' had my rapt attention through the first 95% of a well written detective/courtroom drama with many facets twists and turns. The fact that the story ended with an epilogue instead of a conclusion left me disappointed but the fault is the reader's since human in life

This is a very well written book, and a good story that keeps you interested. It is much more detailed than the movie, as you might expect. It does keep you guessing as to how it will end. Good read.

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