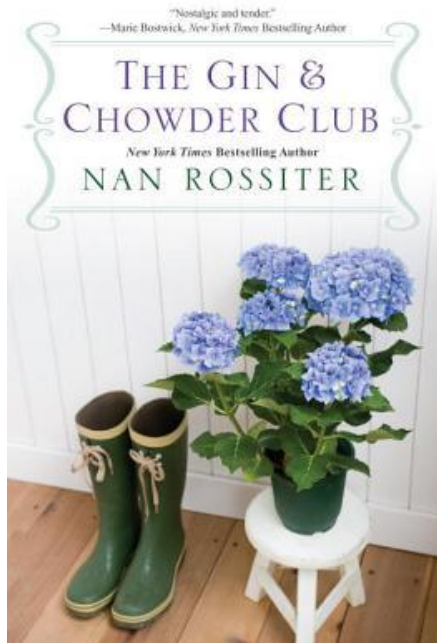




The Gin & Chowder Club

Nan Rossiter

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The friendship between the Coleman and Shepherd families is as old and comfortable as the neighboring houses they occupy each summer on Cape Cod. Samuel and Sarah Coleman love those warm months by the water; the evenings spent on their porch, enjoying gin and tonics, good conversation and homemade clam chowder. Here they've watched their sons, Isaac and Asa, grow into fine young men, and watched, too, as Nate Shepherd, aching with grief at the loss of his first wife, finally found love again with the much younger Noelle.

But beyond the surface of these idyllic gatherings, the growing attraction between Noelle and handsome, college-bound Asa threatens to upend everything. In spite of her guilt and misgivings, Noelle is drawn into a reckless secret affair with far-reaching consequences. And over the course of one bittersweet, unforgettable summer, Asa will learn more than he ever expected about love—the joys and heartache it awakens in us, the lengths we'll go to keep it, and the countless ways it can change our lives forever...

The Gin & Chowder Club Details

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Author : Nan Rossiter

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From Reader Review The Gin & Chowder Club for online ebook

Gina says

Goodreads Description- Set against the beautiful backdrop of Cape Cod, "The Gin & Chowder Club" is an eloquent, tender story of friendship, longing, and the enduring power of love...The friendship between the Coleman and Shepherd families is as old and comfortable as the neighbouring houses they occupy each summer on Cape Cod. Samuel and Sarah Coleman love those warm months by the water; the evenings spent on their porch, enjoying gin and tonics, good conversation and homemade clam chowder. Here they've watched their sons, Isaac and Asa, grow into fine young men, and watched, too, as Nate Shepherd, aching with grief at the loss of his first wife, finally found love again with the much younger Noelle. But beyond the surface of these idyllic gatherings, the growing attraction between Noelle and handsome, college-bound Asa threatens to upend everything. In spite of her guilt and misgivings, Noelle is drawn into a reckless secret affair with far-reaching consequences. And over the course of one bittersweet, unforgettable summer, Asa will learn more than he ever expected about love - the joys and heartache it awakens in us, the lengths we'll go to keep it, and the countless ways it can change our lives forever...

As I began this book, I definitely had preconceived notions that the book would be about two sets of couples who regularly meet for dinner on Cape Cod and much of the story would revolve around those dinners. I didn't expect the story to focus on the affair between the college age son, Asa, of Samuel and Sarah Coleman and Noelle, the second wife of the Coleman's close family friend Nate whose first wife died of cancer several years earlier. I think because I had such preconceived ideas that I was pretty disappointed as to where the book went plotwise.

I thought both Asa and Noelle were pretty petty and selfish to deceive Nate and their families for their tryst. They both were reckless with their behavior and then when they couldn't see each other they were often whiny and depressed. I was especially annoyed with Asa. Everything about him annoyed me. He was jealous of Nate and actually angry that Nate got to have Noelle instead of him. Hello....Nate was older and MARRIED to Noelle. Asa had no claim to her. And the fact that he let his obsession with Noelle ruin his freshman year of college was really immature. I just couldn't stand Asa and his actions. He just needed to get over her and move on. He was in college...surely there were girls that he could have found if he hadn't have been so obsessed with Noelle.

Then tragedy after tragedy happened and Asa was angry with and blamed God. He was just so selfish. He didn't think how others felt during these awful times. Ultimately this book was a tragedy but did have a good outcome that brought Asa out of his selfish funk. I have read other books by this author but this just wasn't up to par when compared to her other books. 3 stars.

Kwoomac says

The nicest thing I can say about this book is that it was a fast read. Not quite sure why I picked it up. The protagonist, whose name I've already forgotten, is a 19 year old summering on the Cape with his family. His father's best friend and his much younger(spoiler alert) second wife also summer on the Cape. Of course the husband spends the weekdays working in Boston, leaving his lovely wife alone down the Cape. Protagonist and second wife realize they love one another and have a brief affair before protagonist goes off to college. It's beautiful! Then something sad happens. I suppose this is supposed to be a tear jerker but I remained dry-eyed throughout. I didn't like any of the characters. Sorry. Finally a neatly wrapped up conclusion to leave you with a good feeling.

