

Chapter 1 : Ta-Nehisi Coates - Wikipedia

Ta-Nehisi Coates is a national correspondent for The Atlantic, where he writes about culture, politics, and social issues. He is the author of The Beautiful Struggle, Between the World and Me.

Kamal Compelled and interested.. We know enough of it. We do not want to hear about it. How long and how d I guess the letter that Coates wrote to his son and whatever he wrote in it. How long and how deep we want to dig to know that racial discrimination exists. Have not Baldwin and Morrison have said it. What would be radical and more interesting is when a white father would start writing letters to their sons and tell them how not be a Donald Trump. Just being human is enough. But the history somehow keeps producing Trumps and we seem to love it. Our supply of bears is hinged to the exploitation of black body. So drenched in privilege, we love to read and enjoy the letters that a black father writes to his son. And we can feel sorry for him, and publicly acknowledge our sympathy or even rage, but deep inside we militantly maintain the white privilege. I will not be surprised if Rick will delete this comment. If one reads it carefully it is fundamentally insincere. Oddly, tears, my tears, tears perhaps I had been locking inside my fatherly bravado for a couple decades, came down in their own sheets, as thoughts of my child, my daughter, at fourteen years old, still having to face the daemonic vulgarities of a world she had no part in building but would be expected to repair, came to life. The tears came because Coates, in a few pages, captured, exposed, unlocked and translated what so many people of color, so many frustrated and frightened parents, and so many disenfranchised and nomadic youth found so difficult to dictate and explain. For them, the feelings were there but the words simply would not come. The similarities between Coates and Baldwin were uncanny, and certainly intentional, as "Between the World This is a book that must be read and passed on to the youth to read several times over; a book for universities and secondary schools to add to their bulging curriculum to produce and encourage meaningful dialogue without blame or bias. It should be read by all people regardless of color, creed, nationality or social belief. This is a book of substance and timeless relevance. It is the book we all know. Eagerly and with great expectation, I await the next Coates to continue the story between the world and us.

Chapter 2 : [PDF] Between the World and Me PDF by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Between the World and Me is Ta-Nehisi Coates's attempt to answer these questions in a letter to his adolescent son. Coates shares with his son—and readers—the story of his awakening to the truth about his place in the world through a series of revelatory experiences, from Howard University to Civil War battlefields, from the South Side of

Summary Analysis Coates begins the book in the style of a letter addressed to his son Samori. However, this is made difficult by the fact that there is such a huge gulf between the world of black people including Coates himself and the audience he is asked to address. He points out that evidence of this gulf lies in the fact that he is being asked to explain his views, when in his mind all the necessary evidence already lies within the white mythologization of American history. This leads to another problem within the US, which is the belief in the reality of race as a natural fact. Coates argues that this belief inevitably leads to racism and to the acceptance of racist atrocities as a natural if tragic part of life. Coates is quick to point out instances in which people romanticize reality in a way that prevents them from acknowledging the truth. Often, this takes the form of telling stories that present the world in a more comforting light. The problem with this tendency is that it encourages people to turn a blind eye to injustice, thereby allowing injustice to continue. For example, if people willfully forget that the US did not always consider African Americans to be people, the dehumanization of African Americans will persist. The creation of the idea of whiteness took place through the violent torture and oppression of black people; in other words, white identity was made by denying black people autonomy over their own bodies. Historically, there may have been groups other than white people who systematically subjected entire races to genocide and enslavement, but Coates does not know of any. Americans themselves like to claim they are exceptional, but perhaps what is truly exceptional about America is its legacy of systematic violence. Here, Coates expands on the argument that racial categories are not natural facts, but rather systems of human invention. When he argues that only white people have oppressed entire races, he is not willfully ignoring the persecution of particular tribes, religions, and ethnicities by groups other than white people. Rather, he is clarifying that only white people have grouped together and persecuted a huge range of these subgroups under the umbrella of a single, invented racial category. He tries to explain this on the talk show, but the segment ends with a picture of a little black child hugging a white police officer and Coates realizes he had failed to convey his message. As a black teenager, Samori has been forced to understand early on that America is a hostile environment for black people. Leaving the TV studio, Coates walks around and observes white families going about their days. It is tempting to avoid this reality and embrace the dream, but sadly not possible. Here Coates explains why other people buy into the Dream, and also why he is not able to do so. On the surface, the Dream is not only appealing but seemingly harmless—however, once a person has been made aware of the connection between the Dream and the persecution of black people, it is impossible to forget that knowledge. Active Themes Related Quotes with Explanations That same weekend, Samori learns that the police officer who killed Mike Brown will not be punished, something that does not surprise Coates but does surprise Samori, who walks out of the room crying. Coates chooses not to comfort him, deciding it would be wrong to provide false hope that everything will be ok, because Coates does not believe it himself. To Coates, false optimism is always worse than dealing with reality, however grim that reality may be. Coates believes it is necessary to reject these myths in order to achieve personal freedom. Coates has sought answers for the question of how to live as a black person in the US through conversations with his family, his friends, and his partner Kenyatta, through reading and writing, and through music. Here Coates illuminates a paradox within American national identity. The American dream is associated with freedom; yet Coates believes that people can only truly be free if they cease to believe in the comforting myths of the Dream, American exceptionalism, and religion. This belief raises the question of just what it means to be free. Does freedom lie in comfort and prosperity, or in autonomy and knowledge? While the latter version is more difficult and painful, Coates argues that this is the real meaning of freedom. Such behavior distracts from the threat posed to them by white America. Active Themes Coates also recognizes the fear in the music he listens to, which is full of ostentatious boasts, and in the toughness of

