



CURRICULUM GUIDE

I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO

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I Am Not Your Negro

Curriculum Guide

“Freedom is not something that anybody can be given. Freedom is something people take, and people are as free as they want to be”

— **James Baldwin**

“I love America more than any other country in the world and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually.”

— **James Baldwin**

“To be a Negro in this country and to be relatively conscious is to be in a rage almost all the time.”

— **James Baldwin**

“I remember when the ex-Attorney General, Mr. Robert Kennedy, said it was conceivable that in 40 years in America we might have a Negro President. That sounded like a very emancipated statement to white people. They were not in Harlem when this statement was first heard. They did not hear the laughter and bitterness and scorn with which this statement was greeted. From the point of view of the man in the Harlem barber shop, Bobby Kennedy only got here yesterday and now he is already on his way to the Presidency. We were here for 400 years and now he tells us that maybe in 40 years, if you are good, we may let you become President.”

— **James Baldwin**



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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR – RAOUL PECK

I started reading James Baldwin when I was a 15-year-old boy searching for rational explanations to the contradictions I was confronting in my already nomadic life, which took me from Haiti to Congo to France to Germany and to the United States of America. Together with Aimée Césaire, Jacques Stéphan Alexis, Richard Wright, Gabriel García Márquez and Alejo Carpentier, James Baldwin was one of the few authors that I could call “my own.” Authors who were speaking of a world I knew, in which I was not just a footnote. They were telling stories describing history and defining structure and human relationships which matched what I was seeing around me. I could relate to them. You always need a Baldwin book by your side.

I came from a country which had a strong idea of itself, which had fought *and* won against the most powerful army of the world (Napoleon's) and which had, in a unique historical manner, stopped slavery in its tracks, creating the first successful slave revolution in the history of the world, in 1804.

I am talking about Haiti, the first free country of the Americas. Haitians always knew the real story. And they also knew that the dominant story was not the real story.

The successful Haitian Revolution was ignored by history (as Baldwin would put it: *because of the bad niggers we were*) because it was imposing a totally different narrative, which would have rendered the dominant slave narrative of the day untenable. The colonial conquests of the late nineteenth century would have been ideologically impossible if deprived of their civilizational justification. And this justification would have no longer been needed if the whole world knew that these “savage” Africans had already annihilated their powerful armies (especially French and British) less than a century ago.

So what the four superpowers of the time did in an unusually peaceful consensus, was to shut down Haiti, the very first black Republic, put it under strict economical embargo and strangle it to its knees into oblivion and poverty.

And then they rewrote the whole story.

Flash forward. I remember my years in New York as a child. A more civilized time, I thought. It was the sixties. In the kitchen of this huge middle-class apartment in the former Jewish neighborhoods of Brooklyn, where we lived with several other families, there was a kind of large oriental rug with effigies of John Kennedy and Martin Luther King hanging on the wall, the two martyrs, both legends of the time.

Except the tapestry was not telling the whole truth. It naively ignored the hierarchy between the two figures, the imbalance of power that existed between them. And thereby it nullified any ability to understand these two parallel stories that had crossed path for a short time, and left in their wake the foggy miasma of misunderstanding.

I grew up in a myth in which I was both enforcer and actor. The myth of a single and unique America. The script was well written, the soundtrack allowed no ambiguity, the actors of this utopia, black or white, were convincing. The production means of this Blockbuster-Hollywood picture were phenomenal. With rare episodic setbacks, the myth was strong, better; the myth was life, was reality. I remember the Kennedys, Bobby and John, Elvis, Ed Sullivan, Jackie Gleason, Dr. Richard Kimble, and Mary Tyler Moore very well. On the other hand, Otis Redding, Paul Robeson, and Willie Mays are only vague reminiscences. Faint stories "tolerated" in my memorial hard disk. Of course there was "Soul Train" on television, but it was much later, and on Saturday morning, where it wouldn't offend any advertisers.

Medgar Evers died on June 12, 1963.

Malcolm X died on February 21, 1965.

And Martin Luther King Jr. died on April 4, 1968.

In the course of five years, these three men were assassinated.

These three men were black, but it is not the color of their skin that connected them. They fought on quite different battlefields. And quite differently. But in the end, all three were deemed dangerous. They were unveiling the haze of racial confusion.

James Baldwin also saw through the system. And he loved these men. These assassinations broke him down.

He was determined to expose the complex links and similarities among these three individuals. He was going to write about them. He was going to write his ultimate book, *Remember This House*, about them.

I came upon these three men and their assassination much later. These three facts, these elements of history, from the starting point, the "evidence" you might say, form a deep and intimate personal reflection on my own political and cultural mythology, my own experiences of racism and intellectual violence.

This is exactly the point where I really needed James Baldwin. Baldwin knew how to deconstruct stories. He helped me in connecting the story of a liberated slave in its own nation, Haiti, and the story of modern United States of America and its own painful and bloody legacy of slavery. I could connect the dots.

I looked to the films of Haile Gerima. Of Charles Burnett. These were my elders when I was a youth.

Baldwin gave me a voice, gave me the words, gave me the rhetoric. All I knew through instinct or through experience, Baldwin gave it a name and a shape. I had all the intellectual weapons I needed.

For sure, we will have strong winds against us. The present time of discord and confusion is an unavoidable element. I am not naive to think that the road ahead will be

easy or that the attacks will not be at time vicious. My commitment to make sure that this film will not be buried or sideline is uncompromising.

We are in it for the long run. Whatever time and effort it takes.



Who Was James Baldwin

James Arthur Baldwin (1924-1987) was one of the greatest and most prolific writers and social critics of the twentieth century. Born on August 2nd, 1924 in Harlem to a single mother—Emma Berdis Jones, Baldwin’s life would be profoundly impacted by the entrance into this life of his stepfather, the preacher, David Baldwin. Baldwin’s tumultuous relationship with his stepfather, paired with the social conditions in his neighborhood would inspire some of his greatest works.

As a young child, Baldwin developed a very positive relationship with one of his white teachers, Orilla “Bill” Miller. Miller introduced James to subjects and topics which opened his eyes to the wider world around him. She took him to plays, and she fed him books about Ethiopia, Italy, and many other topics which influenced him greatly. His informal writing career began during his schooldays, where under the influence of two African American teachers—Countee Cullen and Harry Porter, Baldwin began learning French, and developed his skill and passion as a writer.

As he grew older, Baldwin continued to observe the conditions of race in America. At the age of 24, feeling a growing sense of disquietude with race relations in his homeland, Baldwin left for France, a place where he would spend a large portion of his life. Over the years that followed, Baldwin utilized his talents as a writer, speaker and activist to take action on issues that were important to him, to develop relationships with a multitude of inspiring figures, and to provide the world with insight into topics of race, civil rights, violence, sexuality, identity, class distinctions, politics, history and more both on an American and an on an international level.

Baldwin returned to the United States and there bore witness to and tenaciously recorded the fight for civil rights for African Americans. Before Baldwin’s death on December 1, 1987 in Saint-Paul de Vence, France, he authored over twenty-five essays, novels, plays, articles, hundreds of letters, and poems. He is known for *Go Tell It On The Mountain* (1953), *Notes of a Native Son* (1955), *The Fire Next Time* (1963), *Blues for Mister Charlie* (1964), *An Open Letter to My Sister Angela Y. Davis* (1970), *An Open Letter to Mr. Carter* (1977), as well as *The Evidence of Things Not Seen* (1985).

James Baldwin the Activist: The Pen is Mightier...

James Baldwin was not only an author, he was also an activist, and he utilized the power of his words to move people to action. After his self-proclaimed role as witness, he knew that he also had to take action—to pay his dues. At the beginning of *I Am Not Your Negro*, Baldwin discusses his decision to return to America from France. “That’s when I saw the photograph...of fifteen year old Dorothy Counts, being reviled and spat upon by the mobs as she made her way to school in Charlotte, North Carolina... It made me furious, it filled me with both hatred and pity, and it filled me with shame. Some one of us should have been there with her...And it was on that bright afternoon that I knew that I was leaving France...everyone else was paying their dues, and I knew it was time for me to pay mine¹.”

In an interview that Baldwin did with *The Paris Review* in 1984, he mentions Dr. King, Medgar Evers, and also Malcolm X, and the impact that they had on his decision to return to America during the civil rights era. “What held me in Paris later—from ’55 to ’57—was the fact that I was going through a kind of breakup in my private life, yet I knew I had to go back to America. And I went. Once I was in the civil-rights milieu, once I’d met Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X and Medgar Evers and all those other people, the role I had to play was confirmed. I didn’t think of myself as a public speaker, or as a spokesman, but I knew I could get a story past the editor’s desk. And once you realize that you can do something, it would be difficult to live with yourself if you didn’t do it².”

Once he returned to America, Baldwin traveled throughout the South where he took part in the Civil Rights Movement. In *I Am Not Your Negro*, Baldwin describes his role in the Movement as one of, “to write the story and to get it out.” Toni Morrison wrote of Baldwin’s courage. She said,

¹ *I Am Not Your Negro*. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

² Elgrably, J., & Baldwin, J. (1984). James Baldwin, *The Art of Fiction* No. 78. Retrieved January 17, 2017, from <https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/2994/james-baldwin-the-art-of-fiction-no-78-james-baldwin>
Author interview

“Yours was the courage to live life in and from its belly as well as beyond its edges, to see and say what it was, to recognize and identify evil but never fear or stand in awe of it. It is a courage that came from a ruthless intelligence married to a pity so profound it could convince anyone who cared to know that those who despised us "need the moral authority of their former slaves, who are the only people in the world who know anything about them and who may be, indeed, the only people in the world who really care anything about them." When that unassailable combination of mind and heart, of intellect and passion was on display it guided us through treacherous landscape as it did when you wrote these words - words every rebel, every dissident, revolutionary, every practicing artist from Capetown to Poland from Waycross to Dublin memorized: "A person does not lightly elect to oppose his society. One would much rather be at home among one's compatriots than be mocked and detested by them. And there is a level on which the mockery of the people, even their hatred, is moving, because it is so blind: It is terrible to watch people cling to their captivity and insist on their own destruction³."

There are several memorable moments in Baldwin's life as activist in which his intellect and passion were on display. These moments include the crafting of his book, "The Fire Next Time," his participation in the March on Washington, his historic debate against William Buckley at Cambridge Union, his journey through the South with Medgar Evers, and his organization of a meeting between several of his counterparts and then Attorney General Robert Kennedy.

In 1963, Sheldon Binn provided a review of "The Fire Next Time." Binn stated that, "The Fire Next Time is masterful...Out of his own pain and despair and hope, Mr. Baldwin has fashioned such a transformation. He has pictured white America as seen through

³ Morrison, T. (1987, December 20). JAMES BALDWIN : HIS VOICE REMEMBERED; Life in His Language. Retrieved January 17, 2017, from

the eyes of the Negro⁴.” The book was “an explosive work about black identity and the state of racial struggle⁵.”

At home in America, or at home in Paris, Baldwin was involved in efforts to support the Civil Rights Movement. In 1963 while he was in Paris working on a play, Baldwin and other artists came together to write a brief petition in support of the March on Washington. It said, “I, the undersigned, as an American citizen, hereby publicly express my support of the March on Washington Movement, which aspires not only to eradicate all racial barriers in American life but to liberate all Americans from the prison of their biases and fears. I cannot physically participate in this March, but I, like the rest of the world, have been tremendously stirred by so disciplined an exhibition of dignity and courage and persistence and would like to associate myself with it.⁶”

Baldwin was also an eloquent speaker. On October 26th, 1965, Baldwin debated William Buckley at the Cambridge Union. The topic was, “The American Dream is at the expense of the American Union.” Baldwin was seen as the clear winner of the debate. In an article about the debate, Aidan Lee writes, “Part of Baldwin’s rhetorical genius, on the other hand, was his ability to transition forcefully between the second person. [Baldwin] In the case of the American negro, from the moment you are born every stick and stone, every face, is white. Since you have not yet seen a mirror, you suppose you are, too. It comes as a great shock around the age of 5, 6, or 7 to discover that the flag to which you have pledged allegiance, along with everybody else, has not pledged allegiance to you. To the first person: [Baldwin] I am speaking very seriously, and this is not an overstatement: I picked cotton, I carried it to the market, I built the railroads under someone else’s whip for nothing. For nothing⁷.”

⁴ Binn, S. (1963, January 31). The Fire Next Time. Retrieved from <https://partners.nytimes.com/books/98/03/29/specials/baldwin-fire.html>

⁵ PBS. (2006, November 29). About the Author James Baldwin. Retrieved January 17, 2017, from <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/james-baldwin-about-the-author/59/>

⁶ Dudziak, M. (n.d.). The 1963 March on Washington: At Home and Abroad. Retrieved January 17, 2017, from <https://www.cairn.info/revue-francaise-d-etudes-americaines-2006-1-page-61.htm>

⁷ Lee, A. (n.d.). Baldwin v. Buckley. Retrieved January 17, 2017, from <http://backstoryradio.org/2016/10/09/baldwin-v-buckley/>

One of the more memorable events in both the *I Am Not Your Negro* documentary, and in Baldwin's life, was at a meeting held on May 24th, 1963 which Baldwin had organized with a group of his contemporaries and then Attorney General Robert Kennedy. The group, "which included Baldwin, his brother David, singer Lena Horne, actor/activist Harry Belafonte, African-American playwright Lorraine Hansberry, Dr. Kenneth Clark, Edwin C. Berry, white actor Rip Torn, King's lawyer Clarence Jones, and a CORE Freedom Rider named Jerome Smith. Baldwin would later say that the diversity of the group was intentional, as he wanted as wide and even as rowdy a range of opinion as possible. The novelist also felt that the purpose of the meeting was to impress on Kennedy the extremity of the racial situation in the North and the anger of quickening urgency, of deep alienation felt by northern blacks⁸."