In the book's defense, I was not the intended audience. I guess I was hoping for a mindless mystery with recipes. Mmmm, chowder. If you like romance novels with a bit of heart wrenching conflict and a happy ending , then by all means pick up this book.

Heather Bridson says

This book is not what I expected it to be. I liked it, but it just wasn't what I expected. Anyway, well written, but the sometimes just a paragraph long chapters were a bit irritating. I understand why the author did it, but I still think it could have been written in a bit more reader friendly, with less breaks. Anyway, the characters are well written, and the story is good. now, I don't condone adultery..or a relationship between a young adult and his aunt-in-law..but the story works. Anyway, interesting, loved the imagery of Cape Cod and the beautiful areas around it. I love lighthouses, so I could so love to see these areas! Anyway, interesting story, beautiful imagery and a quick read.

Kylene says

So a young nurse with no family of her own marries a much older (18 years difference, to be exact) man WHO so happened to be the widowed husband of a patient that she was taking care of. She becomes friends with his friends, including his best friend's family and younger sons. A few years pass, and yet somehow she can't contain herself as the youngest son gets older, and at the age of 18-ish (when she's 32) they have an affair. (Ew.) She gets pregnant, he doesn't realize the baby is his and gets mad, and despite being a nurse she dismisses her (and her baby's well-being) to see him and ends up dying. Her old husband, by the way, figures things out, has a heart-attack a few years later and dies. The baby survives and (I assume) ends up having a father/son relationship with his bio-dad.

I rolled my eyes so many times while reading this book. I am a 30-something myself; I do not find 18 year olds attractive, and I would never have an affair with one. Noelle has some major issues. I am surprised that she lets things continue, even though repeatedly throughout the novel she says how wrong this is and that she needs it to stop. For some reason, there is something in her life that was unfulfilled that lead her to continue to make absolutely horrible choices. I also disliked Asa, especially his moody personality and his angst about life. When in your right mind is it okay to have an affair with your father's best friend's wife?

This book is just dumb. I pretty much had to speed read the last half. Thank goodness it was a relatively quick read.

Roxy says

It is a very light read, almost like one of those "beach reads", except that it's not really a happy ending story. I enjoyed her writing style: very simple, with lots of details, yet very pleasant. I had no idea that the action took place in the late 50s, beginning of the 60s until they mentioned that "To kill a mockingbird had just come out". I'm sure there were many details that gave away the time frame, but I must have missed them. With that being said, that explains how boys younger than 21 and even 18 were allowed an occasional drink (some of them drank quite a bit.... not with the parent's approval though). There were different times. It was also very normal for them to drink a few beers (sometimes even in the car) and then drive. The story seems full of paradoxes. They appear to be a very nice Christian family who goes to church every Sunday.... boys

who were raised well. Until you realize that they are not exactly perfect. Other than the fact that they like to drink, one of them has two girlfriends at the same time and the other one is sneaking around with somebody else's wife. Halfway through the book, I read somewhere that it was a story of love and loss and I kept trying to figure out how it was going to end and who was going to die. It might have been predictable, but I didn't see the ending coming until very late. All in all, it was a good read. I bet it would make a really good movie.

Laurie says

With a title and jacket cover like this, I was looking forward to a light summer read. I was wrong. The characters are cold and stiff. The conversations reminded me of the old "Davy and Goliath" programs of the 1960's. I also did not like "religion" pushed in my face on almost every page. I have read the Phillip Gulley Harmony series, those books are funny and filled with quirky characters and scripture is woven in at times, but done well and not preachy. Gin and Chowder club is too preachy, cold and stiff, detached.

Kathy says

loved this book and can't wait to read more of Nan's writings.

Kathryn says

I won this one! And I was so excited, but was so disappointed. I would call this Christian fiction. Way too many Bible passages, prayer and the story focusing on a family that was very religious. AND they are quite the lushes, with drinking a strong thread throughout the entire story. And on top of that a high school senior having a summer affair with a married woman. The cover of the book drew me in and the location was also a summer draw. I am not religious and I don't drink. I just thought everything around this story was too contradictory.

Sandra says

I liked the characters in this book, and the story, but it wasn't what I was expecting. Just an ok read for me.

From Amazon:

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The friendship between the Coleman and Shepherd families is as old and comfortable as the neighboring houses they occupy each summer on Cape Cod. Samuel and Sarah Coleman love those warm months by the water; the evenings spent on their porch, enjoying gin and tonics, good conversation and homemade clam chowder. Here they've watched their sons, Isaac and Asa, grow into fine young men, and watched, too, as Nate Shepherd, aching with grief at the loss of his first wife, finally found love again with the much younger Noelle.

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college-bound Asa threatens to upend everything. In spite of her guilt and misgivings, Noelle is drawn into a reckless secret affair with far-reaching consequences. And over the course of one bittersweet, unforgettable summer, Asa will learn more than he ever expected about love--the joys and heartache it awakens in us, the lengths we'll go to keep it, and the countless ways it can change our lives forever. . .

Christi says

This book was so lame. The best thing about it was the cover photo. Once again, I was lured in by great cover art that disguised a sucky read.