the girls he knows. He recalls his father saying: Active Themes Coates understands the reasoning behind black parents subjecting their children to harsh physical punishments, but he is not sure if it is effective in keeping them out of trouble. The law did not protect black children from these dangers, and was in fact another source of violence itself. He emphasizes that all the sources of authority that are supposed to protect children and make them feel safe are in fact threatening to black children. As a result, black children are imprisoned by the danger that surrounds them and by their own fear. Active Themes Coates recalls a particular time at age eleven, watching a group of older boys yell at a kid his age. The boys are stylishly dressed in ski jackets, and as Coates is watching one of them pulls out a gun. Although this feels like another planet, it is in fact just the world of white people and the Dream. Even as an eleven-year-old boy, Coates must already face the most sinister aspects of the world. From this perspective, it is clear that the Dream is far-fetched and ridiculousâ€”not so much for what it contains than for what it ignores, namely, the experience of Coates and other black children like him. Coates recalls striving to survive as a child and teenager, and says he understands why some people become addicted to the risk inherent within the streets. Once again, Coates is sympathetic to multiple perspectives, but ultimately emphasizes the danger of myth. Active Themes People who turn their fear into violent rage pose the biggest threat, and Coates recalls that he learned to avoid certain places and individuals in order to keep himself safe. Note that even as he emphasizes the centrality of the streets to his childhood, Coates refuses to glamorize this way of life. Indeed, life in the neighborhoods in which Coates grew up is perhaps more banal than anything, as it involves devoting inordinate time to thinking and behaving in a safe, correct way, rather than pursuing other things. It was absurd, for example, that Coates and other black children learned French when it was likely none would ever go to France. Education was not an opportunity for learning and development, but simply the more preferable institution to prison. Over the course of the book, Coates argues that education can be empowering, but that it also often has a sinister side. In this case, the mission lying at the heart of the public education system in Baltimore is to control and suppress black children. School thus becomes a kind of metaphorical prison; although it is better than being literally incarcerated, it nonetheless suffocates people with myths and pointless discipline. Active Themes Coates did not imagine he or anyone he knew would escape this oppressive environment. Some of the tougher kids thought they would escape by asserting dominance on the streets, but this ultimately led nowhere. Coates felt he was in an impossible bind in which either being too violent or not violent enough could result in his death. Succeeding in school required absolute obedience to arbitrary rules and expectations. However, by emphasizing his certainty that he would not be able to escape, Coates reminds us how restrictive and threatening life is for most black children in America, and that supposed opportunities for social mobility often appear more like instruments of discipline and control. Active Themes Related Quotes with Explanations As a child, Coates is curious about the way in which racism simultaneously sustains the Dream and perpetuates the oppression of black people like himself. However, there are no opportunities to understand how this works, as neither the streets, his school, nor religion provide any answers. On the other hand, his mother Cheryl had taught him to read at age four, and she makes him write reflective assignments when he got into trouble at school. These writing exercises allow Coates to develop a better understanding of himself, which in turn helps him understand other people and the world around him.

Chapter 3 : Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates review – an urgent wake-up call | Books | T

Between the World and Me is Ta-Nehisi Coates's attempt to answer these questions in a letter to his adolescent son. Coates shares with his son – and readers – the.

