

C&T Notes for Friday, March 30

Ralph Ellison, Invisible Man, Prologue and Chapter 1 [Readings Book BB]

Board Topics:

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------|
| 1) BB-14 - 1A | Equality? |
| 2) BB-5 - 2C | Freedom and loving, not hating |
| 3) BB-3 - 1A | Knife fight |
| 4) BB-7 - 2A | Grandfather's death bed words |
| 5) BB-9 - 1C | Dancing girl |
| 6) BB-2 - 1A | "I am invisible, ..." |
| 7) BB-14 - 2B | Gold pieces for automobiles |
| 8) BB-14 - 2D | Dream |
| 9) BB-12 - 1C | The electrified rug |

Discussion: (Note: Story set in 1930s)

6)

- Whites ignore blacks
- Just him, or are all blacks invisible to whites?
- Whites choose to ignore, *inner* eyes
- BB-7 - 1D to 2A
 - You are invisible if no one cares for you
 - Is it all in his head?

3)

- What about the fight?
- Anger, irrationality leads to the fight
- BB-7 - 1C
 - Does invisibility justify irresponsibility?
 - Even an invisible victim is responsible for the fate of all
- The stabbing is understandable, but still wrong

2)

- Is freedom due to hating or loving?
- Is hate more aggressive? Not here

4)

- Grandfather is a traitor for not rebelling against white men
- Is freedom worth dying for?
- Can a fight be intellectual and not violent?
 - It was in the 1960s. It is what he wants
- "Live your head in the lion's mouth. I want you to overcome 'em with yeses, undermine 'em with grins, agree 'em to death and destruction, let 'em swoller you till they vomit or bust wide open." ~ Grandfather, BB-7 - 2C

5)

- Entire first column of BB-9, not just 1C
- Off the wall
- Human urges conflicting
- Terror (second column)

9)

- Whites are overly excessive in treatment of blacks
- Gets punched for throwing a white man on the rug
- This type of battle royal was also used during slavery

1)

- Equality what?
- “We mean to do right by you, but you've got to know your place at all times.” ~White man
- Clapping in drunken approval?
- Very nervous/worried about speech

7)

- Why?
- They are just advertisements
- Show one thing, give another
- Whites trick blacks into working hard, even though they are no longer slaves

8)

- Futility of living with whites
- No final reward

BB-4 to BB-5)

- One with the music
- Louis Armstrong is unaware of his invisibility, but his music is not

BB-11)

- Doesn't bribe Tatlock
- Pride in fighting in more important
- Proving self against white men

Question)

- What if we were all black? How would we react to the story then?
 - Anger
 - Appreciative
 - Unfair
 - Invisibility goes against significant change
 - Would hopefully feel the same, but not sure