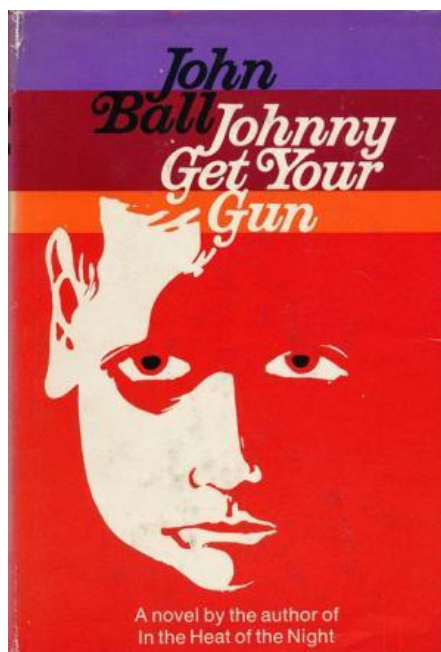




Johnny Get Your Gun

John Dudley Ball

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Johnny Get Your Gun John Dudley Ball

The original title of a book now called [Death for a Playmate](#):

Follow black homicide detective Virgil Tibbs as he investigates the scene of black-white conflict in Pasadena. There are riots, brutalities, an action-packed chase through Disneyland, and a heart-warming and heartbreaking scene at the end of the book in the baseball park of the California Angels.

Johnny Get Your Gun Details

Date : Published 1969 by Little, Brown

ISBN : 9780316079457

Author : John Dudley Ball

Format : 227 pages

Genre : Audiobook, Mystery, Young Adult, Fiction

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From Reader Review Johnny Get Your Gun for online ebook

Scott says

This red like someone telling a true story. It seems it is fictionalized. It takes place certainly in a very different time then we are in now. It was an over arching story of a turbulent time in history, but is that so different than we see happening even right now? Both sides absolutely right with their beliefs.

Jennifer says

I listened to this book free through audiobooksync.com as part of their free YA program to keep teens reading in the summer.

Although an interesting story, this one bothered me and I think part of that is because I listened to the audio book. There were multiple uses of the words n*gger, colored, and Negro which grated on my 2018 ears and really dated the book (which was published in 1969 when this was much more common). Race and gun rights were both big parts of this story and I often felt like the author was a little preachy and trying to make a political point instead of just telling a story. (Which I dislike regardless of which political side - just tell the story and let it make your point!) I also felt like the author was patronizing to people of color (characterizing them as "better educated" because they "spoke properly" and the mc refusing to "lapse" back into a southern drawl -- he was raised in the south -- because he had "grown beyond" that).

Overall, the story was entertaining and not as simple as I had expected at the beginning, but I probably won't be reading anymore by this author.

Laurie says

Audiobook Sync free audiobooks for their 2018 YA summer program week 3.

Oof-ta. This book packs a punch. It looks like this is the third novel in the Virgil Tibbs mystery series, but it seemed to stand alone just fine, and with the current gun tensions, I can see why Audiobook Sync decided to add this to their summer lineup. I'm not sure which way I should feel about that precisely, but regardless this was a powerful book. Poverty, anger, hatred/suspicion of authority, fear, racism, and gun violence all play a part in this fairly short story centered around a hurt and terrified 9yr old boy.

Leslie says

I enjoyed this book. I wish there was a bit more of a mystery element to it. But it was a good story with some important themes that I think are (unfortunately) just as necessary in today's world as they were in 1969.

Some favorite lines:

"Guns, dammit, guns! The right to keep and bear arms was given when a raw young country was part of a great, wild, largely unknown continent. In crowded modern cities, a loaded gun was as lethal as a pit viper. A machine for killing, and nothing else."

"I heard about Booker Washington and George W. Carver and then like a kid I dreamed that someday a great man would come, with a black skin, that the whole world would look up to and honor. And when we

looked there was Martin Luther King. Nobody shoved him aside when he stood up to accept the Nobel Prize, but some bastard couldn't stand it, so he shot him. And while things like you cried for black power and started riots that ripped apart the Negro sections in Newark and Detroit other men stood up to take his place.' He stopped suddenly, his teeth clamped hard together. Then he consciously regained control of himself; when he spoke again it was almost calmly. 'I work here because nobody cares whether I'm black or white, just so long as I do my job. I clawed my way up against prejudice, I licked poverty, and I earned my job. And here. I'm not a black man, I'm Virgil Tibbs, a respected police officer, and nobody asks for anything more. I just caught a murderer who's in a cell upstairs. Now who the hell are you?'"

Heather says

This book was read by Dion Graham who also read the INFINITY RING SERIES which I have listened to. This was another book in the 2018 Audiobook SYNC Summer Series. It was published in 1969--oh how I would love to be able to pay the same amount that Johnny pays in this book to get into Disneyland!

I thought this was a great book that dealt with racism as well as gun violence and education on guns and gun registration. A good SYNC book for this year!

Amy "the book-bat" says

While at times the novel seemed a bit dated (set in the 1960's), it also has relevance to today's society. This book could open up a lot of discussions about race and gun violence, as well as the right to bear arms. The liberal use of the N-word was irritating to me, but does seem to be appropriate to the setting of the story.

Kate says

I can't decide between 3 or 4 stars. this book was like a time capsule. the language, imagery, and cultural references were so completely 1969.

It provided a snapshot of southern California in a middle class neighborhood (and some less than middle). There is racial tension and mental health issues, gun issues and socio-economic factors, all coming into play over the course of a two day experience.