In the first part of this book-length letter, Coates recounts the past experiences that he went through when he was a young man. He narrates his childhood, how he was raised in Baltimore in the 80s. During that time, Coates says that even walking to school was risky enough to get you killed. He also recounts that he would, later on, he joined Howard University, after which he started pursuing his writing career. This section starts with the discussion of how Prince Jones was murdered. The killer of Prince Jones, who was a law enforcement officer, was never convicted of the murder charges. The author also talks about how he established himself as a writer after moving to New York. Coates also discusses how he would later move to France together with his family. Part 3 In the last part, Coates recounts how he visited Mable Jones, the mother of Prince Jones, an African-American who died at the hands of the police. Mable Jones is a black mother who is well-off. She was once poor but struggled until she came out of poverty to give her children a good life. *Between the World and Me* pdf is a very critical memoir that tackles racial profiling of black people in America. According to Coates, the racial categories are systems of human inventions and are not natural facts. He concludes that America has succeeded in creating a hostile environment for black people. You can also read *The Things They Carried*, which is also a memoir. Part 1 The author begins by narrating to his son about an interview that he had for a Washington-based news show. Part 2 Coates narrates how he had learned of the murder of Prince Jones from the newspaper. He was filled with rage when he learned about this sad news. Part 3 Coates discusses how Mable Jones, who was Prince Jones mother, reacted when she learned of the death of her son. He was born in Baltimore, Maryland. His mother was a teacher while his father was once a member of the Black Panther. His dad was also an entrepreneur and a publisher. It is clear that what might have pushed Coates to choose a career in literature was his early exposure to books. By the age of 17, he had already started writing poetry. He joined Howard University in *Between the World and Me* pdf was published in July. He has also written several essays and comic books.

Chapter 4 : Between the World and Me (Audiobook) by Ta-Nehisi Coates | www.nxgvision.com

Ta-Nehisi Coates's new book is written in the form of a letter to his son, who is trying to make sense of blatant racial injustice and come to grips with his place in the world.

Transcript This is a rush transcript. Copy may not be in its final form. In America, it is traditional to destroy the black body—it is heritage. The book is a combination of memoir, history and analysis. Its release comes after the shooting of nine African-American churchgoers by an avowed white supremacist in Charleston and the horrifying death of Sandra Bland, a year-old African-American woman in Texas who was pulled over for not signaling a lane change. Today we spend the hour with Ta-Nehisi Coates. He grew up in Baltimore. The nakedness is not an error, nor pathology. The nakedness is the correct and intended result of policy, the predictable upshot of people forced for centuries to live under fear. Clearly it is Ta-Nehisi Coates. Thanks for having me. And congratulations on your book. *Between the World and Me*. You write it as a letter to your son, Samori. But I thought, at the same time, it made what it meant to live under a system that made reparations essential in the first place abstract. There was a distancing effect about talking about people as numbers, you know, about talking about people across history. And what I wanted to do with this book is to give the reader some sense of what it meant to live under a system of plunder as an individual, to express that, to take it out of the realm of numbers and to take it directly into, you know, individual people. How does it feel every day in your life to live under such a system? How do you cope with that? How is it warping? How is it perverse? What sort of effects does it ultimately have on you? And how do you, you know, as much as possible, make your peace with it? And, you know, my study, my very elementary, pedestrian, autodidactic study of history, does not demonstrate that to be true. My own life does not necessarily demonstrate that to be true. My belief is in the chaos of the world and that you have to find your peace within the chaos and that you still have to find some sort of mission. I was sitting here watching the Sandra Bland video, which I have avoided, because I think, you know, all of us have our ways of coping, and sometimes it just becomes a little too much. But I was watching it here. And unfortunately, those beliefs go back right to the founding of this country. So, you wrote a letter to your son. James Baldwin wrote a letter to his nephew. The significance of this? You said hers was the only blurb you wanted. And they managed to do that with Toni Morrison anyway, putting it on both sides. And, you know, I guess, for me, the significance of that quote, that blurb, for me, is, Toni Morrison is somebody who has been such a figure in our community, within black literature, for so long. Doctorow, who just left us last night, as it seems. But Toni Morrison just—I mean, when you think about a figure who just represents what literature is in this country, and for black people particularly, there was no one else. That was how I situated the work. And so, I am very, very appreciative, just very, very honored by her endorsement. And its examination of the hazards and hopes of black male life is as profound as it is revelatory. His new book is called *Between the World and Me*. I wanted to ask you—in the book, you talk about the influences on your life, and specifically when you first began reading Malcolm X and the enormous influence he had on your life, and also the fact that your father was a member and a leader of the Black Panther Party, and the influence that those movements, of Malcolm and the Panthers, had on your consciousness in your upbringing. Well, they had a tremendous influence. These are my first sources, you know, of skepticism, the notion that one should be skeptical of the narratives that one is presented with. The African-American tradition, in the main, is very, very church-based, very, very Christian. It accepts, you know, certain narratives about the world. As you said, my dad was in the Black Panther Party. The mainstream sort of presentation of the civil rights movement was not something that I directly inherited. And so, notions of nonviolence, for instance, when I walked out into the streets of West Baltimore, seemed to have very, very little applicability. It was all around us. And then, when one looked out to the broader country, as I became more politically conscious, it was quite obvious that violence was essential to America—to its past, to its present and to its future. And so, there was some degree of distance for me between how my politics and how I viewed the world at that time and what was presented as my political heritage. And that, to me, was just so beautiful and so real. It was not esoteric. It made perfect sense to me. And you say he was the most honest leader. He was the most honest