In the documentary, Baldwin recounts the powerful moment in which Lorraine Hansberry walked out of the meeting, leaving the other members of the group to follow her once they saw that they were not making any headway with Robert Kennedy. "At the time of the Kennedy meeting, Lorraine Hansberry was 33...that was one of the last times that I saw her on her feet...I miss her so much. ...We would like from you said Lorraine [to Kennedy], a moral commitment. Lorraine sat still, watching all the time. She looked at Bobby Kennedy, who looked at her for the probably the first time⁹." The meeting had lasted two and half hours. The final comment came from Lorraine Hansberry, "who had praised black men and the role they had played in the Movement, and concluded by saying, "Mr. Attorney General, I am very worried about the state of a civilization which produces that white cop standing on that Negro woman's neck in Birmingham¹⁰." Before she left the room, she had smiled. Baldwin recalled, "then she smiled, and I am glad that she was not smiling at me. Good bye Mr. Attorney General

⁸ Saucedo, T. (2007). *The Fire Within: The Baldwin Meeting And The Evolution Of The Kennedy Administration' s Approach To Civil Rights*. P. 91. Retrieved from <http://stars.library.ucf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4331&context=etd>

⁹ *I Am Not Your Negro*. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

¹⁰ Saucedo, T. (2007). *The Fire Within: The Baldwin Meeting And The Evolution Of The Kennedy Administration' s Approach To Civil Rights*. P.91-92. Retrieved from <http://stars.library.ucf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4331&context=etd>

she said, and turned and walked out of the room¹¹.” The rest of the group followed her lead and walked out of the apartment¹².”

Over the course of his career, Baldwin’s relationships with leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, and also his own writings, landed him on the FBI’s Security Index. His phones were tapped, and his relationships, especially, his relationship with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. were closely scrutinized. This did not prevent Baldwin from utilizing his gift with words to bring national and international attention to the issue of race in America.

In his funeral eulogy to Baldwin, playwright Amiri Baraka summed up the power of Baldwin as writer and as an activist. Baraka said, “This man traveled the earth like its history and its biographer. He reported, criticized, made beautiful, analyzed, cajoled, lyricized, attacked, sang, made us think, made us better, made us consciously human. ... He made us feel ... that we could defend ourselves or define ourselves, that we were in the world not merely as animate slaves, but as terrifyingly sensitive measurers of what is good or evil, beautiful or ugly. This is the power of his spirit. This is the bond which created our love for him¹³.”

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Author interview

¹¹ I Am Not Your Negro. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

¹² Saucedo, T. (2007). The Fire Within: The Baldwin Meeting And The Evolution Of The Kennedy Administration's Approach To Civil Rights. P. 92. Retrieved from <http://stars.library.ucf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4331&context=etd>

¹³ James Baldwin. (n.d.). Retrieved January 17, 2017, from <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/james-baldwin>

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Medgar, Martin and Malcolm

At the basis of *I Am Not Your Negro* is a reflection on James Baldwin's relationship with three giants of the Civil Rights Movement—Malcolm X, Medgar Evers, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. These three men would prove to be instrumental actors in Baldwin's personal and professional life. The documentary “tells his story of America through the lives of three of his murdered friends: Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King, Jr¹⁴.”

Within the first moments of the documentary we are provided with an introduction to the three subjects of this film. “The time of these lives and deaths from a public point of view is 1955, when we first heard of Martin to 1968 when he was murdered. Medgar was murdered in the summer of 1963. Malcolm was murdered in 1965. The three men, Medgar, Malcolm and Martin were very different men...I want these three lives to bang against and reveal each other, as in truth they did¹⁵.”

Who were these three men who left such an indelible mark on Baldwin and on America?

Medgar

Medgar Evers was born in Decatur, Mississippi on July 2, 1925. “In June 1944, Evers' unit was part of the massive, post D-Day invasion and he served in both France and Germany until his honorable discharge in 1946¹⁶.” When Evers returned home to postwar Mississippi, he attended Alcorn College where he graduated with honors. In 1954 when the Supreme Court decided *Brown v. Board of Education* and struck down segregation in public schools, Evers applied to the University of Mississippi Law School. His application was denied on the basis that he had failed to include the necessary number of letters of recommendation. Evers went to the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) for help. The NAACP “offered him a position as the organization's first field secretary in the state. Evers accepted, and by December

¹⁴ *I Am Not Your Negro*. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

¹⁵ *I Am Not Your Negro*. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

¹⁶ Maranzani, B. (2013, June 11). 7 Things You Should Know About Medgar Evers. Retrieved January 18, 2017, from <http://www.history.com/news/7-things-you-should-know-about-medgar-evers>

1954 he had opened an office in Jackson¹⁷.” In the time that he spent as field secretary, Evers worked on many investigations. He also was one of three field workers who tracked down witnesses, and who convinced people to testify in the trial of the white men who were accused of abducting and murdering fourteen year old Emmett Till. He was also responsible for shepherding the witnesses’ “out of town in secrecy when the all-white jury returned a verdict of not guilty after deliberating for just an hour¹⁸.” One of Evers’ most well-known accomplishments was participation in the integration of Ole Miss. “His efforts to have James Meredith admitted to the University of Mississippi in 1962 brought much needed federal help for which he had been soliciting. Meredith was admitted to Ole Miss, a major step in securing civil rights in the state¹⁹.”

Baldwin met Sergeant Medgar Evers on January 1st, 1963 in Mississippi while Evers was investigating the death of a black man at the hands of white men in Mississippi. Evers wanted Baldwin to accompany him on his investigation. Baldwin feared such a journey because while he was used to being the observer, and expressing his feelings and thoughts on the realities of America and racism on paper, a journey such as this proved that there was a thin and often invisible line between being a witness and being an actor²⁰. During this time, Baldwin’s relationship with Evers grew even more, and he gained a profound sense of appreciation for the person that was Medgar Evers. For months the two men would stay in contact with each other on topics related to the civil and social issues that were plaguing America. Unfortunately, the relationship between Baldwin and Evers would be short-lived. On June 12th, 1963 while Baldwin was in Puerto Rico writing a play related to the death of Emmett Till entitled *Blues for Mister Charlie*, he learned that Evers had been shot and killed in front of his family by Ku Klux Klan member Byron De La Beckwith, Jr²¹. Baldwin would never again get to see his friend continue his fight against injustice. “This peaceful man, who had constantly urged

¹⁷ Maranzani, B. (2013, June 11). 7 Things You Should Know About Medgar Evers. Retrieved January 18, 2017, from <http://www.history.com/news/7-things-you-should-know-about-medgar-evers>

¹⁸ Maranzani, B. (2013, June 11). 7 Things You Should Know About Medgar Evers. Retrieved January 18, 2017, from <http://www.history.com/news/7-things-you-should-know-about-medgar-evers>

¹⁹ Medgar Evers. (2002, September). Retrieved January 18, 2017, from http://mwp.olemiss.edu/dir/evers_medgar/

²⁰ *I Am Not Your Negro*. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

²¹ *I Am Not Your Negro*. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

that violence, is not the way, but who paid for his beliefs with this life, was a prominent voice in the struggle for civil rights in Mississippi²².”

Malcolm

One evening while Baldwin was having dinner with his sister Gloria in London, a phone call came in. When Baldwin’s sister came back to the table, she seemed reluctant to say much, but then she told James that Malcolm X had been murdered. “Born on May 19, 1925, in Omaha, Nebraska, Malcolm X was a prominent black nationalist leader who served as a spokesman for the Nation of Islam during the 1950s and '60s...Articulate, passionate and a naturally gifted and inspirational orator, Malcolm X exhorted blacks to cast off the shackles of racism "by any means necessary," including violence. The fiery civil rights leader broke with the group [Nation of Islam] shortly before his assassination on February 21, 1965, at the Audubon Ballroom in Manhattan, where he had been preparing to deliver a speech²³.”

The documentary recounts that unlike Baldwin’s relationship with Evers, his relationship with Malcolm X began with a level of distrust. The two men had different viewpoints about race in America--At one point in X’s life he was a segregationist and Baldwin an integrationist. In *I Am Not Your Negro*, Baldwin describes seeing Malcolm X for the first time at one of his lectures. He spoke of how nervous he had been as Malcolm X never took his eyes off of him as he spoke²⁴.

On May 24, 1963, the same day in which Baldwin had just finished a meeting with a group of his friends and Attorney General Robert Kennedy, he was recorded on the PBS show *The Negro and The American Promise* hosted by Dr. Kenneth Clark. Baldwin spoke of Malcolm X’s position on the lives of black people in America.

“**Baldwin:** What Malcolm tells them, in effect, is that they should be proud of being black, and God knows that they should be. That is a very important thing to

²² Medgar Evers. (2002, September). Retrieved January 18, 2017, from http://mwp.olemiss.edu/dir/evers_medgar/

²³ Malcolm X. (2016, October 05). Retrieved January 18, 2017, from <http://www.biography.com/people/malcolm-x-9396195#synopsis>

²⁴ *I Am Not Your Negro*. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

hear in a country which assures you that you should be ashamed of it. Of course, in order to do this, what he does is destroy a truth and invent a history. What he does is say, "you're better because you're black." Well, of course that isn't true. That's the trouble.

Dr. Kenneth Clark: Do you think that this [Malcolm X's] is an appealing approach, and that the Black Muslims, in preaching black supremacy, seek to exploit the frustration of the Negro?

James Baldwin: I don't think -- to put it as simply as I can, without trying now to investigate whatever the motives of any given Muslim leader may be -- it is the only movement in the country, what you can call grass roots -- I hate to say that, but it's true, because it is only -- when Malcolm talks or one of the Muslims talks, they articulate for all the Negro people who hear them, who listen to them. They articulate their suffering, the suffering which has been in this country so long denied. That's Malcolm's great authority over any of his audiences. He corroborates their reality; he tells them that they really exist. You know?

Clark: Jim, do you think that this is a more effective appeal than the appeal of Martin Luther King?

Baldwin: It is much more sinister because it is much more effective. It is much more effective, because it is, after all, comparatively easy to invest a population with a false morale by giving them a false sense of superiority, and it will always break down in a crisis. It's the history of Europe, simply -- it's one of the reasons that we are in this terrible place. It is one of the reasons that we have five cops standing on the back of a woman's neck in Birmingham, because at some point they believed, they were taught and they believed, that they were better than other people because they were white. It leads to a moral bankruptcy. It is inevitable, it cannot but lead there²⁵."

²⁵ PBS. (n.d.). American Experience: TV's most-watched history series. Retrieved January 18, 2017, from <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/bonus-video/mlk-james-baldwin/>

As time moved forward, Malcolm X and James Baldwin would respectfully disagree on various topics related to matters that impacted black people in America and on racism in America. However, just two years after the assassination of Medgar Evers', another great leader was lost.

Baldwin, in describing his work on the film version of the Autobiography of Malcolm X, had this to say, "...since I had known Malcolm after all, had crossed swords with him, worked with him, and held in him in that great esteem which is not distinguishable, if it is distinguishable, from love²⁶."

Martin

Martin Luther King, Jr. was born on January 15th, 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia. The Nobel Prize Organization summarizes King's life very succinctly:

"In 1954, Martin Luther King became pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. Always a strong worker for civil rights for members of his race, King was, by this time, a member of the executive committee of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People." In 1955, he [led] "the first great Negro nonviolent demonstration of contemporary times in the United States, the bus boycott [which] lasted 382 days. On December 21, 1956, after the Supreme Court of the United States had declared unconstitutional the laws requiring segregation on buses, Negroes and whites rode the buses as equals. During these days of boycott, King was arrested, his home was bombed, he was subjected to personal abuse, but at the same time he emerged as a Negro leader of the first rank. In 1957 he was elected president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization formed to provide new leadership for the now burgeoning Civil Rights Movement. The ideals for this organization he took from Christianity; its operational techniques from Gandhi. In the eleven-year period between 1957 and 1968, King traveled over six million miles and spoke over twenty-five hundred times, appearing wherever there was injustice, protest, and action; and meanwhile he wrote five books as well as

²⁶ I Am Not Your Negro. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

numerous articles. In these years, he led a massive protest in Birmingham, Alabama, that caught the attention of the entire world, providing what he called a coalition of conscience. and inspiring his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail", a manifesto of the Negro revolution; he planned the drives in Alabama for the registration of Negroes as voters; he directed the peaceful march on Washington, D.C., of 250,000 people to whom he delivered his address, "I Have a Dream", he conferred with President John F. Kennedy and campaigned for President Lyndon B. Johnson; he was arrested upwards of twenty times and assaulted at least four times; he was awarded five honorary degrees; was named Man of the Year by *Time* magazine in 1963; and became not only the symbolic leader of American blacks but also a world figure. At the age of thirty-five, Martin Luther King, Jr., was the youngest man to have received the Nobel Peace Prize²⁷."

While working on the screen version of the Autobiography of Malcolm X on a bright day in Palm Springs, Baldwin and the entire country heard the words of Senator Robert Kennedy that stopped the nation in its tracks. Kennedy, was on a routine campaign stop in Indianapolis, and announced the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. saying, "I have some very sad news for all of you, and, I think, sad news for all of our fellow citizens, and people who love peace all over the world; and that is that Martin Luther King was shot and was killed tonight in Memphis, Tennessee. Martin Luther King dedicated his life to love and to justice between fellow human beings. He died in the cause of that effort. In this difficult day, in this difficult time for the United States, it's perhaps well to ask what kind of a nation we are and what direction we want to move in²⁸."

Baldwin recalled, "I hardly remember the rest of the evening at all. I remember weeping briefly, more in helpless rage than in sorrow...²⁹"

²⁷ Martin Luther King Jr. (n.d.). Retrieved January 18, 2017, from http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1964/king-bio.html

²⁸ American Rhetoric: Robert F. Kennedy -- Statement on the Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. (n.d.). Retrieved January 18, 2017, from <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/rfkonmlkdeath.html>

²⁹ *I Am Not Your Negro*. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

Of all his relationships with the three, Baldwin's relationship with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was the longest. Baldwin met King in 1957 during his first journey to the South. During this trip, and many subsequent trips after, Baldwin wrote of the racism that blacks faced in the South. He wrote of how blacks were being penalized for being black and he wrote about the insecurities of whites. In the eight years that followed his memorable trip, Baldwin would align some of his writings and lecture to the ideas of Dr. King.

Similar to King, Baldwin did not believe that all white people were devils or malicious. He credited the possibility of his own views on this to his white teacher Orilla "Bill" Miller, who had been influential on the cultural and artistic development of his earlier years. Baldwin believed that King's methods of protest took a lot of strength because it required the ability to endure the subsequent violence. King also ingested Baldwin's writings and allowed him to write a piece about him for Harper's Magazine in February 1961, entitled, *The Dangerous Road Before Martin Luther King*.

I Am Not Your Negro shows clips of Dr. King's funeral. Baldwin's words were filled with raw emotion, and provide a sense of the profound loss that was felt with the assassination of Martin. "The church was packed...I have a childhood handover thing about not weeping in public. I was concentrating on holding myself together. I did not want to weep for Martin. Tears seemed futile, but I could also have been afraid, and I could have not been the only one. I was afraid that if I started to weep, that I would not be able to stop. I started to cry and I stumbled³⁰."

