

Peter Matthiessen: A Life of Adventure, Writing, and Conservation

Peter Matthiessen was an American novelist, naturalist, and environmentalist who lived a long and eventful life. He was born in New York City in 1922 and died in Sagaponack, New York, in 2014. Matthiessen was a prolific writer, publishing over 30 books, including novels, non-fiction works, and children's books. He was also a passionate conservationist and environmental activist.



Men's Lives by Peter Matthiessen

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 3099 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 354 pages
Screen Reader	: Supported



Early Life and Education

Peter Matthiessen was born on May 22, 1922, in New York City. His father, Erard A. Matthiessen, was a prominent businessman, and his mother, Helena (Hoving) Matthiessen, was a painter. Matthiessen attended the Hotchkiss School in Lakeville, Connecticut, and then Yale University, where he studied English and graduated in 1944. After graduating from Yale, Matthiessen served in the United States Army Air Forces during World War II.

Writing Career

After the war, Matthiessen began his writing career as a journalist. He worked for several magazines, including *Time* and *Life*, before publishing his first novel, *Race Rock*, in 1954. *Race Rock* was a critical and commercial success, and it established Matthiessen as a major literary figure. Over the next several decades, Matthiessen published a number of other novels, including *At Play in the Fields of the Lord* (1965), *Far Tortuga* (1975), and *Killing Mr. Watson* (1990). He also wrote several non-fiction works, including *The Snow Leopard* (1978), *The Cloud Forest* (1983), and *Shadow Country* (2008).

Matthiessen's writing is often characterized by its lyrical prose, its deep sense of place, and its exploration of environmental themes. He was a passionate advocate for the environment, and his writing often reflected his concerns about the impact of human activity on the natural world. Matthiessen's work has been praised by critics for its beauty, its insight, and its importance to the environmental movement.

Conservation and Environmental Activism

In addition to his writing, Matthiessen was also a passionate conservationist and environmental activist. He was a founding member of the The Nature Conservancy, and he served on the board of directors of the World Wildlife Fund. Matthiessen also worked to protect endangered species and habitats, and he spoke out against the use of pesticides and other harmful chemicals.

Matthiessen's conservation efforts were recognized with a number of awards, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Audubon Medal,

and the Sierra Club John Muir Award. He was also inducted into the National Wildlife Federation's Conservation Hall of Fame.

Later Life and Death

In his later years, Matthiessen continued to write and speak out about environmental issues. He also spent time with his family and friends, and he enjoyed gardening and fishing. Matthiessen died on April 5, 2014, at his home in Sagaponack, New York. He was 91 years old.

Legacy

Peter Matthiessen was a prolific writer, a passionate conservationist, and an influential environmental activist. His work has left a lasting legacy on American literature and the environmental movement. He will be remembered as one of the most important voices of his generation.



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