man. You know, I knew other honest men, but, you know, in a bit of hyperbole, he was the first honest man—he was the first person I heard, and it matched what I saw when I walked outside. It matched what I saw when I opened up my history books about the country. You know, one has to justify it. And so, that was just profound to me. You talk about the fear, living in fear. Yeah, I mean, and this—you know, to tie this into the previous question, life in Baltimore was, is and will be for some time quite violent. I can remember, as I talk about in the book, being a young man coming out of my elementary school, seeing what should have been just an after-school yard fight and seeing one of these boys pull out a gun, and being very, very present at the age of, say, 11 years old that children were walking around with the ability to end the lives of other children, are going into middle school, and having an entire ritual totally devoted to making sure I was safe—you know, concerns about what I was wearing, concerns about who I was walking to school with, concerns about how many people I was walking to school with, concerns during lunchtime about where I was sitting, where I was spending my time—and at the same time being aware, dimly aware, that somewhere out in the world the majority of Americans did not have to carry that fear with them, you know, and then eventually understanding how that was connected to our politics. I asked him about his experience writing a memoir in prison called *Marshall Law*: And I think they would have been lost to history, and they would have been lessons that had been learned through organizing in prisons that other people could have used. So I think at some point I sat down, and I started writing, and I tried to capture what it was that we had tried to do during those turbulent years that George Jackson was organizing in California and Attica occurred in New York. That was Eddie Conway, again, less than 24 hours after his release from prison, where he served 44 years. Eddie Conway is central to my first memories. My parents used to take me to, when it was open, the Baltimore city penitentiary to see Eddie Conway—I was talking to my dad about this recently—from the time I might have been one or two years old. I mean, literally, my first memories are of black men in jail, specifically of Eddie Conway. That was a huge, huge, huge influence on me, I mean, when you talk about like this notion of—just going back to your question, Juan—of violence, knowing that that was present. And, you know, I had this conversation with my dad recently. Why would you take a three-year-old, four-year-old child into a prison? I wanted you to see what you were up against. And let me just say how happy I am that he got out. I wanted to ask you about another part of the book. Could you elaborate on that, what Howard meant to you? But if you could sort of give us a sense of that, for those who are listening and watching, of what the Howard experience meant to you? Well, one of the things that—you know, this theme of the book of living under a system of plunder and about surviving and how you deal with that and how you struggle against it, within that are the beautiful things that black people have forged, you know, even under really, really perilous conditions. For me, Howard University is one of the most loveliest, for me personally. To try to explain this, Howard is one of several historically black colleges and universities, is, I think, rather unique in terms of its size and in terms of its scope. It is a beacon point, the Mecca, as I call it, as it calls itself, you know, in the book, for the entire black diaspora around the world. And so, to come to Howard University at the age of 17, as I did, and to see black people from Montreal, to see black people from Paris, to see black people from Ghana, to see black people from South Africa, to see black people from Mississippi, to see black people from Oakland, to see biracial black people, to see black people with parents from India, to see black people with Jewish parents—you know, things that I had not encountered in West Baltimore—to see black people who took semesters off to go to other countries and live, to see black people with deep interests in other languages, it was tremendous. And really what it showed me is, even within what seems like a narrow band, which is to say, you know, black life, is in fact quite cosmopolitan, is in fact a beautiful, beautiful rainbow. And to see all of these people, you know, of all these different persuasions, and to have that heritage—you know, Toni Morrison went to Howard. Amiri Baraka went to Howard. Lucille Clifton went to Howard. Ossie Davis went to Howard. And I was aware of that when I was there. Charles Drew went to Howard. Thurgood Marshall went to the law school. So, one of the people I met, you know, whose life was very, very different from mine, whose background was very, very different from mine, was my friend Prince Jones. He was a child of Mable Jones. Mable Jones was born the child of sharecroppers in, you know, just deep, deep poverty in rural Louisiana. Through dint of her own intelligence, through dint of her own work, through dint of her own efforts, she raised

herself up, became a doctor, went to LSU, served in the Navy, became a radiologist, you know, accumulated some amount of wealth, raised two beautiful children. One daughter went to UPenn. Her son, Prince, had the ability really to go to any Ivy League school, was tremendously, tremendously intelligent, chose Howard University, was attracted to this heritage, this legacy, went there. And his explanation for this was that Prince tried to ram his Jeep.