Ultimately, *I Am Not Your Negro*, does what Baldwin set out to do, and provides insight into the lives of three men who helped to shape the history of America. "As concerns Malcolm and Martin, I watched two men coming from considerably different backgrounds, whose positions were poles apart, driven closer and closer together. By the time each died, their positions had become virtually the same position. It can be said indeed that Martin picked up Malcolm's position. Articulated the vision which Malcolm had begun to see, and for which he paid with his life. And that Malcolm was one of the

³⁰ *I Am Not Your Negro*. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

people that Martin saw on the mountain top. Medgar was too young to have seen this happen, though he hoped for it, and would not have been surprised³¹.”

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³¹ I Am Not Your Negro. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

The Influence of Educators, Arts, and Culture on James Baldwin

In David Leeming's book, "James Baldwin: An Autobiography," he expands on the relationship between Orilla "Bill" Miller, and James Baldwin. In *I Am Not Your Negro*, Baldwin states that Bill Miller was, "a young white schoolteacher, a beautiful woman, very important to me...whom I loved absolutely...it was certainly partly because of her, who arrived in my terrifying life so soon that I never really managed to hate white people³²." Leeming, in his work implies that Bill Miller saw in Baldwin, a student far ahead of his time. She was the Theatre Project intern, and he became her special assistant. She also in that role directed his first play. They discovered that they were interested in some of the same works of literature and arts which included a "common interest in [Charles] Dickens³³."

Miller essentially provided Baldwin with an alternate education to the one he received at school. Leeming stated that, "The experiences with Bill and Henrietta Miller and later Evan Winfield shared with Jimmy Baldwin provided a formative supplemental education during his elementary and junior years. In effect, the Winfield-Millers included him in their family, not only sharing cultural activities but making him a participant in their political discussions. Later Baldwin would often say that his association with Bill Miller gave intellectual support to his instinctive resistance to the oppression he already knew firsthand³⁴."

With Miller, Baldwin was able to absorb Macbeth, works by Charles Dickens, and many movies. He found *20,000 Years in Sing Sing* and *A Tale of Two Cities* to be two of the most memorable that he saw. "Movies...had introduced [Baldwin] to a wider world, giving him a sense of human experience beyond his own situation³⁵."

Baldwin was also influenced heavily by two African American teachers at the Frederick Douglass Junior High School—Countee Cullen and Herman Porter. Cullen for example, "brought him into the school's literary club, which he founded, and spent a great deal of

³² *I Am Not Your Negro*. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

³³ Leeming, D. A. (2015). *James Baldwin: a biography*. New York: Arcade Publishing. Chapter 2

³⁴ Leeming, D. A. (2015). *James Baldwin: a biography*. New York: Arcade Publishing. Chapter 2

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time working with him on both poetry and fiction³⁶.” It was also during this time that Baldwin started learned French, and shared with his teachers his desire to go to France. Porter is credited with “[getting] him started at the library; it became an important sanctuary during the rest of his school years³⁷.” The influence of his teachers had a major impact on Baldwin. Leeming states that with Porter, “Most important, a black man the boy respected and admired corroborated what Bill Miller was trying to show him, that culture and learning, even when downtown, were part of his birthright³⁸.”

It would then appear that Baldwin the artist, the writer, the prolific speaker was encouraged from a young age to observe life from both within and beyond his own circumstances, and to allow the influence of literature, theatre, arts, and music to inspire him to his own greatness.

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Baldwin and the Importance of Letters

James Baldwin gave the world a gift whenever he sat to put pen to paper. Over the course of his career, he created a wide collection of novels, essays, plays, and poems. But there was something else—before the age of social media and the ability to send a quick email, Baldwin also penned hundreds of letters to a wide range of individuals—family, friends, and political figures. The *I Am Not Your Negro* documentary actually starts off with a letter to Jay Acton—his literary agent. Baldwin writes, “My dear Jay...I will confess to you that I am writing this in a somewhat divided frame of mind...”³⁹ The letter goes on to outline Baldwin’s plan for the work “Remember this House,” that he planned to write which would provide insight into not only race in America, but also into his relationships with Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King, Jr.

There is an importance to letters especially as it relates to learning about history. Letters are a primary source, and that makes them an important tool for conducting research, and for learning about history. A primary source provides direct firsthand evidence about an event, object, person, or work of art⁴⁰. Primary sources include historical and legal documents, eyewitness accounts, speeches, creative writing and other objects. Primary sources may provide the reader and the researcher with important questions and things to think about. What is the purpose of the source? What is the author trying to get across? What do we know about the author⁴¹? These are all questions that can be asked when reading or researching a letter from Baldwin.

Baldwin’s voice echoes from the pages of his letters, and give us deep insight into his frame of mind, and a reflection of what was going on in his life, and in the country on a micro and macro level. The Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Yale University alone houses over 103 of Baldwin’s letters—mostly to his friends Mary Painter, Eugene Lerner, and his biographer David Leeming. The curator of the prose and drama

³⁹ *I Am Not Your Negro*. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

⁴⁰ Primary and Secondary Sources. (n.d.). Retrieved January, 2017, from <https://library.ithaca.edu/sp/subjects/primary>

⁴¹ Seidman, R. (n.d.). History. Retrieved January, 2017, from <https://apps.carleton.edu/curricular/history/resources/study/primary/>

collection, Melissa Barton, stated, “This remarkable archive provides a window into Baldwin’s thinking while he was an emerging writer and during the peak of his literary fame...these materials will doubtlessly enhance our understanding of this brilliant and complex man⁴².”

While Baldwin penned letters from all over the world, and to many different individuals, this section will focus on three letters that showcase the importance of Baldwin’s letters not only in content, but also in the myriad of recipients of his letters—family, president, contemporary... The letters featured in this section are: A letter printed in *The Progressive Magazine* in December, 1962 which was written to Baldwin’s nephew James. An Open Letter to My Sister Angela Davis, and An Open Letter to Jimmy Carter.

To James

The first letter was written to Baldwin’s nephew, James. The letter shows a certain level of intimacy and care towards his nephew. He also attempts to explain to young James how to interact with his white countrymen. What results is a power lesson to his young relative. “I keep seeing your face, which is also the face of your father and my brother... There is no reason for you to try to become like white men and there is no basis whatever for their impertinent assumption that they must accept you. The really terrible thing, old buddy, is that you must accept them, and I mean that very seriously. You must accept them and accept them with love, for these innocent people have no other hope. They are in effect still trapped in a history which they do not understand and until they understand it, they cannot be released from it. They have had to believe for many years, and for innumerable reasons, that black men are inferior to white men. Many of them indeed know better, but as you will discover, people find it very difficult to act on what they know. To act is to be committed and to be committed is to be in danger. In

⁴² Beinecke Library Acquires Trove of Letters by Author James Baldwin. (n.d.). Retrieved January 17, 2017, from <http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/about/news/beinecke-library-acquires-trove-letters-author-james-baldwin>

this case the danger in the minds and hearts of most white Americans is the loss of their identity⁴³.”

To Angela

In Baldwin’s letter to political activist and scholar Angela Davis, he discusses the system which he finds to have been so oppressive towards blacks in America. “We know that we, the blacks, and not only we, the blacks, have been, and are, the victims of a system whose only fuel is greed, whose only god is profit. We know that the fruits of this system have been ignorance, despair, and death, and we know that the system is doomed because the world can no longer afford it—if, indeed, it ever could have. And we know that, for the perpetuation of this system, we have all been mercilessly brutalized, and have been told nothing but lies, lies about ourselves and our kinsmen and our past, and about love, life, and death, so that both soul and body have been bound in hell⁴⁴.”

To President Jimmy Carter

In 1977, Baldwin penned an open letter to then president Jimmy Carter. His letter began, “I have a thing to tell you, but it is with a heavy heart, for it is not a new thing⁴⁵.” This line said so much about the perpetuating force of racism and of the conditions that black had faced for so long in America. His letter also voiced the concerns of his friend, the actress Ruby Dee, and the worry of many African-Americans across the country that if there was no atonement, if there was not an end to what was happening to blacks, there may be a bleak future ahead. “Or, as my friend the actress Miss Ruby Dee once put it to me, after four girls were killed in the 1963 bombing of the Birmingham Sunday School, and as we were trying to organize a protest rally--to demand, in fact--that the American

⁴³ A Letter to My Nephew | The Progressive. (2014, December 4). Retrieved January, 2017, from <http://www.progressive.org/news/2014/12/5047/letter-my-nephew>

⁴⁴ An Open Letter to My Sister, Miss Angela Davis. (n.d.). Retrieved January, 2017, from <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1971/01/07/an-open-letter-to-my-sister-miss-angela-davis/>

⁴⁵ Baldwin, J. (1977, January 23). An Open Letter to Mr. Carter. Retrieved January, 2017, from <http://www.nytimes.com/books/98/03/29/specials/baldwin-carter.html>

people, in the light of so dreadful an event, declare Christmas a day of mourning, of atonement: "Soon, there won't be enough black people to go around"⁴⁶."

These three letters to three people of different ideologies and who had different meanings to Baldwin all reveal that no matter what he was doing or to whom he was corresponding with, the issue of race in America was never far from his mind.

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⁴⁶ Baldwin, J. (1977, January 23). An Open Letter to Mr. Carter. Retrieved January, 2017, from <http://www.nytimes.com/books/98/03/29/specials/baldwin-carter.html>

France as a Haven for African Americans

When *I Am Not Your Negro* begins, Baldwin writes from France, where he had been living. It was not unique for him as an African-American artist to have fled for France after finding his own country overflowing with racism. Lua Yuille writes that, “For African Americans living in a country that they perceive as overflowing with prejudice, France has come to represent the opportunity and security missing in America. France is seen as a Black Haven, a safe place⁴⁷.” There appears to have been the perception of many African Americans that in France, the issue of color was different than how it was in America. “In the words of a World War I black American soldier, French people don’t bother with any color line business. They treat us so good that the only time I ever know I’m colored is when I look in the glass⁴⁸.” One such famous American soldier was Eugene Bullard. Bullard was the world’s first black combat aviator, and in 1959 he was made a Knight of the French Legion of Honor by French President Charles de Gaulle⁴⁹. That is France’s highest ranking order and distinction.

Many African American artists and performers during much of the early and mid-twentieth century also chose to settle in Paris. These individuals came from a wide array of backgrounds. Tyler Stovall stated that, “Throughout the twentieth century a small population of African Americans has chosen to leave the United States and make a new home for itself in the French capital...Those engaged in the creative arts, especially musicians, generally assumed pride of place in both the reality and representations of African American life in Paris. However, the community has also included students, business men and women, athletes, housewives, fashion models, soldiers, and journalists⁵⁰.” These artist and performers included among them Nina

⁴⁷ Yuille, L. K. (2001, April 01). African Americans and the Myth of a Colorblind France. Retrieved January, 2017, from <http://saisjournal.org/posts/a-black-haven>

⁴⁸ Yuille, L. K. (2001, April 01). African Americans and the Myth of a Colorblind France. Retrieved January, 2017, from <http://saisjournal.org/posts/a-black-haven>

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⁵⁰ HARLEM-SUR-SEINE: BUILDING AN AFRICAN AMERICAN DIASPORIC COMMUNITY IN PARIS. (n.d.). Retrieved January 15, 2017, from <http://web.stanford.edu/group/SHR/5->

Simone and Josephine Baker. Josephine Baker was not only a very sophisticated and much celebrated performer; she also served the French during World War II and was later awarded the Medal of the Resistance with Rosette and named a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor⁵¹. While she was much celebrated across Europe, racism prevented her from achieving that same level of success in her home country—the United States of America.

One of the reasons behind Baldwin's choice to go to France may have had to do with his friendship with fellow writer, Richard Wright. Stovall also stated that,

“The African American community was reborn in Paris after the Liberation, more vigorous and numerous than before. Roughly fifteen hundred blacks from the United States lived in the French capital between 1944 and 1968, renewing old traditions and establishing new ones. In the 1950s in particular, the golden age of black American literature in Paris, writers replaced jazz musicians as the prototypical expatriates, and the black American community of Paris was dominated by one man, Richard Wright. The author of *Native Son* and *Black Boy* had left New York for Paris in protest against both racism and McCarthyite politics in 1947. He would spend the rest of his life in Parisian exile. The leading black writer of his generation, Wright soon became a symbol of black expatriates and the politics of exile. He used his contacts to persuade several other African American writers, most notably James Baldwin and Chester Himes, to join him in the French capital. Wright and his associates not only pursued an active social life in the cafes and jazz clubs of the Latin Quarter and Saint-Germain-des-Prés, but also founded a political organization, the French American Fellowship, to pursue the fight against racism internationally⁵².”

2/stoval.html

⁵¹ The Official Josephine Baker Website. (n.d.). Retrieved January, 2017, from <http://www.cmgww.com/stars/baker/about/biography.html>

⁵² HARLEM-SUR-SEINE: BUILDING AN AFRICAN AMERICAN DIASPORIC COMMUNITY IN PARIS. (n.d.). Retrieved January 15, 2017, from <http://web.stanford.edu/group/SHR/5-2/stoval.html>

From France, Baldwin and others had the opportunity to practice their craft, without feeling the weight of racism over their shoulders as intensely as in America. In the documentary, Baldwin states, "Nothing worse could happen to him there, than could happen here [America]... it is hard to sit at a typewriter and concentrate on that, when you are afraid of the world around you⁵³." Europe gave him back himself. "The immediate fruit of self-recovery was a great creative outburst⁵⁴." Baldwin once told the New York Times that being in France allowed him to see himself clearly. "Once I found myself on the other side of the ocean, I see where I came from very clearly...I am the grandson of a slave, and I am a writer. I must deal with both.⁵⁵" The world may owe a debt of thanks to Paris for the safe haven that it provided in helping to cultivate not only the talents of Baldwin, but also the talents of so many talented African Americans.

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Major Organizations during the Civil Rights Movement

During the Civil Rights Movement, several organizations were very vocal and well known for their efforts to fight against injustice. Baldwin mentions the different groups in various writings, interviews and speeches; Baldwin did work with some of the groups, but not all.