It's called the Gin and Chowder Club but the group of adults who host these gatherings are rarely mentioned in this book. I expected to learn more about Samuel and Nate in this book through their weekly get-togethers. Instead, we get one gathering at the beginning of the summer and one at the end. That's it.

I also would have liked more details about the chowder. What parts from which family made it into the final recipe? What makes it so different?

Instead it's an awful attempt at a romance novel. There are too many self-gratifying shower scenes, I guess to convey the longing of the teenage boy in lust with the young second wife of his father's best friend. You know, the guy he calls Uncle Nate.

Asa and Noelle are not in love. They are in lust. That's all. How she can claim with a straight face that she loves Asa is beyond me.

I really kept hoping that they would get caught. I thought when Uncle Nate went to buy paint and found out Asa already did, that he'd go home and catch them in the pool or something. But no. THAT would have made an interesting book. What do you do when your best friend's marriage is wrecked by your 17 year old kid?

I did not enjoy the 2 paragraph chapters toward the end of the book as a story-telling mechanism. I take that back, I did like it because it meant I'd finish the book faster.

And the ending? Huh?? The author just rushes through a couple of years in a page or two. What happened to Nate after Noelle died? Did Asa's parents get custody of the baby and then just give him to Asa? And what was the deal with not giving out the baby's name until the end. Oh, and just POOF! Asa hooked up with that girl from the library? Where did that come from?

Finally, the mother brings hydrangeas in from the yard in May. Which is way too early for hydrangeas to be in full bloom. Then weeks later at church there are lilacs on the altar from someone's garden. There is no way lilacs would still be blooming in June/July. The other one that bothered me was people drinking sweet tea on the porch. In New England, people drink iced tea. It may be sweetened but it's just called iced tea. I dislike when details like that slip by an author and a team of editors.

Charland Garvin says

Not sure what I thought. Should be 2.5 rating for me. I read the book because it was about Cape Cod which I dearly love but the book wasn't what I thought it would be. Perhaps that is why I couldn't relate to it. It was

well written in how the author wrote but I just didn't care for the premise or story of the book. Great title and a good sounding chowder recipe at the end.

Connie says

I didn't realize until I started reading this book that I have read it before. That's ok because I enjoyed it just as much the second time as I did the first. I've read a couple of Nan Rossiter's books and I enjoyed them as well.

Angelique Simonsen says

too much religion and hypocrisy for me

Kim says

Impulse buy because of the title (gin and chowder), setting (Cape Cod), and cover art, in that order. I knew nothing about the author, so I was pleased with how readable it was. Good level of suspense about how an affair would affect the two individuals involved and their families, which had been close for generations. Believable descriptions of how they felt about the affair and no excess detail about the intimate times they were together.

Written in 2011, but set in the early 1960s, which for some reason I didn't realize until well into the story.

Ti says

The Short of It:

Looking at this gorgeous cover you might dismiss it as pure chick-lit, but let me tell you... this one is different. With a male protagonist, a Cape Cod setting, and the tight bond between two families, this one is a winner.

The Rest of It:

The Coleman and Shepherd families have known each other for quite some time. Each year, they head to Cape Cod where they are neighbors for the summer. Samuel and Sarah Coleman have been busy raising their two sons, Asa and Issac, whereas Nate Shepherd has weathered some heartache with the loss of his first wife. However, his second marriage to a much younger woman has brought him happiness and the entire Coleman family is happy for them both. Their time together is spent enjoying gin and tonics and clam chowder and they all look forward to this special time together.

The story is set in the early 60's and this particular summer happens to be the last summer before Asa goes off to college. The Colemans worry whether their son is ready to embark on such an adventure, and admittedly, Asa has some doubts of his own, but he has no idea how complicated life really is until he finds himself drawn to Noelle, Nate's younger wife.

At its heart, this is most certainly a love story, but it's also a story of about trust, betrayal, friendship and the ability to forgive. Rossiter does an amazing job of describing the angst...the yearning and the horrible guilt that results from Asa and Noelle's relationship. There is a taunting, teasing quality to it, but also a good dose of remorse. These are good people being tested. That's how I felt while reading it.

There are other things that won me over. The decision to set the story in the early 60's, was an excellent choice. It had a completely different feel because of it and gave the story the tenderness it required. Think about it, a story like this set in the present day would be filled with gadgets and cell phone conversations and texts between the two of them. The magic would have been lost.

Additionally, there are references to two of my favorite books of all-time. *To Kill a Mockingbird* is often mentioned in books, so although I was pleased to see it here, I wasn't surprised by it. However, I gasped out loud at the mention of *A Separate Peace* because it's one of my faves and has been since I read it in college. I love it when an author can reference another book within her own story, and have it mean something.

I knew this book would be a pleasant read but I didn't expect it to raise so many questions. This would be a wonderful book club book because there is just so much to consider. The reading guide that is included in my copy, asks some really tough questions and the message from the author, which includes a story about a cardinal (poor bird!), will prove to you that authors can find ideas just about anywhere.

You might buy the book for the cover but read it for the story.

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