Chapter 5 : Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Between the World and Me is a love letter written in a moral emergency, one that Coates exposes with the precision of an autopsy and the force of an exorcism Coates is frequently lauded as one of America's most important writers on the subject of race today, but this in fact undersells him: Coates is one of America's most important.

He is a national correspondent at The Atlantic, where he writes about culture, politics and social issues. Transcript This is a rush transcript. Copy may not be in its final form. This is Democracy Now! Ta-Nehisi is a national correspondent at The Atlantic, where he writes about culture, politics, social issues. In the book, you talk about the influences on your life, and specifically when you first began reading Malcolm X and the enormous influence he had on your life, and also the fact that your father was a member and a leader of the Black Panther Party, and the influence that those movements, of Malcolm and the Panthers, had on your consciousness in your upbringing. Well, they had a tremendous influence. These are my first sources, you know, of skepticism, the notion that one should be skeptical of the narratives that one is presented with. The African-American tradition, in the main, is very, very church-based, very, very Christian. It accepts, you know, certain narratives about the world. As you said, my dad was in the Black Panther Party. The mainstream sort of presentation of the civil rights movement was not something that I directly inherited. And so, notions of nonviolence, for instance, when I walked out into the streets of West Baltimore, seemed to have very, very little applicability. It was all around us. And then, when one looked out to the broader country, as I became more politically conscious, it was quite obvious that violence was essential to Americaâ€™to its past, to its present and to its future. And so, there was some degree of distance for me between howâ€™my politics and how I viewed the world at that time and what was presented as my political heritage. And that, to me, was just so beautiful and so real. It was not esoteric. It made perfect sense to me. And you say he was the most honest leader. He was the most honest man. You know, I knew other honest men, but, you know, in a bit of hyperbole, he was the first honest manâ€™he was the first person I heard, and it matched what I saw when I walked outside. It matched what I saw when I opened up my history books about the country. You know, one has to justify it. And so, that was just profound to me. You talk about the fear, living in fear. Yeah, I mean, and thisâ€™you know, to tie this into the previous question, life in Baltimore was, is and will be for some time quite violent. I can remember, as I talk about in the book, being a young man coming out of my elementary school, seeing what should have been just an after-school yard fight and seeing one of these boys pull out a gun, and being very, very present at the age of, say, 11 years old that children were walking around with the ability to end the lives of other children, are going into middle school, and having an entire ritual totally devoted to making sure I was safeâ€™you know, concerns about what I was wearing, concerns about who I was walking to school with, concerns about how many people I was walking to school with, concerns during lunchtime about where I was sitting, where I was spending my timeâ€™and at the same time being aware, dimly aware, that somewhere out in the world the majority of Americans did not have to carry that fear with them, you know, and then eventually understanding how that was connected to our politics. I asked him about his experience writing a memoir in prison called Marshall Law: And I think they would have been lost to history, and they would have been lessons that had been learned through organizing in prisons that other people could have used. So I think at some point I sat down, and I started writing, and I tried to capture what it was that we had tried to do during those turbulent years that George Jackson was organizing in California and Attica occurred in New York. That was Eddie Conway, again, less than 24 hours after his release from prison, where he served 44 years. Eddie Conway is central to my first memories. My parents used to take me to, when it was open, the Baltimore city penitentiary to see Eddie Conwayâ€™I was talking to my dad about this recentlyâ€™from the time I might have been one or two years old. I mean, literally, my first memories are of black men in jail, specifically of Eddie Conway. That was a huge, huge, huge influence on me, I mean, when you talk about like this notion ofâ€™just going back to your question, Juanâ€™of violence, knowing that that was present. And, you know, I had this conversation with my dad recently. Why would you take a three-year-old, four-year-old child into a prison? I wanted you to see what you were up against. And let me