1) *Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)*

Former SNCC member Julian Bond stated that, “a SNCC legacy is the destruction of the psychological shackles which had kept black southerners in physical and mental peonage; SNCC helped break those chains forever. It demonstrated that ordinary women and men, young and old, could perform extraordinary tasks⁵⁶.”

The SNCC was established in April 1960 at Shaw University through the efforts of civil rights activist Ella Baker who worked as an official at the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Baker had been organizing students who were participating in the sit-ins. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had wanted the students to work with SCLC but they were encouraged by Baker to create an independent organization. James Lawson, a then theology student at Vanderbilt University, wrote the mission statement for the group. “We affirm the philosophical or irreligious ideals of nonviolence as the foundation of our purpose, the presupposition of our faith, and the manner of our action. Nonviolence as it grows from Judaic-Christian traditions seeks a social order of justice permeated by love⁵⁷.”

The SNCC worked throughout the South during the Civil Rights Movement to organize protests, sit-ins, and to help with voter registration. The group organized activists and students to participate in the Freedom Rights of 1961. They were also one of the major

⁵⁶ SNCC Changed American Politics in Pursuit of Freedom, Bond Says. (2016, May 25). Retrieved January 17, 2017, from http://content.law.virginia.edu/news/2010_spr/bond.htm

⁵⁷ Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). (n.d.). Retrieved January, 2017, from <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/student-nonviolent-coordinating-committee-sncc>

organizers of the August 1963 March on Washington. Activist turned US Senator John Lewis was also once the chairman of the SNCC⁵⁸.

By the late 1960's the tone of the organization had changed from nonviolence to changing their name to reflect the change in philosophy. The group became, "Student National Coordinating Committee." One member, James Forman believed that nonviolence might not be the only strategy to them overcoming racism. Later, when Stokely Carmichael became the leader of the group, he coined the term "black power"⁵⁹.

2) *Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)*

CORE was established in Chicago in 1942 by James Farmer⁶⁰, and membership was opened to "anyone who believes that all people are created equal and willing to work towards the ultimate goal of true equality throughout the world"⁶¹. CORE was also another organization that believed in the strategy of nonviolence. They were fundamental in organizing and participating in many of the events with SNCC⁶². "In the early 1960s, CORE, working with other civil rights groups, launched a series of initiatives: the Freedom Rides, aimed at desegregating public facilities, the Freedom

⁵⁸ Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). (n.d.). Retrieved January, 2017, from <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/student-nonviolent-coordinating-committee-sncc>

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Summer voter registration project and the historic 1963 March on Washington⁶³". In her book, "The Critical Reception of James Baldwin 1963-2010: An Honest Man and A Good Writer," Consuela Francis mentions that in 1963, Baldwin embarked on a lecture tour for CORE. "He lectured widely throughout the South, and made numerous appearances on TV and radio⁶⁴." At one point, Baldwin also served on CORE's national advisory board⁶⁵.

3) *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)*

The NAACP was founded in 1909, and it is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights based organization⁶⁶. During the Civil Rights era, the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund helped to outlaw segregation in public school. They also helped to advance the passages of the Civil Rights Acts and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Rosa Parks was a chapter secretary for the NAACP, and when she refused to give up her seat in the front of a public bus, that helped to launch the Montgomery Bus Boycotts. Medgar Evers, Baldwin's friend, was also a Field Secretary for the NAACP in Mississippi⁶⁷. His work made him and his family a target for pro-segregationist violence. He was later assassinated in front of his home, and this tragic incident left an indelible mark on Baldwin.

4) *Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)*

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference was established in 1957 to help coordinate the efforts of local protest groups in the South. The catalyst for the formation of the group was the Montgomery Bus Boycotts⁶⁸. They operated under the leadership

⁶³ History.com Staff. (2009). Congress of Racial Equality. Retrieved January 17, 2017, from <http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/congress-of-racial-equality>

⁶⁴ Francis, C. (2014). *The critical reception of James Baldwin, 1963-2010: "an honest man and a good writer"*. Rochester, NY: Camden House.

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⁶⁶ Oldest and Boldest. (n.d.). Retrieved January, 2017, from <http://www.naacp.org/oldest-and-boldest/>

⁶⁷ Oldest and Boldest. (n.d.). Retrieved January, 2017, from <http://www.naacp.org/oldest-and-boldest/>

⁶⁸ Khan Academy. (n.d.). Retrieved January, 2017, from <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/postwarera/civil-rights->

of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., with the combined efforts of black churches across the South. What made the organization different was that they were an umbrella of organizations. “SCLC differed from organizations such as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, in that it operated as an umbrella organization of affiliates. Rather than seek individual members, it coordinated with the activities of local organizations like the Montgomery Improvement Association and the Nashville Christian Leadership Council. “The life-blood of SCLC movements,” as described in one of its pamphlets, “is in the masses of people who are involved—members of SCLC and its local affiliates and chapters” (“This is SCLC,” 1971). To that end, SCLC staff such as Andrew Young and Dorothy Cotton trained local communities in the philosophy of Christian nonviolence by conducting leadership training programs and opening citizenship schools. Through its affiliation with churches and its advocacy of nonviolence, SCLC sought to frame the struggle for civil rights in moral terms⁶⁹.”

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[movement/a/sncc-and-core](https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/postwarera/civil-rights-movement/a/sncc-and-core)

⁶⁹ Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). (n.d.). Retrieved January, 2017, from http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_southern_christian_leadership_conference_sclc/

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World Events during the Life of James Baldwin

There were many major world events that took place during James Baldwin's life. His teacher Orilla "Bill" Miller taught him a lot about what was going on in the greater world—beyond New York. In the *I Am Not Your Negro* documentary, Baldwin describes how Bill taught him about Italy, Ethiopia, and the Third Reich of Nazi Germany⁷⁰. He also describes the impact of each race not knowing what was going on in the homes and communities of the other⁷¹. Imagining that to be the case, it seems as though, knowing what was happening on the other side of the world was less important. However, the education that Baldwin received about other cultures, and other world events, allowed him to know that there was a greater world out there beyond America.

It is interesting to note some of the larger events that occurred during the life and times of James Baldwin. Baldwin was born in 1924, which means that he was alive during the Great Depression (1929). He was a young man during the Holocaust and during World War II. He also lived through the Cold War, the Korean War, the Algerian War, and the Vietnam War⁷².

It is hard to imagine that Baldwin was not influenced by both international and domestic incidents. In 1948, he moved to Paris, and this moved inspired his novel, "Giovanni's Room." In 1953, the year the Korean War ended, Baldwin's most famous novel, "Go Tell It on the Mountain," was published. Baldwin had finished writing "Go Tell It on the Mountain" in Switzerland.⁷³ In 1955, Emmett Till, a 14 year old African American teenager was viciously lynched by a mob in Mississippi. In 1964, James Baldwin wrote his second play inspired by Till's murder, "Blues for Mr. Charlie." His book, "No Name on the Street" was written and it contained essays which dealt not only with issues of

⁷⁰ *I Am Not Your Negro*. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

⁷¹ *I Am Not Your Negro*. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

⁷² James Baldwin. (n.d.). Retrieved January, 2017, from <https://www.preceden.com/timelines/63474-james-baldwin>

⁷³ Biographical Timeline. (2013, August 01). Retrieved January 17, 2017, from <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/james-baldwin-biographical-timeline/2667/>

the Civil Rights Movement and influential individuals from that time, but it also touched on the Algerian War.⁷⁴

His sixth novel, "Just Above My Head," published in 1979 is described as a novel that, "tells the life story of a group of friends, from preaching in Harlem, through to experiencing incest, war, poverty, the civil rights struggle, as well as wealth and love and fame in Korea, Africa, Birmingham, New York and Paris⁷⁵." In 1985, Baldwin published "The Evidence of Things Not Seen," a nonfiction work about the Atlanta Child Murders that took place from 1979-1981 and the trial of Wayne Williams, an African American man convicted of the crimes. Kirkus called the work a "stinging indictment of racial stagnation⁷⁶."

Baldwin passed away in 1987 in France, but before he passed away he left the world a vast collection of his works. Baldwin's works are a great chronology of the issues not only facing the United States on topics that range from civil rights, the Church, relationships and oppression, but also the issues that were facing the world at large during this lifetime.

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⁷⁴ James Baldwin. (n.d.). Retrieved January, 2017, from <https://www.preceden.com/timelines/63474-james-baldwin>

⁷⁵ James Baldwin. (n.d.). Retrieved January, 2017, from <https://www.preceden.com/timelines/63474-james-baldwin>

⁷⁶ Kirkus Reviews "The Evidence of Things Not Seen," Review. September 15, 1985 <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/james-baldwin/evidence-things-not-seen/>

Resource Links:

<https://www.preceden.com/timelines/63474-james-baldwin>

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/james-baldwin-biographical-timeline/2667/>

Where Do We Go From Here?

The question that we are all left with after ingesting *I Am Not Your Negro* and of being in contemplation of the words of Baldwin, and of his life, and of the lives of Malcolm X, Medgar Evers, and Martin Luther King, Jr. is where do we go from here? It is certain that wherever we will go, that the journey will take courage. “[Miles Eisele states that], Courage often means standing firm after all other means have failed...A truly courageous person—or nation—senses that life is transitory and swift, and that there are more important and lasting principles to serve than one’s own safety or the length of his days.⁷⁷”

In 1963, Dr. Kenneth Clark, hosted the program, *The Negro and the American Promise*. The guests were James Baldwin, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King, Jr. During that program, Baldwin revealed the uncertain feeling which many blacks faced in America, “there are days when you wonder what your role is in this country, and what your future is in it⁷⁸.”

The documentary, *I Am Not Your Negro*, provides a juxtaposition of modern day America with America during the Civil Rights era. The film shows for example, clips of Oakland in 1968, and also clips of Ferguson, MO in 2014⁷⁹. African American’s fight against injustice in the 1960’s parallel’s contemporary movements such as Black Lives Matter, founded in 2013. The fight against injustice by Blacks is still greeted with the same reaction today as it was then. “If any white man in the world says, ‘Give me liberty or give me death,’ the entire white world applauds,” Baldwin tells talk show host Dick Cavett, in a scene from the documentary. “When a black man says exactly the same thing, he is judged a criminal and treated like one and everything possible is done to make an example of this bad nigger so there won’t be any more like him⁸⁰.”

⁷⁷ Johnson, J. (1963). What Courage Means. *Black World/Negro Digest*,XII(12), 31.

⁷⁸ Baldwin, J., & Clark, K. (1963). There is No Compromise. *Black World/Negro Digest*,XII(12), 25-31.

⁷⁹ See, *I Am Not Your Negro*. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

⁸⁰ Brathwaite, L. F. (2017, January 05). James Baldwin Still Speaking Truth to Power in 'I Am Not Your Negro' Trailer. Retrieved January 17, 2017, from <http://www.out.com/movies/2017/1/05/james-baldwin-still-speaking-truth-power-i-am-not-your-negro-trailer>

The writer Toni Morrison said of James Baldwin upon his death, “Jimmy, there is too much to think about you, and too much to feel. The difficulty is your life refuses summation - it always did - and invites contemplation instead⁸¹.” When James Baldwin decided to write “Remember This House,” it was after many years of witnessing, of taking action, and of contemplation. He had seen firsthand the effects of racism in America, and he had a plan, “to write a book called “Remember This House” about the interconnections between the three assassinated leaders who were also his friends: Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr⁸².” In this book, Baldwin wanted, “these three lives to bang against and reveal each other as in truth they did, and use their dreadful journey as a means of instructing the people whom they loved so much, who betrayed them, and for whom they gave their lives⁸³.”

“I Am Not Your Negro” is an instructional guide which echoes loudly from the pages of history. It reminds us of the dream, of the sacrifices, and of the work still yet to be done. In his own words, Baldwin said, “*I have a dream*. One looks around this country now, remembering those words, and that passion. A vast amount of love and faith and passion and blood, have gone into the attempt to transform and liberate this nation. To look around the United States today is enough to make prophets and angels weep, and, certainly, the children’s teeth are set on edge. This is not the land of the free; it is only very unwillingly and sporadically the home of the brave, and all that can be said for the bulk of our politicians is that, if they are no worse than they were, they are certainly no better. *I have a dream*⁸⁴.”

The question of what will happen to this country has also been answered by Baldwin in the documentary. “It is not a question of what happens to the Negro. Baldwin says, a look of inexpressible weariness crossing his face. The real question is what is going to

⁸¹ Morrison, T. (1987, December 20). JAMES BALDWIN : HIS VOICE REMEMBERED; Life in His Language. Retrieved January 17, 2017, from

<http://www.nytimes.com/books/98/03/29/specials/baldwin-morrison.html>

⁸² Turan, K. (2016, December 8). James Baldwin is illuminated, with dizzying multimedia savvy, in *I Am Not Your Negro*. Retrieved January 17, 2017, from

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⁸³ *I Am Not Your Negro*. Dir. Raoul Peck. Magnolia Pictures. 2017. Film.

⁸⁴ Baldwin, J., & Kenan, R. (2010). *The cross of redemption: uncollected writings*. New York: Pantheon Books. P.131-132

happen to this country. This is the theme, the idea that what's really at stake in racial matters is America's soul that Baldwin returns to again and again in the course of the film⁸⁵." Baldwin said, "You cannot lynch me and keep me in ghettos without becoming something monstrous yourselves. And furthermore, you give me a terrifying advantage: you never had to look at me; I had to look at you. I know more about you than you know about me. Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced⁸⁶." Baldwin calls to the populous through this documentary to face itself, as a nation and as a people so that real change can occur.

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HOW THE FILM, “I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO” CAN BE USED IN THE CLASSROOM

The power of the indomitable human spirit in Raoul Peck’s film *I Am Not Your Negro*, as captured in this major motion picture; was evidenced by James Baldwin’s thoughts and words that defined his ability to intellectually and politically engage in civic activism and observance of world events and civic protest. The film serves to chronicle Baldwin’s ability to dismantle the social norms and misguided beliefs of American society. The accompanying resources in the classroom are aligned to the Common Core curriculum standards for college and career readiness to scaffold the learning.

The following lesson plans will expound on the various conversations that converge on-screen in the film *I Am Not Your Negro*, a visual essay that highlights the dichotomy of world events, United States events, and life events of James Baldwin. It is an exemplar of one man’s historic civic engagement in the turbulence of the Civil Rights era and beyond; with the power of his pen, his words, and his actions, in an attempt to highlight the contradictions and unfulfilled guarantees America promised to its citizenship.