Amberfaye says

I listened to this book free through audiobooksync.com as part of an initiative to keep teens reading in the summer. In light of recent events it appears to me that Johnny was treated to respect and with kid gloves by the police as a result of his privilege. The author was very condescending in regards to the way he characterized POC. Overwhelmingly this story did not exactly age well and was on the didactic side of gun control and anti-bullying. Johnny's mother also needs an all expenses paid trip to Disneyland while his dad gets some anger management tips. To quote several bad 80's "very special episodes" "[Johnny] learned it all

from you Dad!".

Mary Havens says

I listened to this as part of Sync/Audiofile's Summer Reading program, a free audiobook program starting in late April until July. 2 books a week for free! Check them out :)

I am telling you this because 1) I would have never found this book without this program and 2) I'm so glad I did.

I read the descriptions of the books and later find out information about them. So I had no idea until I started listening to this book that it was written in 1969. If you didn't know that, you would balk at the language used (lots of Negro and colored) and the \$4 price to get into Disneyland. But the core issues are still the same: racism, gun control, parenting, poverty. So much and so little has changed in 50 years.

I want to read more by Ball but I'm unable to find anything at the libraries. I have seen In the Heat of the Night (the movie) once but don't remember much. I found Ball to be a good author (although the Angels bit drug out and seemed impossible) and even timely or timeless. I would like to read more by him.

And, of course, Dion Graham!!!! My favorite narrator by far. I've started looking up books that he has voiced and will likely listen to them just because he's so good. :) A far cry from that other book I had to abandon because the narrator was so terrible.

Lesley says

I am at a loss for words to truly describe how exceptional this book is! It truly is well written and this author we as truly a writer who had the foresight to write about how things should be! What a wonderful and great legacy to people of many generations yet to come while still being entertaining! Additionally, it is so refreshing to read such a well written book that doesn't have to use an excessive amount of foul language or explicit sexual encounters within the storyline. Virgil Tibbs became a household name with the making of the movie "In the Heat of the Night" starring Rod Steiger and Sidney Poitier. In this novel Tibbs is a well respected detective in the Pasadena police department. When a nine-year-old boy takes his father's loaded gun to settle a score with another boy he is assigned the case. A few hours later after shooting at the boy's home and running away, Johnny is confronted by a group of black youths by whom he feels threatened. During a scuffle the gun is discharged and a black boy is dead. Tibbs, and his colleagues, is on full alert to find Johnny before the gun is used again. A fast paced and easy to read book. Excellent work!

Angela Martinez says

I liked most of the story. It was a little weird in places, but it was good overall.

Jennifer says

Audiobook. Although I enjoyed the idea of introducing the issues of racism and gun control to teenagers in a narrative and captivating story, I was incredibly annoyed that I felt like the author forced his views down the throat in the narrative rather than giving the reader the freedom to explore the issues on their own and come to their own conclusions.

Robyn says

This has got to be one of the worst covers.

First Line:

It was close to the summer solstice, so that all day long the sun had hung high in what had been a cloudless sky, p.1.

Nine year old Johnny McGuire is a poor white kid just moved to California. It's the early 1970s, and there's nothing better to Johnny than Gene Autry, baseball, and his window-to-the-world radio. One day Johnny takes his radio to school (and as a former teacher I'd just like to point out what comes next is exactly why we tell students not to bring valuables to school!) only to have an older boy break it. Heartbroken, Johnny goes home to get a gun.

What Dazzled: This book is from week 3 of Audiobook Sync, and Francisca Goldsmith writes in her blog that "Listeners will forget quickly that this title is as old as it is because its story could be set today with unfortunate credibility." I completely agree with her statement. *Johnny Get Your Gun* offers readers scenes on race and race relations, social justice, gun control, bullying, and more. Comparing this book with today's social climate is what I found most interesting.

What Fizzled: #ownvoices

Jots and Thoughts: I did not know that John Ball wrote *In the Heat of Night* which was turned into a movie starring Sidney Poitier as detective Virgil Tibbs (the same detective in *Johnny Get Your Gun*). FYI the author uses several times throughout the novel the N-word. Read Harder challenge: A book with a cover you hate.

Terri says

Johnny, a young white boy whose family only recently moved from Tennessee to Pasadena in hopes of a better future, is heartbroken and enraged when an older boy takes and breaks his beloved transistor radio. Johnny's racist father has taught his son to always fight back when he is wronged, so Johnny phones Billy to say he is going to kill him. He then sneaks his father's gun from its shelf and goes to the older boy's home. When he tires of waiting for Billy to come outside, Johnny fires a bullet through the window and flees. Johnny's father also despises police, and he has passed his hatred on to Johnny who is terrified by what he has done and afraid to go home or seek help. To escape the police patrols that are searching for him, Johnny boards a city bus that deposits him in the black section of town where four black youths spot Johnny, leading to other shots being fired. Where can Johnny turn for guidance and safety, who can he trust? The answer is found through his heroes, the California Angels and their owner, Gene Autry.

This third novel in the Virgil Tibbs series is dated by many of today's standards, particularly the use of racial slurs that were common in the 60s but are seriously unacceptable today. Nevertheless, the black detective introduced in *In the Heat of the Night* is still a powerful character. His intelligence, fairness, and patience win the respect of both black and white characters as he searches for a frightened young white boy, tries to prevent a race riot, and ensure justice.

Liesl says

Audiobook SYNC Theme: Running Scared

Although published in 1969, this hit on a lot of topics that are relevant and unfortunately still an issue today. The things that date the book are the use of the n-word, negro and colored along with prices for things. (He got into Disneyland for \$4?! Whaaaaa?!) But other than that it reads very contemporary. I enjoyed getting to know Virgil Tibbs and might check out other books in the series. I also enjoyed the audiobook narrator and he has done the entire series.