just say how happy I am that he got out. I wanted to ask you about another part of the book. Could you elaborate on that, what Howard meant to you? But if you could sort of give us a sense of that, for those who are listening and watching, of what the Howard experience meant to you? Well, one of the things that you know, this theme of the book of living under a system of plunder and about surviving and how you deal with that and how you struggle against it, within that are the beautiful things that black people have forged, you know, even under really, really perilous conditions. For me, Howard University is one of the most loveliest, for me personally. To try to explain this, Howard is one of several historically black colleges and universities, is, I think, rather unique in terms of its size and in terms of its scope. It is a beacon point, the Mecca, as I call it, as it calls itself, you know, in the book, for the entire black diaspora around the world. 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Lucille Clifton went to Howard. Ossie Davis went to Howard. And I was aware of that when I was there. Charles Drew went to Howard. Thurgood Marshall went to the law school. Ta-Nehisi, you actually met with President Obama twice. Can you talk about these meetings, how you prepared for them, what you said to him? Well, one of them was interesting that you ask that after that question. The first one was after I levied quite a bit of critique of his Morehouse speech, which I was not a fan of and am not a fan of now. The president of all America, the bearer of the heritage of America, the bearer of policy of America, which has you know, for the vast, vast majority of its history has been a policy of plunder towards black people, has no right to lecture black people on morality. You know, I understand an African-American man wanting to have a conversation with young people. You know, if there cannot be direct policy towards black people, then there should be no direct criticism towards black people either. Having said that, I wrote the piece, and probably within a day, I got a call to come to the White House. I was not sure why. And I was there with a bunch of other reporters. And I asked him a question that was semi-related, and he sort of answered and then immediately launched into an attack on my piece. And I left that meeting quite disappointed, not disappointed in him you know, he did what I expected him to do but disappointed in myself. I felt that I had not been particularly challenging. I had watched him joust and answer all of these questions. And it takes some amount of courage. I mean, those are the facts. The second time, I probably was a little bit more challenging. What did your wife tell you on the way to your second trip? All the other journalists were in suits. I was not in a suit; I was in jeans. I was late, and I had been rained on. It was not, you know, propitious circumstances. But, you know, even in that meeting, I was deeply concerned about the liberal and the progressive notion that one should pursue policy based on class and not really deal with race. And I was concerned that as the ACA was playing out, as Obamacare, as they call it, was playing out, in fact, there were whole swaths of people in the Southern states who were being left out, and, you know, a majority of those people were black people. And this is a tradition with class-based policy that goes all the way back to the New Deal. So I thought it was very, very important to try to directly challenge as much as possible. I think the other reason, and perhaps the most important reason, that I am throwing these suggestions out to you tonight is that in this country, every black man born in this country, until this present moment, is born into a country which assures him, in as many ways as it can find, that he is not worth the dirt he walks on. Now, many, indeed, have survived, and at an incalculable cost, and many more have perished and are perishing every day. If you tell a child and do your best to prove to the child that he is not worth life, it is entirely possible that sooner or later the child begins to believe it. In this last minute we have with you, Ta-Nehisi Coates, where have we come in more than half a century? I think if people like me appear impatient, it is with the fact that, you know, we are talking about a system that has

basically been in place since To see our whole interview , you can go to our website at democracynow.org. Please attribute legal copies of this work to democracynow. Some of the work s that this program incorporates, however, may be separately licensed. For further information or additional permissions, contact us.

Chapter 6 : The Hard Truths of Ta-Nehisi Coates -- NYMag

Between the World and Me is a book written by Ta-Nehisi Coates and published by Spiegel & www.nxgvision.com is written as a letter to the author's teenage son about the feelings, symbolism, and realities associated with being Black in the United States.

At the time I was living in Morningside Heights, a neighborhood to the south-west of Harlem. I had just finished a year at Columbia University as one of just a very few black students there. Politicians who had just taken control of Congress were reading this book, and I could see already that it would lead to policies that would do harm. Baldwin came to me at the right time. He woke me up, and gave me a way to keep moving through all of it. Baldwin, too, published such a letter in , addressed to his nephew at the height of the civil rights movement. Each has a different modus operandi: Baldwin was a preacher, Coates is a poet. Baldwin oscillated from hope to harsh despair, but Coates is a realist, finding beauty and dirt in equal measure. It fits our moment. This country is reckoning with how it values — or rather, devalues — black American lives. So Coates digs deep into the meaning and value of black bodies, drawing from his own experiences as an adolescent in West Baltimore, as a student at Howard, as a writer, and finally as a parent. The book lives in the tension between the broad sweep of that history and the specific havoc it wreaks. Coates tackles that subject with both love and dread. Raising a self-possessed child in this environment takes careful work. You are growing into consciousness, and my wish for you is that you feel no need to constrict yourself to make other people comfortable. Then he adds, brutally: It must be rape so regular as to be industrial. Many conscious black writers have been haunted in this way. My Prince Jones was a year-old black boy named Edmund Perry, an Exeter graduate from Harlem murdered by a white cop, whom I learned about from a book in eighth grade. Yet I did wonder where the stories of black women feature in all this death and plunder. Their names are not included in this work, and I am not the only one who has noticed it. Coates seems aware of the omission, but he still only manages to surface the experiences of black women through their very real pain at the death of black men. After all, *Between the World and Me* is an exhortation against blindness. Throughout he resists the urge to tie up these ugly complexities with anything pat, delivering a perspective, in many ways, that you could call post-cynical. It is simply about surviving, and remembering.