In order for students to understand the significance of the film *I Am Not Your Negro*, Educators must have a composite of resources that explicate the historical nuances, large and small, that are highlighted in the film. They must also possess the connections to present day realities that are also illuminated in the film which will serve to linchpin conversations in the classrooms that allow students to explicate the

messages that undergird the links and lineages from the past to the present, so that *I Am Not Your Negro* can be a powerful resource to use in the classroom.

I Am Not Your Negro is an exceptional teaching tool that exemplifies the power of film and allows for the layering of resources to bring the textbooks and works of literature alive and catapult historical figures of the Civil Rights Era, off the pages onto the big screen for 21st century students. It is an in-depth visual montage that humanizes people, places, and events that are too often reduced in textbooks to a series of facts that do not allow for students to truly understand the exigency, the strategies, realities, and triumphs that lead to an understanding of the full narrative of the struggles in American history – that are still on-going.

To take full advantage of this film in the classroom, you may use in concert, the accompanying lessons and essay to the educator, that provide contextual material that encompasses the themes and ideas, and events espoused in the film through James Baldwin's narration. The following lessons can be scaffolded to cover various intersections in the teaching of English/Language Arts, American and World History/Social Studies and the humanities. The lessons are also interdisciplinary – and can cover four major areas of - applied mathematics, geography, English/Language Arts (ELA) and History/Civics. The lessons are geared towards non-grade specific secondary education students as well as college students; and will allow for differential instruction considerations for the teachers. They can be utilized at various points during the teaching year in-totality or in-part and include:

- 13 lesson interdisciplinary projects for the classroom - that can be adapted for either ELA, History, Civics and Applied Mathematics with links to primary and secondary resources, a library of documents, and accompanying blubs of varied speeches, Excerpts from literature, maps, samples of song lyrics and poetry that serve to narrate the historiography, life events, and long standing legacies of the United States, as well as James Baldwin, Malcolm X, Medgar Evers, Martin Luther King, Jr. The historical essay to the Educator is peppered with information that attempts to extend, and ignite questions to consider while covering some of the issues and topics highlighted. Scene excerpts from the film that can be used in the classroom with discussion questions, and interviews with the cast that brings the characterizations of the heroes an sheroes in the film to life for students are all available.

All of these resources are presented on a user-friendly downloadable online platform, and will be available to Educators throughout the country.

Indexed Lesson Plans According to the National Council of Social Studies

The following is an index of lesson plans according to the standards:

Lesson #1 - In their own words – Voices from the Movement Past and Present – Voices of Tenacity, Hope and the American Dream - (ELA/History/Civics/) Geared towards secondary education settings/post secondary settings NCSS Standard 1-c,d,e; Standard 2-c,d; Standard 4 – g,h; Standard 5-c,g; Standard 9-e

Lesson #2 - An Artist Life in Praxis within American History (Literary Insurrection and the Pursuit of Freedom)

(ELA / History / Social Studies /Civics / Geography) Geared towards / secondary education/post secondary settings

- NCSS Standard 1-a,b,c,d,e; Standard 2b,c,e; Standard 3-a,g; Standard 4-d,g; Standard 5-e; Standard 5-e; Standard 6 –a; Standard 6-a: Standard 6-a; Standard 7-d; Standard 7-d; Standard 9-b; Standard 10-j

Lesson # 3: The Literary World of James Baldwin - Art and Spoken Words Influences Influence in Freedom Movements and Ideologies (ELA History / Social Studies/Religion/Civics) - Geared towards Secondary and Post-Secondary education settings

- NCSS Standard 1-b,d; Standard 2-d,e,f; Standard 3-g; Standard 4-f,g,h; Standard 5-b,j,d,g; Standard 6-a,d; Standard 9-b,e,f; Standard 10-a,l,j

Lesson # 4: Chronicling by Illustration – Storyboarding James Baldwin’s Journey - Civil Discourse and Civil Engagement (ELA, Art, History) Geared towards secondary education, post-secondary settings

- NCSS Standard 1-a,b,d; Standard 2-a,c; Standard 3-g; Standard 4-f,g,h; Standard 5-a,b,d; Standard 9-b,f; Standard 10-f,g,h,j

Lesson # 5: Protest, Fear and Retribution on the National Stage (ELA, History/Civics) Geared towards secondary post-secondary education settings

- NCSS Standard 1-a,b,c,d; Standard 2-a,e,f; Standard 4-f,g,h; Standard 5-b,d,e,f,g; Standard 6-c,h; Standard 9-b,d,f; Standard 10-a,b,c,e,g,i

Lesson # 6 Documenting the Movement – James Baldwin in Real Time (ELA, History/Civics) Geared towards secondary / post-secondary education settings with modification for younger learners.

- NCSS Standard 1-a,b,c,d; Standard 2-a,e,f; Standard 4-f,g,h; Standard 5-b,d,e,f,g; Standard 6-c,h; Standard 9-b,d,f; Standard 10-a,b,c,e,g,i

Lesson # 7- Nothing Happens in a Vacuum - Causations and Consequences: Creating a Timeline of Events (Mathematics, History/Civics) - Geared toward secondary learners

- NCSS Standard 1-a,b,d;Standard 2-a,c; Standard 3-g;Standard 4-f,g,h; Standard 5-a,b,d; Standard 9-b,f; Standard 10-f,g,h,j

Lesson # 8 - The March to Selma –the Mathematics of the Journey An Applied Mathematics Project (Mathematics, Geography, ELA, History/Civics) Geared towards secondary education/post secondary settings

- NCSS Standard 1-a,b,c,d,e;Standard 2b,c,e;Standard 3-a,g;Standard 4-d,g;Standard 5-e; Standard 5-e; Standard 6 –a; Standard 6-a: Standard 6-a; Standard 7-d; Standard 7-d;Standard 9-b;Standard 10-j

Lesson # 9 - Debating the Revolt and Subsequent Outcomes - Taking a Side (ELA, History/Civics) Geared towards secondary / post-secondary education settings

- NCSS Standard 1-a,b,c,d;Standard 2-a,e,f; Standard 4-f,g,h; Standard 5-b,d,e,f,g;Standard 6-c,h; Standard 9-b,d,f;Standard 10-a,b,c,e,g,i

Lesson # 10 - A Dream Deferred - the Pursuit of Life, Liberty and Justice for All or Is It? Images Speak Volumes (ELA/History/Civics) Geared towards secondary education/post secondary settings with adaptations for younger learners

- NCSS Standard 1b,c,d,e;Standard 2b,c,e;Standard 3-a,b, c,d, g;Standard 4-d,g;Standard 5-e; Standard 5-e; Standard 6 –a; Standard 7-d; Standard 7-d;Standard 9-b;Standard 10-j

Lesson #11 - Imagery in Film and its Influence on a National Psyche (ELA, History/Civics/Film Studies/Sociology) Geared towards secondary education/post secondary settings

- NCSS Standard 1b,c,d,e;Standard 2b,c,e;Standard 3-a,b, c,d, g;Standard 4-d,g;Standard 5-e; Standard 5-e; Standard 6 –a; Standard 7-d; Standard 7-d;Standard 9-b;Standard 10-j

Lesson #12 “The Meeting” Baldwin’s Life on Stage - the Artist and Activist (ELA, History/Civics) Geared towards secondary education/post secondary settings

- NCSS Standard 1-a,b,c,d;Standard 2-a,e,f; Standard 4-f,g,h; Standard 5-b,d,e,f,g;Standard 6-c,h; Standard 9-b,d,f;Standard 10-a,b,c,e,g,i

Lesson #13 - Literature Legacies and A Final Farewell for Now – Toni bids Baldwin Adieu (ELA/History/Civics) Geared towards secondary education/post secondary settings

- NCSS Standard 1-b,d;Standard 2-d,e,f;Standard 3-g;Standard 4-f,g,h; Standard 5-b,j,d,g; Standard 6-a,d; Standard 9-b,e,f; Standard 10-a,l,j

I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO

VIDEO LESSON PROMPTS

The following video lesson prompts correlate to lesson plans and are available for download and streaming at BazanED.com.

Beneficiaries

Download or Stream the “Beneficiaries” Lesson Prompt for the motion picture *I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO*. This clip features two historic television interviews with James Baldwin responding to “why aren’t the Negroes optimistic,” and commenting on the state of the Negro in America.

Prompt Question: Can the beneficiaries of racism be counted on to dismantle racism?

Lesson Correlation: Lesson #1 - In their own words – Voices from the Movement Past and Present – Voices of Tenacity, Hope and the American Dream

Run Time: 1:32

Segregation

Download or Stream the “Segregation” Lesson Prompt for the motion picture *I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO*. This clip features James Baldwin at the Florida Forum in 1963 discussing apathy, ignorance and the impact of segregation in America.

Prompt Question: Second class citizenship is created and maintained by segregating the races. Which American institution are still heavily segregated?

Lesson Correlation: All

Run Time: 1:12

Nature of Oppression

Download or Stream the “Visible Leadership” Lesson Prompt for the motion picture *I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO*. This clip features James Baldwin appears on the Dick Cavett Show in 1968 a discusses the differences between actions taken by white Americans vs the treatment of black Americans for those same actions.

Prompt Question: Malcolm X, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Medgar Evers spearheaded movements dedicated to changing American society. All three were assassinated. Black Lives Matter has no distinct leadership. What is the strategy behind this choice? Why are black and brown countermeasures met with such overwhelming countermeasures?

Lesson Correlation: Lesson # 5: Protest, Fear and Retribution on the National Stage

Run Time: 1:20

North and South

Download or Stream the “Visible Leadership” Lesson Prompt for the motion picture ***I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO***. This clip features James Baldwin during a televised interview commenting on why white America “had to have a Nigger in the first place,” and the bleak future of the country.

Prompt Question: Is there an appreciable difference between racism in the North and in the South?

Lesson Correlation: Lesson #4 - Chronicling by Illustration – Storyboarding James Baldwin’s Journey - Civil Discourse and Civil Engagement

Run Time: :52

Lesson #1 - In their own words – Voices from the Movement Past and Present –Voices of Tenacity, Hope and the American Dream - (ELA/History/Civics/) Geared towards Secondary and Post-Secondary education settings with modifications for younger learners

Lesson Summary: The use of film as a visual essay - Raoul Peck's documentary *I Am Not Your Negro* begins in the middle of a televised conversation in 1968, between Dick Cavett and James Baldwin. Cavett asked - why "Negroes" aren't optimistic, even though "There are Negro mayors, there are Negroes in all of sports, there are Negroes in politics, they're even accorded the ultimate accolade of being in television commercials now." Baldwin's answer is resounding 48 years later: "It's not a question of what happens to the Negro here, the black man here," Baldwin says, "That's a very vivid question for me, you know, but the real question is what's going to happen to this country? I have to repeat that." Contemplating the continuities and contradictions that define our collective history, the film is built on Baldwin's unfinished project, "Remember This House," a book that was purposed to ruminate on the intertwining legacies of Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King Jr., and also on the nature of memory itself. It is positioned around a series of reflective essay letters written by Baldwin to his editor Jay Acton regarding the impacts of the death of Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, and Medgar Evers. His memory in those letters as chronicled in the film *I Am Not Your Negro* is structured by the brutalities and embattlements against racism in American culture. *I Am Not Your Negro* offers resistance. It looks both back on the events of the Civil Rights Movement, but also highlights the realities of today's racial climates (the events in Ferguson, police encounters, the Black Lives Movement), and postulates on the future; exploring the natural relationships James Baldwin makes

effortlessly between art and politics. Baldwin and Peck in this film examine America's assumptions with racist, stereotypes, and segregation, as well as declare future aspirations for race relations in this country- through an interpretative visual essay based on the Cavett's opening questions to Baldwin. It's a question that is still persistent, and more relevant - daily in the lives of Americans. The Question of where we go from here? It is a battle for the soul of America. The 1968 episode of the Dick Cavett Show was the linchpin of the film "I Am Not your Negro," the discussion and questions of the American relationship with racism and race and its battle for the redemption of America's "soul" have not been answered. The voices of our students might illuminate some answers and possible solutions.

Lesson Details:

Learning Activities:

1. Performance Task

- (1) This lesson can take place over several class periods - contingent on the size of class groups.
- 2) The use of letters writing, and reflective essay writing is a powerful teaching tool for students. It allows them to document and interpret events, giving meaning and credence to their opinions and importance.
- 3) **Students will be taught how to write a Reflective Essay – students will learn the parts of and execute reflective essays reminiscent of the writings of Baldwin to Acton, based on current events and America's social political culture.**
 - a) **Introduction:** A narrative essay doesn't necessarily have the same type of introduction as an expository or persuasive essay. The same principles, however, apply. A reflective essay should introduce the incident about which you are writing, including principal characters and setting.
 - b) **Body:** The body is the actual narrative part of the reflective essay. It recreates the incident with specific details. It must make the significance of the event clear.
 - c) **Conclusion:** The conclusion should reflect on the outcome of the incident and present the writer's feelings.
- 4) **Standards to Live By** - A reflective essay should:

- a) Focus on a clearly defined and well-developed incident. The incident may consist of a series of closely related incidents.
 - b) Provide background information.
 - c) Include the elements of a narrative: plot, characters, setting, conflict.
 - d) Organize events clearly. Chronological order works best. Skilled writers may want to incorporate flashbacks.
 - e) Use dialogue, if appropriate.
 - f) Include appropriate word choice.
 - g) Explain the significance of the incident.
 - h) Maintain a consistent point of view.
- 5) **Choosing the Incident** - The first step is choosing the incident. It can be something you experienced personally or something you witnessed but did not participate in. For ideas, brainstorm significant people, places, and things or writing "I remember when..." on the top of your paper and finishing it with as many things you can think of. Once you have chosen an incident, do the following:
1. **Test the topic.** Make sure you remember the incident well enough to write about it, understand the significance of it, your willingness to share it, and your ability to express the incident's impact.
 2. **Consider your audience and purpose.** Tailor the subject matter and the writing level to those who are most likely to read it.
 3. **List key events** - This will help you establish a foundation for the narrative.
- 6) **Drafting and Revising** - Theoretically, you have chosen a memory that has personal significance. If you find yourself losing interest as you write, you probably chose the wrong memory. Remember the following as you draft:
- Use the elements of a story and include necessary background information.
 - Include dialogue.
 - Use sensory details.

When revising make sure the following is clear:

- The significance of the event
- What actually happened

2. Assessment

1. the students' ability to evaluate documents using primary sources.

**Lesson # 2: An Artist Life in Praxis within American History
(Literary Insurrection and the Pursuit of Freedom)
(ELA History/ Social Studies/Civics/Geography) Geared towards
Secondary and Post-Secondary Settings)**

Lesson Summary: Who was James Baldwin? James Baldwin, prolific 20th Century, African American artist, writer, civil rights activist, social commentator was highlighted in the companion book to the film - ***I Am Not Your Negro: A Companion Edition to the Documentary Film Directed by Raoul Peck (Vintage International)*** uses striking archival footage to evoke the essence of Baldwin's life and work. The companion book was crafted by ***I Am Not Your Negro*** filmmaker Raoul Peck, who selected passages from Baldwin's books, essays, letters, notes, and interviews to postulate the book project that Baldwin never completed. The notes and letters that would have culminated in a Baldwin book about Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King, Jr, have never been previously published. This edition of the script contains black-and-white images from the film. Newsreel clips from the '60's record Baldwin's running commentary on the drama of the Civil Rights movement. The film also explores Baldwin's later life in Paris, the South of France, Istanbul, and Switzerland - places where Baldwin was able to write and expose his thoughts away from the racial tensions of America. The film gives us a glimpse into the inner life of James Baldwin.

Article/resources about - **[I Am Not Your Negro: A Companion Edition to the](#)**

[Documentary Film Directed by Raoul Peck \(Vintage International\)](#)

<https://www.amazon.com/i-am-not-your-negro/s?ie=UTF8&page=1&rh=i%3Aaps%2Ck%3Ai%20am%20not%20your%20negro>

Lesson Details:

Lesson Activities -

Have students research and watch the life events and social/political happenings in

based - **I Am Not Your Negro: A Companion Edition to the Documentary Film**

Directed by Raoul Peck (Vintage International) on the life of James Baldwin and the

film ***I Am Not Your Negro*** including mapping of event localities to understand the

pervasiveness of racism and segregation policies across all of America and the globe.

Read articles and biographies on James Baldwin What were the experiences that

formulated Baldwin's life, philosophies, and experiences?

- Direct students to learn more about James Baldwin independently choosing a specific facet of influence (literature, music, civil rights, protests, civil disobedience, philosophy, poetry, social commentary) as an exemplar of how the each sphere shifted local and national agendas.
- In class read the plethora of available resources, and/or one of numerous documentaries on James Baldwin - for example Peck's companion book which is available at the following link - <https://www.amazon.com/i-am-not-your-negro/s?ie=UTF8&page=1&rh=i%3Aaps%2Ck%3Ai%20am%20not%20your%20negro> and/or short documentaries on James Baldwin, and you may also follow the supporting links for more about James Baldwin.

Some on-line resources on James Baldwin (1924-1987) for students:

- <https://web.archive.org/web/20080420113813/http://falcon.imu.edu/~ramseyil/baldwin.htm>
- <https://www.c-span.org/person/?jamesbaldwin>
- <https://www.sam-network.org/video/race-political-struggle-art-and-the-human-condition>
- audio file - http://dpg.lib.berkeley.edu/webdb/mrc/search_vod.pl?avr=1
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8klsr2TB5pA>

Literary Works of James Baldwin:

Go Tell It on the Mountain (semi-autobiographical novel; 1953)

- *The Amen Corner* (play; 1954)
- *Notes of a Native Son* (essays; 1955)
- *Giovanni's Room* (novel; 1956)
- *Nobody Knows My Name: More Notes of a Native Son* (essays; 1961)
- *Another Country* (novel; 1962)
- *A Talk to Teachers* (essay; 1963)
- *The Fire Next Time* (essays; 1963)
- *Blues for Mister Charlie* (play; 1964)
- *Going to Meet the Man* (stories; 1965)
- *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* (novel; 1968)
- *No Name in the Street* (essays; 1972)
- *If Beale Street Could Talk* (novel; 1974)
- *The Devil Finds Work* (essays; 1976)
- *Just Above My Head* (novel; 1979)
- *Jimmy's Blues* (poems; 1983)
- *The Evidence of Things Not Seen* (essays; 1985)
- *The Price of the Ticket* (essays; 1985)
- *The Cross of Redemption: Uncollected Writings* (essays; 2010)
- *Jimmy's Blues and Other Poems* (poems; 2014)

Together with others:

- *Nothing Personal* (with Richard Avedon, photography) (1964)
- *A Rap on Race* (with Margaret Mead) (1971)
- *One Day When I Was Lost* (orig.: A. Haley; 1972)
- *A Dialogue* (with Nikki Giovanni) (1973)
- *Little Man Little Man: A Story of Childhood* (with Yoran Cazac, 1976)
- *Native Sons* (with Sol Stein, 2004)

Collections

- *Early Novels & Stories: Go Tell It on the Mountain, Giovanni's Room, Another Country, Going to Meet the Man* (Toni Morrison, ed.) (Library of America, 1998), ISBN 978-1-883011-51-2.
- *Collected Essays: Notes of a Native Son, Nobody Knows My Name, The Fire Next Time, No Name in the Street, The Devil Finds Work, Other Essays* (Toni Morrison, ed.) (Library of America, 1998), ISBN 978-1-883011-52-9.
- *Later Novels: Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone, If Beale Street Could Talk, Just Above My Head* (Darryl Pinckney, ed.) (Library of America, 2015), ISBN 978-1-59853-454-2.

Music/spoken word recordings

- *A Lover's Question* (CD, Les Disques Du Crépuscule – TWI 928-2, 1990)

Lesson # 3: The Literary World of James Baldwin - Art and Spoken Words Influences Influence in Freedom Movements and Ideologies (ELA History/ Social Studies/Religion/Civics) - Geared towards Secondary and Post-Secondary education settings

Lesson Summary: James Baldwin rejected the label "civil rights activist", although he had participated in a civil rights movement he was more aligned with Malcolm X's assertion that ones citizenship should eliminate ones need to fight as unequal participants for contractual constitutional rights of individuals promised, there should be no fight for one's civil rights. While he wrote about the movement, Baldwin aligned himself with the ideals of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). In 1963 he conducted a lecture tour of the South for CORE, traveling to locations like Durham and Greensboro, North Carolina and New Orleans, Louisiana. During the tour, he lectured to students, white liberals, and anyone else listening about his racial ideology, an ideological position between the "muscular approach" of Malcolm X and the nonviolent program of Martin Luther King, Jr. while advocating for voting rights like Medgar Evers. Art and social/political involvement cross pollinated often, as it still does today. Langston Hughes, Lorraine Hansberry, and James Baldwin elected themselves mentors for their contemporary, celebrated lyricist and musical icon singer Nina Simone. Simone's evolution into civil rights protest music songwriting and performance was a defining progression in her musicology as a socially prolific and conscious African American artist. Like Baldwin she had a stint as an expatriate in France, rejecting the racist segregation policies that stymied, confined and defined her artistry in America. Simone's civil-rights songs were according to Simone "the important ones." The civil rights movement is where she gained her

strength. It's also where her private anger took on public dimensions, in the years when patience gave way and the anger in many black communities could no longer be tamped down. Hence her penning and performance of the song - "Mississippi Goddam" In the state of Mississippi, there were legacies of decades of cruelty and violence waged against its African-American citizens. Many activists were abused, tortured and even killed with the approval, implicit if not overt, of the state's lawmakers and civil authorities. Among the victims was Medgar Evers -who is one of the three civil rights icons that was the centralized tenet of Baldwin's work of which *I Am Not Your Negro* is based. Evers was a World War II veteran turned high profile civil rights activist; president of the Regional Council of Negro Leadership and organizer for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Evers was instrumental in the state's civil rights movement and was of course assassinated in the driveway of his Jackson, Mississippi home on the morning of June 12, 1963. Evers's assassination horrified many, among them Baldwin and her friend Nina Simone, who composed "Mississippi Goddam" largely in response to the event.

- A RAISED VOICE *How Nina Simone turned the movement into music.*
By Claudia Roth Pierpont
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/08/11/raised-voice>
- Memoir in a Melody: The Outrage in Nina Simone's 'Mississippi Goddam' By MATT STAGGS - September 27, 2013
<http://www.signature-reads.com/2013/09/memoir-in-a-melody-the-outrage-in-nina-simones-mississippi-goddam/>
- Nina Simone - Mississippi Goddam
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hBiAtwQZnHs>
- lyrics - <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/ninasimone/mississippigoddam.html>

- **Lesson Details:**
 - **Learning Activities:**
 - Have students independently or in a group classroom jigsaw, research CORE/SNCC/ NAACP/ Freedom Summer and the Nation of Islam – what are they and what are their varied philosophies and methodologies for civil rights and civil engagement.
 - Have students independently or in a group classroom jigsaw, read the Declaration of Independence and the Black Panther Party’s Ten Point Platform and Program to analyze their similarities in language, tone and tenor. Have students discuss why they are received so differently although they can be viewed as parallel protest documents for inalienable human rights.
 - Listen to some of the speeches and recordings of James Baldwin and his opinions of these organizations and to these organizations.
 - Nina Simone - look at her discography – most especially during the 1960’s.
 - Analysis of the music of the movement, protest music, folk music, spoken word, taking special note of the lives and intersection of the artist with their involvement with the music and with each other.
 - Discussion and analysis on such topics that were birthed from the movements and from the music - Awakening such issues as voting rights, civil engagements, women’s movement, police brutality, political and social upheavals, disparities in civil and legal rights, redlining, equal opportunities, political power, electoral power etc.- has the sphere of influence in the music evolved with the current events worldwide today? How has it transcended into other manifestations in America?
 - Ask the students to bring in the lyrics to a modern day protest song - discuss the artist’s social/political sphere of influence - does their philosophy and associations come through in the music?

Lesson # 4 Chronicling by Illustration – Storyboarding James Baldwin’s Journey -Civil Discourse and Civil Engagement (ELA, Art, History) Geared towards Secondary education, and Post-Secondary settings with modifications for younger learners

Lesson Summary:

In this lesson, students will learn about the life history of James Baldwin life, from his experience as a child in New York City, his education and indoctrination and religious training as a youth, his confrontations with injustice under oppression, his preaching, the decision to plan an write, the depth of the canon of his literature, his status and commentary as an expatriate overseas, and the aftermaths and results of his sphere of influence. Students will also learn of his activism with film making and about James Baldwin as a visual essayist and a civil rights witness – in the documentary ***Take This Hammer***. ***Take This Hammer*** is a documentary film produced and directed by Baldwin. It features KQED's mobile film unit following author and activist James Baldwin in the spring of 1963, as he's driven around San Francisco to meet with members of the local African-American community. Baldwin's premise - racism is not siloed to the South. Experiences in urban Northern enclaves also beg for civil rights and civil justice - community redlining, employment, educational justice was needed in Northern urban enclaves, such as San Francisco that saw an influx of minority population growth vis-à-vis the second great migration of the 1940's for job opportunities in the Western states. In the film, Baldwin was escorted by Youth For Service's Executive Director Orville Luster to be a witness and speak first hand to residents, community leaders and people on the street in the Bayview and Western Addition neighborhoods of San Francisco. In Baldwin's own words from the film see "the real situation of Negroes in the city, as opposed to the image San Francisco would like to present." He declares: "There is no

moral distance ... between the facts of life in San Francisco and the facts of life in Birmingham. Someone's got to tell it like it is. And that's where it's at."

<https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/sfbatv/bundles/187041>

Lesson Details:

Learning Activities:

1. Although standardly geared towards younger learners, the storyboard teaching strategy helps students keep track of main ideas and supporting details and can be used with texts are/or read aloud, or after a film to help students summarize and retain main ideas of a story they have read to themselves or seen and interpreted. Checking the thoroughness and accuracy of students' storyboards is an effective way to evaluate reading comprehension before moving on to more analytic tasks. Storyboard teaching strategy help students visualize and make sense of this story. Students can share the storyboards in small groups. After you have checked that all students understand the basic ideas of the reading, the questions, "What strikes you most about this story? What scene or square of your storyboard most stands out to you?" can be used to start a discussion. With older students the technique is often a pleasant divergent from traditional assessment and expands the use of their analytical processing and by creating an inventive space to deconstruct the narrative artistically.
- Step 1: Watch the major motion picture ***I Am Not Your Negro***, ancillary documentaries ***Take This Hammer***, the companion book to the film - **I Am Not Your Negro: A Companion Edition to the Documentary Film Directed by Raoul Peck (Vintage International)** and video clips on the life of James Baldwin, or other experiences in the discussed communities or read the narrative of the events from various news accounts and personal testimony aloud or have students read silently to themselves.
 1. Allow students to be able to identified between primary and secondary sources in the telling of the stories
 2. Step 2: Provide a storyboard template for students or blank pieces of paper. (The template should have several blocks that are large enough for students to draw pictures with room for captions below.) You can find many storyboard templates online.

3. Step 3: With a small group or as individuals, ask students to draw the main ideas of a story. Students could do this after hearing a story aloud or while reading a story to themselves or after viewing the film. Each drawing should have a can have short caption explaining what is happening in the picture. You could also have students use relevant quotations from the story as captions. If you are looking for them to be really creative, tell the students that they are to use very limited words, that the main ideas must be displayed by their “pictures only”.
4. Step 4: You can then ask students to compare storyboards with a partner or as small groups. How are their storyboards similar? How are they different? This discussion can help students clarify basic ideas in the text and can also help them analyze which ideas and details of the events are most important to them individually or as the group. You can then display your storyboards around the room so that other might see the intersections and the differentials among the storyboards.

Assessment of Learning:

1. Students will know and understand via artistic and inventive replication:
 1. The history and realities of American civil rights struggles and how James Baldwin’s can be placed in the context of this country’s history and identify it as an exemplar of the triumph of the American spirit for literary genius and the creative freedom from racial categorization and oppression despite the challenges he faced.
2. Assessments:
 1. Story board rubric can be created if assigned as a group assignment or individually.

Lesson # 5- Protest, Fear and Retribution on the National Stage (ELA, History/Civics) lesson Geared towards Secondary and Post-Secondary education settings

Lesson Summary:

In this lesson, students will learn to be able to look at individual perspectives and how life experience influences opinions of individuals in real time when witnessing/living through/experiencing an event as opposed to historical memory that can often shift opinions and perspectives. They will perform individual and group work to gain a better understanding of the varied life experiences of individuals during the 20th century that were targeted by the US Federal Bureau of Investigations. Legacies and memory are often shifted through the lens of time – and the arc of history often turns yesterday’s vilified into today’s glorified icons. Like Martin, Malcolm, and Medgar Evers, James Baldwin made himself visible. Baldwin recalls his decision to come back from Paris to New York, to author *Remember This House*, his descriptive of himself was not an activist but as a witness: which he saw was responsible for moving “as largely and as freely as possible to write the story and to get it out.” However, Baldwin was fervently shadowed, beleaguered and even expurgated by the FBI. When examining Baldwin’s FBI file, it’s clear his phone was tapped and that government agents, posing as publishers followed him even as he traveled to France, Britain and Italy.