Chapter 7 : Between the World and Me Quotes by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Ta-Nehisi Coates' Between the World and Me is an essay to his teenaged son. Toni Morrison on the cover maintains that this should be required reading. In this short yet powerful message, Coates delivers a rap on race and offers hope to African Americans in their struggle to maintain their culture.

After the dreams of Martin Luther King Jr. Neither he nor his editor, Christopher Jackson, knew Morrison, but they managed to get the galleys into her hands. Jackson forwarded the note to Coates, who sent back a one-word email: They were also a weight. At six-foot-four, he towers over nearly everyone he meets, and to close the physical distance he tends to turtle his neck down, making himself smaller: A writer who radicalizes the Establishment is more rare. Even casual tweets he sent out were retweeted hundreds of times. The broadcast was muted, but Coates noticed the tableau: They mean a lot. But in , he was hired by The Atlantic “ to write longer pieces, then to blog “ and eventually his commentary formed a counterpoint to the White House line. Against the optimism of the Obama ascendancy, Coates offered a bleaker view: While the president talked about the velocity of our escape from history, Coates insisted that the country was still stuck in its vise. When Michael Brown was killed by a police officer in Ferguson, Missouri, and then Tamir Rice in Cleveland and Walter Scott in South Carolina, it was Coates who seemed to most adeptly digest the central paradox of the time: It turns out that was actually what was in motion. More essential, the paper reported , were the public gestures of forgiveness that family members of the victims had offered to Roof. These gestures had moved conservative Christians in a very religious state. Coates believes in the power of social structures, not in the politics of emotion. Even the public forgiving, so soon after the slaughter, seemed unreal. The heavy force in Between the World and Me “ what makes it both unique and bleak “ is his atheism. To consider the African-American experience without the language of souls and destiny is to strip it of euphemism, and to make the security of African-American bodies even more crucial. It also isolates him from the main black political tradition. I had physicality and chaos. He splayed his fingers over his brow and covered his eyes, so that as he talked he could not see. The ministers were standing up and smiling. To their left, the first African-American president of the United States had lifted his head. Courtesy of Ta-Nehisi Coates The first time Coates met the president, at an off-the-record White House conversation with liberal opinion writers in , he left disappointed in himself. The second time, a few months later, he was determined to do better. Coates arrived at the White House late and, because he had not prepared for rain, wet. He was not wearing a suit but a blazer and jeans. Coates wanted the president to take more targeted action to counter this “ to make the policy acknowledge race and not just class. Obama said that progressives were doing the best they could. At a certain moment, Coates became self-conscious. The president told Coates he had been unfair. But it argued that what the president had called despair was actually the product of experience. Coates was born in and grew up in Northwest Baltimore, in a sprawling family infused with black political consciousness. Paul Coates, who had briefly been a Black Panther and became a radical librarian and independent publisher, had seven children with four different women. Northwest Baltimore was sharply segregated “ it basically still is “ and so though Coates did not grow up poor, he did grow up in proximity to violence. He could express very deeply the dimensions of fear. Nonviolence seemed like an impossible standard. Violence was a product of fear; it was also a tool against it. I felt it in the sting of his black leather belt, which he applied with more anxiety than anger, my father who beat me as if someone might steal me away, because that was exactly what was happening all around us. Coates was writing poetry then, and the effort pushed him into a circle of older black writers. They often told him how much more he had to learn. One mentor, the poet Joel Dias-Porter, quit his job and moved into a homeless shelter for two years so that he could spend each day at the Library of Congress, working through an impossibly long list of books he felt compelled to read. Coates developed a similar ritual “ sitting down each morning at the Howard University library and requesting three books at a time, battling with the histories of nationalism and integration in his mind. When Coates was 24, he and Matthews had a son, Samori “ whom they named after a West African military leader who routed the French colonists “ and moved to Brooklyn. He writes of feeling himself swelling toward physical fights,

of being conscious of his race, of not feeling comfortable. They did not have much money. For a while, Coates mainly stayed home with Samori. Though the book went through many revisions, Coates said he was always sure that he would end it by describing his meeting with a woman named Mabel Jones, whose son, Prince, had been a friend of his at Howard and who was later killed by a police officer who tracked him from Maryland to Virginia in a case of mistaken identity — he had committed no crime. Her son was killed, and the police officer who shot him, a black man himself, was allowed to return to the force. Courtesy of Ta-Nehisi Coates Coates has borrowed this language from feminist writing. For him, it contained a basic truth, that indignity is always physical. The destroyers will rarely be held accountable. Mostly they will receive pensions. Soon, the magazine gave him his own blog. Reading new books, trading notes with his commenters, Coates sharpened his sense of the historical weight of white supremacy: Last week on Twitter, a woman asked Coates about the pronunciation of his first name: In the fall of, Coates told his editor at The Atlantic, Scott Stossel, that he wanted to make a case for racial reparations in the magazine. The case was formless then, but over the following months it took shape as an account of the experience of housing discrimination in Chicago and the way government policy deliberately fenced blacks into particular neighborhoods and denied them the benefits that went to whites nearby. The great theme of the piece is plunder the word appears 14 times — of what was taken from African-Americans specifically because they were black and not because they were poor, and specifically because of government policy, and recently. Reparations were morally necessary, Coates argued, because the harm was so tangible. They were restitution to be paid for property that continues to be taken. That article appeared two months before Michael Brown was killed in Ferguson. If you did not believe in the soul, then police killings took on especially high stakes because the body was all you had. Coates said he would not have written *Between the World and Me* in His view was less bleak then, less concretized by history. It is instead with the metaphors through which they made a compromise with the country — Obama as the embodiment of hope and King the embodiment of dreams. These formulations gave white liberals a pass. Coates plays with both these words in his book, reconsidering them, twisting them around. Coates saw far more stasis running in the background of his own life. He was a pessimist about America. But he was actually very optimistic. Malcolm very much believed in the dream of nationalism. He believed we could do it. And Martin believed in the dream of integration. He believed that black people could be successful if they did x, y, and z. African-Americans are a minority in America, and he sees limits to what they can control. Private jets were scattered over the tarmac, each sleek and bony as a fish skeleton. Aspen is a junket to end all junkets. The speakers are ideologically promiscuous. The collision of real intellectuals and real money is surreal. The Atlantic invited Coates to the festival for the first time in, when he was still a freelancer. He found it disorienting. He still notices the wealth, but it does not especially faze him; he has a theory about the ideological profile of the attendees split between Republicans and Democrats, but with very few real conservatives; he knows which barbecue places are actually good and which restaurants will overcharge you. It was sunny and immaculate and the crowd was diverse in a way that made you, or at least me, think warmly about America. Soon Coates would walk toward a shuttle into Aspen for dinner, shortening his steps to keep behind the penguinlike form of Bill Kristol, also waiting for a ride. The mayor — shaven-headed, coachlike — had made crime in black neighborhoods a political focus. It was an issue on which he was accustomed to being the good guy. The search engine Bing had sponsored an app that allowed audience members to rate the speakers in real time. Landrieu said he hoped they liked him. Coates said, a little masochistically, he hoped they hated him. Landrieu seemed mindful of all the ways a well-meaning white liberal in a situation like this might embarrass himself. Landrieu said that was part of it. Then he talked about personal responsibility. Inner-city violence, he said, had everything to do with the legacy of structural neglect in the inner city and nothing at all to do with culture. Even from the cheap seats, it was clear that Landrieu was struggling, that there was some turn in the politics of race that he had not fully comprehended, some way in which the old Clintonite phrasings were failing. In their place was a more radical language, of structuralism and supremacy. Now that language has a place in Aspen.

Between the World and Me is a letter to Ta-Nehisi Coates's fifteen-year-old son, Samori. He weaves his personal, historical, and intellectual development into his ruminations on how to live in a black body in America. Coates writes of his upbringing in the ghettos of Baltimore in which he learned.

Chapter 9 : Between the World and Me - Wikipedia

*Ta-Nehisi Coates is the author of the #1 New York Times bestseller *Between the World and Me*, a finalist for the National Book Award.*