James Baldwin’s FBI file contains an outrageous 1,884 pages of documents, collected from 1960 until the early 1970s. This was the era of illegal surveillance of American writers, artist, politicians, social and political leaders, most especially African Americans. Baldwin’s relationship with the days’ infamous black intellectuals and activists of the day, such as Harry Belafonte, Lorraine Hansberry and Nina Simone only lent itself to

having them collectively investigated interchangeably. The FBI, under the directorship of J. Edgar Hoover, maintained files on more than 250 artists. This period of illegal surveillance was punctuated with the FBI's war on the Black Panthers and other black nationalists, all these FBI files were collected under its Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO). The following are links to the records are articles discussing them.

- <https://vault.fbi.gov/james-baldwin>
- <https://archive.org/details/JamesBaldwinFBIFile>
- “Why James Baldwin's FBI File Was 1,884 Pages” By William J. Maxwell -Feb 20, 2015
<http://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/tip-sheet/article/65641-why-james-baldwin-s-fbi-file-was-1-884-pages.html>

The class will jigsaw positions based on the information they have learned. This lesson can be done over several class periods and encompasses Common Core standards for English Language Arts and Social Studies.

Lesson Details:

Learning Activities:

1. Discuss national events and the world in which James Baldwin lived.
2. Research the history and legacy of Hoover and the FBI and their relationships with African American leadership.
3. Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) - ask students to research the parameters of the program- the public access to the documents after a certain amount of years, and the FBI tactics in the reports.
4. Ask students to generate a list of different types of people who may have been investigated by the FBI (The US government) and why. Write those names and/or categories as headings at the top of the board.

5. Discuss the differential of the distance of time on people's opinion of those investigated and vilified. Time often shifts realities – for example – Martin Luther King as public enemy #1 in 1963 to Civil Rights icon and giant within twenty years.
6. Ask students to generate a list of emotions each group of people may have had regarding these investigations. Direct students to select one of the people on the board, disregarding their personal feelings. Explain that they will be pretending to be a member of that category or person.
 - Read, explicate and assess excerpts of biographies and narratives that discuss the opinions, subsequent experiences and actions of the investigated during the 20th century- like James Baldwin (some examples - Martin Luther King Jr., Medgar Evers, Malcom X, Paul Robeson, WEB Dubois, Marcus Garvey, Richard Wright) compare and contrast their vantage points and FBI files.

Lesson # 6- Documenting the Movement – James Baldwin in Real Time (ELA, History/Civics) lesson Geared towards Secondary and Post-Secondary education settings with modification for younger learners.

Lesson Summary:

There is now a large body of documentation available on the internet regarding James Baldwin and the three icons - Martin, Malcolm, and Medgar, that became the centralized themes of the body of work that would develop into the manuscript for *“Remember this House”*, and is the basis for the film ***I Am Not Your Negro***, they can be found in video, can be found in the varied newspaper articles written across the nation chronicling the events of the Civil Right movement. These resources are archived for posterity and available for students to be able to access and read the editorials, journalistic interpretations, and opinion pages. In this lesson, students will look at these resources on line intently to dissect the relationships and the varied perspectives and motivations of these leaders in their own words and in interactions with each other to understand the relationships between them during the movement. This lesson also requires students to delve into the notion of primary and secondary sources. Students will learn that a primary source is an original, firsthand account containing original data of an event or time period, and it usually was written or created during or close to a particular event or during a specific time period. Primary sources include creative writing such as diaries, letters, memoirs, journals, speeches, manuscripts, and interviews. They may also include newspaper or magazine articles if the articles were written soon after the event. Works of art and original letters may also be primary sources, or original video. In comparison, secondary sources are created after the event to chronicle an analysis of the event or time period. Primary and secondary sources are tools historians use to interpret the

events of the past. As is true with all documents, the author, individual, or institution creates the document with his or her own point-of-view. It is important for students to consider what conflicting versions of the same event tell them about historical writings and interpretation. What is the importance of the evidence included, and what is the importance of those details omitted?

There are many key questions to ask when interrogating primary or secondary sources:

- Was the author present at the event or soon thereafter?
- How does the author know these details (names, dates, and times)?
- What are the sources of this information?
- Are they from personal experience, eyewitness accounts, or reports others have written?
- Are the author's conclusions based on a single piece of evidence, or have many sources been taken into account (e.g., diary entries, along with third-party eyewitness accounts, contemporary observations, newspaper accounts, etc.)

Lesson Detail:

Learning Activities:

- Students will research and gather primary sources via the web that chronicle the events in the 1950-1970's (Civil Rights and beyond) from various and contrasting points of view and sources that were printed before, during or immediately following the era, for example. This activity will allow students understand the account as it was seen in real time, as well as the longer lenses of historical interpretation which often shifts ideologies and narrations. Students will then be asked to assess whether history has shifted the narrative and how that has manifested.
- An example of some to get student started are some online interviews and video interviews and newspaper articles and interviews with James Baldwin, Malcolm X,

Martin Luther King and Medgar Evers that can be found with a simple search - it is important for students to search out resources themselves so they can differentiate first primary and secondary sources:

- Malcolm X - Debate with James Baldwin - September 5, 1963 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Jlp9_IIV3s
- Martin Luther King Speaks! Introduced by James Baldwin "We come not to beg, but to demand" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xU71kk27nQU>
- The Legacy of Medgar Evers https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-adk-adk_sbnt&hsimp=yhs-adk_sbnt&hspart=adk&p=legacy+of+medgar+evers#id=4&vid=eb1f6c97adbc52a869eec68ac85f2a70&action=click
- <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1294360>

Lesson # 7 - Nothing Happens in a Vacuum - Causations and Consequences: Creating a Timeline of Events (Mathematics, History/Civics) - Geared toward Secondary learners

Lesson Summary:

The totality of the events during the Civil Rights Era are a result of causation, ideologies, influences and actions; a push and pull that results in a uprisings, revolt, revolutions, and protest. In this lesson, students will learn how timelines are useful primary sources for interpreting historical information and establishing causation in history. What do timelines really indicate about the social, political and economic realities of the times and the peoples involved? The students' understanding of timelines helps to create their ability to apply causation to major events in history. It is important for them to understand the adage, "Nothing happens in a vacuum."

Lesson Details:

Learning Activities:

Students will be divided in groups and given a series of blank cards – they will choose dates and events that they have researched in previous assignments regarding the correlating events circling James Baldwin's life that relate to a specific event that happened between 1940's -1970's and construct an independent analysis of the event on the cards. The teacher will then collect them and will them redistribute the cards among groups that have dates and events on them. As a group, they must correlate the dates with the event –and then report out so that each group is able to see the causation of a timeline of events that surrounded the life of James Baldwin and the events that followed up to the Civil Rights Era. Students will understand chronology and cause and effect in history, as well as create a jigsaw puzzle of events and times that they will collectively construct back into a linear timeline together. (the lesson can also be applied for events that are happening today - to help students understand causation does not often end at a specific point or remedy – for example – could they do the causation activity and link it all the way to the events in Ferguson in recent years - as it is juxtapositioned in (*I am Not Your Negro*))

Lesson #8 - The March to Selma – the Mathematics of the Journey An Applied Mathematics Project (Mathematics, Geography, ELA, History/Civics) Geared towards Secondary and Post-Secondary settings)

Lesson Summary:

James Baldwin marched with Martin Luther King, Jr, (including US Congressman John Lewis) and many others across the Edward Pettus Bridge from Selma to the state capitol of Montgomery, Alabama to confront the governor and challenge the denial of voting rights in 1965. He was instrumental in the organizing of the concert during the march in which Nina Simone performed “Mississippi Goddam”). Baldwin’s involvement landed him on the watch list for the FBI. In this lesson, have students relate to the march via a math, geography, and logistical experience. Students will learn through this mathematics project how can we develop visual representations of distance, geography, and time to enhance student understanding of the Mathematics and logistics of the March from Selma to Montgomery Alabama. Students will select, apply and translate among Mathematical representations, to solve the logistical issues that faced the organizers and marchers for the March from Selma to Montgomery.

Lesson Details:

1. Learning Activities:

- Students will use of the distance formula – $D=R*T$ (Distance = Rate * Time)
- Students will be able to calculate the time of travel as related to the distances between locations in the March to Selma to Montgomery.
- Students will understand the difference between the birds eye view of travel and actual travel using triangular relationships and formulas.
- Student will understand the value of visual of visual representation for mathematical expressions.
- Students will understand the concept of using the distance formula to find distance or rate or time - separately.
- Students will understand the perimeters of triangles and of regular, and irregular polygons.
- Students will be able model actual travel using geometric shapes and geography, topography considerations and mapping skills.
- Students will be able to apply and adapt a variety of appropriate strategies to solve logistical constraints and considerations in traveling from Selma and Montgomery Alabama.
- Students will be able to recognize Mathematics vocabulary terms, names, build, draw, compare and sort two and three dimensional shapes.

- Students will be able to describe name, and interpret direction and distance in navigating space and apply ideas about directions and distance - Geometry/ Algebra

Performance Tasks:

- Within the classroom set up various maps of Alabama, county roads, topography, map of travel route taken by the marchers, as well as projectors, transparencies with formulas, colored expo markers, student individual maps – modeling individual worksheets, additional practice sheets/ lesson extension sheets / Math textbooks and primary and secondary sources that chronicle the route and parameters, logistics of the march to Selma.
- Classroom set up - work in fours with each student assigned individual performance tasks around the room. Students will float around the room as they must examine and utilize the information on all the maps displayed.
- Students will come out of this lessons with Do Now assignments using their peers and primary and secondary sources as resources. Each student will report on their individual tasks to build the group presentations. Once students accurately complete the practice questions they will be able to answer more challenging questions regarding the logistics of calculating the march from Selma to Montgomery. For those students who are having difficulty they will be encouraged to draw geometric representations of the practice problems
- Personal reflections/ notes - after teaching the lessons – ask students to write up their reflections on the extension of knowledge gained by the applied Math project. Students will also be asked to reflect on whether the lesson shifted the student's understanding about the intricacies, the realities, the logistics and execution of the march - and the determination of those like Baldwin who participated.

Lesson # 9 – Debating Civil Justice and Equal Rights and Subsequent Outcomes- Taking a Side (ELA, History/Civics) lesson Geared towards Secondary and Post-Secondary education settings

Lesson Summary:

In this lesson plan secondary and post-secondary (college) students can engage in the various debate strategies and methodologies utilizing the argument of whether the possible outcomes of an event, utilizing James Baldwin's 1965 debate at Cambridge University with William Buckley as the linchpin. Baldwin participated in a debate with conservative American scholar William F. Buckley, on the topic of whether the American dream has adversely affected African Americans. The debate took place at The Cambridge Union in the UK. The spectating student body voted overwhelmingly in Baldwin's favor as the victor with a standing ovation at its conclusion. The question proposed during the debate can be utilized and replicated for the students. These and other topics were hotly debated around the nation with many contrary. This lesson presents several basic debate formats, including the popular Lincoln-Douglas format. In addition, it provides adaptation suggestions for using debates with whole classes and small groups. Plus, it offers ten strategies teachers can use to make the debate process more interesting to students.

Lesson Details:

Learning Activities:

- Have students Watch the debate between Baldwin and Buckley. What were the positions each took? Do you agree or disagree? What would you add, shift, change to the opposing arguments? Do you agree with the students as to the winner of the debate?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFeoS41xe7w>

Debate strategy background for students:

In 1859, Senator Stephen A. Douglas was up for re-election to his Illinois Senate seat. His opponent was Abraham Lincoln. During the campaign, the two men faced off in a The Lincoln-Douglas Debates of 1858, a series of seven debates on the issue of slavery. On Election Day, Douglas was re-elected, but Lincoln's position on the issue and his inspiring eloquence had earned him wide recognition that would aid his eventual bid for the presidency in the presidential elections of 1860. The basic format of the Lincoln-Douglas debates has long been used as a debate format in competition and in classrooms. The Lincoln-Douglas Debate format is a one-to-one debate, in which two sides of an issue are debated. It starts with a statement of purpose/policy. (For example, you may take the position of James Baldwin in his debate with Buckley, affirmatively that the "American dream is at the expense of the American Negro". The debater who agrees with the statement (the Affirmative) begins the debate, which is structured in this way: Affirmative position debater presents constructive debate points. (6 minutes) Negative position debater cross-examines affirmative points. (3 minutes) Negative

position presents constructive debate points. (7 minutes) Affirmative position cross-examines negative points. (3 minutes) Affirmative position offers first rebuttal (4 minutes) Negative position offers first rebuttal (6 minutes) Affirmative position offers second rebuttal (3 minutes) Generally speaking, in a Lincoln-Douglas competitive debate, debaters do not know the statement of purpose/policy in advance. The purpose is proposed, and each presenter is given 3 minutes to prepare for the face-off. In the classroom, however, the Lincoln-Douglas debate format is adapted in a wide variety of ways. Following are some of the ways that procedure might be adapted in a classroom setting to involve small groups or an entire class. Adapt the Lincoln-Douglas Format for Classroom or Small Group Use Arrange the class into groups of six. Each group will represent one side -- the affirmative or negative -- of a debatable question or statement. In order to involve all six individuals, each member of the team will have a specific responsibility based on the Lincoln-Douglas debate format detailed above. Each team will include students who assume the following roles:

- Moderator -- calls the debate to order, poses the debatable point/question, and introduces the debaters and their roles.
- Lead Debater/Constructor -- presents the main points/arguments for his or her team's stand on the topic of the debate. - Questioner/Cross-Examiner -- poses questions about the opposing team's arguments to its Question Responder.
- Question Responder -- takes over the role of the Lead Debater/Constructor as he or she responds to questions posed by the opposing team's Questioner/Cross-Examiner.
- Rebutter -- responds on behalf of his or her team to as many of the questions raised in the cross-examination as possible. Summarizer -- closes the debate by summarizing the main points of his or her team's arguments, especially attempts by the opposition to shoot holes in their arguments.

Note: In the standard Lincoln-Douglas debate format, the negative position is given a lengthy rebuttal time in which to refute the affirmative rebuttal and make a final summary argument for the position. Then the affirmative position has a brief opportunity to rebut the rebuttal (offer a closing argument, if you will) -- and the debate is over. In this format, adapted for the classroom, both teams offer a closing summary/argument after the rebuttals.

- The six-student team format enables you to arrange a class of 24 students into four equal teams.
- If your class is smaller than 24 students, you might adapt the format described above by having the teacher serve as moderator.
- If your class is larger than 24 students, you might arrange students into more and/or smaller groups and combine some roles (for example, Moderator and Summarizer or Moderator and Questioner/Cross-Examiner). You can apply the Lincoln-Douglas classroom debate adaptations above by having pairs of teams debate the same or different issues.

If this is your first experiment with debate in the classroom, it would probably be wise to have both teams debating the same issue, or you can use your most confident students to model good debate form by using the fishbowl strategy described in the Additional Strategies section below.

Additional Strategies:

The following strategies can be used to extend the Lincoln-Douglas debate structure by involving the entire class in different ways:

- **Three-Card strategy** -- This technique can be used as a pre-debate strategy to help students gather information about topics they might not know a lot about. It also can be used after students observe two groups in a debate, when the debatable question is put up for full classroom discussion. This strategy provides opportunities for all students to participate in discussions that might otherwise be monopolized by students who are frequent participators. In this strategy, the teacher provides each student with two or three cards on which are printed the words "Comment or Question." When a student wishes to make a point as part of the discussion, the student raises a card; after making a comment or asking a question pertinent to the discussion, the student turns in the card. This strategy encourages participants to think before jumping in; those who are usually frequent participants in classroom discussions must weigh whether the point they wish to make is valuable enough to turn in a card. When a student has used all the cards, he or she cannot participate in the discussion again until all students have used all their cards.
- **Participation Countdown strategy** -- Similar to the above technique, the countdown strategy helps students monitor their participation, so they do not monopolize the discussion. In this strategy, students raise a hand when they have something to say. The second time they have something to say, they must raise their hand with one finger pointing up (to indicate they have already participated once). When they raise their hand a third time, they do so with two fingers pointing up (to indicate they have participated twice before). After a student has participated three times, he or she cannot share again as long as any other student has something to add to the discussion.
- **Tag Team Debate strategy** -- This strategy can be used to help students learn about a topic before a debate, but it is probably better used when opening up discussion after a formal debate or as an alternative to the Lincoln-Douglas format. In a tag team debate, each team of five members represents one side of a debatable question. Each team has a set amount of time (say, 5 minutes) to present its point of view. When it's time for the team to state its point of view, one speaker from the team takes the floor. That speaker can speak for no more than

1 minute, and must "tag" another member of the team to pick up the argument before the minute is up. Team members who are eager to pick up on or add to the team's argument, can put out a hand to be tagged. That way, the current speaker knows who might be ready to pick up the argument. No member of the team can be tagged twice until all members have been tagged once.

- Role Play Debate strategy -- In the Lincoln-Douglas debate format, students play the roles of Constructor, Cross-Examiner, and so on. But many debate topics lend themselves to a different form of debate -- the role play debate. In a role play debate, students examine different points of view or perspectives related to an issue.
- Fishbowl strategy -- This strategy helps focus the attention of students not immediately involved in the debate; or it can be used to put your most skilled and confident debaters center stage as they model proper debate form and etiquette. As the debaters sit center-stage (in the "fishbowl"), other students observe the action from outside the fishbowl. To actively involve observers, appoint them to judge the debate; have each observer keep a running tally of new points introduced by each side as the debate progresses. Note: If you plan to use debates in the future, it might be a good idea to videotape the final student debates your current students present. Those videos can be used to help this year's students evaluate their participation, and students in the videos can serve as the "fishbowl" group when you introduce the debate structure to future students.
- Inner Circle/Outer Circle strategy -- This strategy, billed as a pre-writing strategy for editorial opinion pieces, helps students gather facts and ideas about an issue up for debate. It focuses students on listening carefully to their classmates. The strategy can be used as an information-gathering session prior to a debate or as the structure for the actual debate. See a sample lesson: Inner Circle/Outer Circle Debate.
- Think-Pair-Share Debate strategy -- This strategy can be used during the information-gathering part of a debate or as a stand-alone strategy. Students start the activity by gathering information on their own. Give students about 10 minutes to think and make notes about their thoughts. Next, pair each student with another student; give them about 10 minutes to share their ideas, combine their notes, and think more deeply about the topic. Then pair each student pair with another pair; give them about 10 minutes to share their thoughts and gather more notes. Eventually, the entire class will come together to share information they have gathered about the topic. Then students will be ready to knowledgeably debate the issue at hand.

- Four Corners Debate strategy -- In this active debate strategy, students take one of four positions on an issue. They either strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.
- Graphic Organizer strategy -- A simple graphic organizer enables students to compare and contrast, to visualize, and to construct their position on any debatable question.
- Discussions strategy -- The standard rules for a Lincoln-Douglas style debate allow students 3 minutes to prepare their arguments. The debatable question is not introduced prior to that time. If your students might benefit from some research and/or discussion before the debate, you might pose the question and then have students spend one class period (or less or more) gathering information about the issue's affirmative arguments (no negative arguments allowed) and the same amount of time on the negative arguments (no affirmative arguments allowed).

Lesson #10 - A Dream Deferred - the Pursuit of Life, Liberty and Justice for All, or Is It? Images Speak Volumes (ELA/History/Civics) Geared towards Secondary and Post-Secondary settings

Lesson Summary: By the spring of 1963, Baldwin had become so much a spokesman for the Civil Rights Movement that for its May 17 issue on the turmoil in Birmingham, Alabama, *Time* magazine put James Baldwin on the cover. "There is not another writer," said *Time*, "who expresses with such poignancy and abrasiveness the dark realities of the racial ferment in North and South."

<http://content.time.com/time/covers/0,16641,19630517,00.html>

James Baldwin was the first black writer to ever grace the cover of *TIME*

Magazine. As with anyone who makes the cover of *TIME*, it marked Baldwin as an important figure of his era, validating his work and influence in a way that few other publications do. In the years following Baldwin's cover, there have been just two other writers of color have ever been featured to date on the cover of *TIME*, Toni Morrison and Alex Haley. (This isn't even considering the representations of writers of both sexes or other minority groups) - a purview of covers that have featured writers show the predominance of the American-male author archetype. the *TIME* cover archives featured on the following websites makes it difficult to ignore the obvious, looking at the featuring authors, it became difficult to not see a pattern. *TIME*'s should be commended for celebrating writers. The collection of covers found on the website: <http://airshipdaily.com/blog/05172014-time-magazine-author-covers> are a tribute to the magazine and its role in both literature and society at large — but it's also a call for change.

Lesson Details:

Learning Activities:

The collection of covers are found on the website:

<http://airshipdaily.com/blog/05172014-time-magazine-author-covers>

1. As you scroll through the covers below, consider: Identify the writers featured and note in your opinion their significant to the literary canon of literature and their greater contribution to American culture/ How many of these covers showcase just one kind of writer? One gender? One race? One experience? And is that really a good thing for literature?
2. What other previous authors do you think should have made the *TIME* cover and why?
3. What current author should be on the cover and why?
4. What do you think *TIME* magazine's criteria is for inclusion? What would be yours?
5. Does this shift your opinion of how great literature canons are formulated?

Lesson #11 - Imagery in Film and its Influence on a National Psyche (ELA, History/Civics/Film Studies/Sociology) Geared towards Secondary and Post-Secondary education settings

Lesson Summary:

In this lesson, students will examine the opinions and images created vis-à-vis film and television of the perceived realities and stereotypes of life under segregation and the personas that those imageries cultivated and exploited. James Baldwin was an active participant in that fight for justice in his writings and in his activism. Baldwin was also witness to the destructive images projected that shifted the realities of opinions of African American realities. In the film "*I Am Not Your Negro*" we learn that James Baldwin was a major fan of the movies and we see moments from and hear his thoughts on the films that shaped his life and the films that more importantly were imposed to shaped America's images of African American life and public persona, despite their inability to be reflective of African American people, they were the images that America used to define Black life and peoples. *I am Not Your Negro* uses images from "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" and "The Defiant Ones" but unexpected items like "They Won't Forget", "Tarzan" and "Lover Come Back." As well as "King Kong," and a cut from a pose of Doris Day that unintentionally echoes the image of a black man being lynched.

If we had to explicate the images to understand their influence, we should look to the film *Ethnic Notions* which chronicles the persona of these images and their utilization to shape an imposed persona of a people. Baldwin returns these perceived personas again and again in the course of the film *I Am Not Your Negro* in an effort to get to a full understanding of their creation, their inaccuracies and the necessity of their deconstruction so that crisis of conscious that racism and segregation and the necessity to have those personas to juxtapositioned power and privilege has brought on this nation can be eliminated. Baldwin grapples with the influence of these images on the American psyche. "The truth is this country does not know what to do with its black population," he says at one point, adding later "Americans can't face the fact that I am flesh of their flesh." Perhaps most movingly, in a televised interview with psychologist Dr. Kenneth

Clark, Baldwin says he is "terrified at the moral apathy -- the death of the heart which is happening in my country. These people have deluded themselves so long that they really don't think I'm human."

Lesson Detail:

Learning Activities:

- After watching *I Am Not Your Negro* - watch the film documentary film *Ethnic Notions* via California Newsreel.
- Identify the varied stereotypes and personas that have been used, and imposed in popular culture to mislabel African American peoples.
- Can you see these images in today's society? Are they still being used?
- Can you name a recent film that uses these stereotypes?
- How could they be a hindrance to the Civil Rights Struggles even today?
- How could they shape people's perceptions of African American people?
- Do they shape opinions of African Americans of themselves? (Note - Baldwin was very astute and clear in the film *I Am Not Your Negro* to say that the images had never reflected any of the men he ever knew- including his father)
- How can we eradicate these images from being continuously used in literature, music, television and film?
- Then, the class will hold a debate based on the information they have learned. This lesson can be done over several class periods and encompasses Common Core standards for English Language Arts and Social Studies.

Lesson #12 “The Meeting” Baldwin’s Life on Stage - the Artist and Activist (ELA, History/Civics) Geared towards Secondary and Post-Secondary education settings

Lesson Summary:

An infamous meeting with Robert Kennedy, James Baldwin, and Lorraine Hansberry discussed in the film *I Am Not Your Negro* was subject of the play - Howard Simon's 1999 play, *James Baldwin: A Soul on Fire*. The delegation included Kenneth B. Clark, a psychologist who had played a key role in the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision; actor Harry Belafonte, singer Lena Horne, writer Lorraine Hansberry, and activists from civil rights organizations. This meeting was discussed when highlighting on Baldwin's relationship with Hansberry in the film. *I Am Not Your Negro*. Although most of the attendees of this meeting left feeling "devastated," the meeting was an important one in voicing the concerns of the civil rights movement and it provided exposure of the civil rights issue not just as a political issue but also as a moral issue.

In 2011 Charles Reese published a book entitled "The Charles Reese Experience and Glover Lane Press Publish 'James Baldwin: A Soul on Fire'" which including the play and commentary. The National James Baldwin Literary Society has celebrated and promoted the book, whose release in 2012 coincided with the 25th anniversary of Baldwin's death.

Lesson Detail:

Learning Activities:

- Read a copy of the play *James Baldwin: A Soul on Fire*.
- Discuss the politics and dynamics of the meeting and the personalities and the agendas of each participant
- Compare it to Baldwin's meeting descriptive in “I Am Not Your Negro”
- Is it similar or does it have large differentials in its interpretation to the accounts depicted by Baldwin?
- What would you have added to the arguments if you were present in the room?

- Have students write an essay oral presentation to present to the class or add a scene to the play featuring their contributions to the conversations.

<http://www.playbill.com/article/soul-on-fire-burns-longer-ob-show-extended-to-may-7-com-88804>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2000/04/12/theater/theater-review-glimpsing-james-baldwin-on-the-precipice.html>

Teeth & Eyes Communications. "[The Charles Reese Experience and Glover Lane Press Publish 'James Baldwin: A Soul on Fire'](#)". PRLog. January 21, 2012.

Lesson #13 - Literature Legacies and A Final Farewell for Now – Toni bids Baldwin Adieu (ELA/History/Civics) Geared towards Secondary and Post-Secondary education settings

Lesson Summary:

Baldwin was also a close friend and mentor for Nobel Prize-winning novelist Toni Morrison. Morrison wrote a eulogy for Baldwin that was published in *The New York Times*. In the eulogy, entitled "Life in His Language," Morrison credits Baldwin as being her literary inspiration and the person who showed her the true potential of writing.

JAMES BALDWIN: HIS VOICE REMEMBERED; Life in His Language
December 20, 1987, Sunday, New York Times Late City Final Edition Section 7; Page 27, Column 1; Book Review Desk - By Toni Morrison
<http://www.nytimes.com/books/98/03/29/specials/baldwin-morrison.html>

Lesson Details:

Learning Activities:

Students will understand the purposes of a eulogy and an obituary and the differences between them, identify the essential elements of both, determine which is the more authentic historical record, and be able to associate an individual's life with important historical events.

LESSON PLAN

- What are the definitions of "eulogy" and "obituary"? Identify the birth and death dates of James Baldwin. Using basic reference resources and the obituary, list the major events in Baldwin's life and the major events in U.S. history during the same time. List some, as well as some highs, conflicts, and lows of his career
- What is the difference between "eulogy" and "obituary"? How would you summarize Baldwin's career, and which source is more helpful in doing so? What are some examples of Baldwin's positive qualities, and which source is more helpful in identifying those?
- What information would you have to have about a person in order to write an obituary or eulogy? Are there elements of James Baldwin's life that are not accounted for in the eulogy, and why might that be? Are there qualities in James Baldwin that might not be viewed so positively today or the opposite- things look at unfavorably that would be praised today? Why? Can you find examples of key information omitted from either the obituary or the eulogy? What determines the historical value of either?

- Construct both a eulogy and an obituary for your (i.e., the student) life or write either a eulogy or an obituary for a fictional character. Using the eulogy of Baldwin penned by Toni Morrison as a guide, work in groups to compose a eulogy for a current political figure. Use the Internet to find eulogies or obituaries of other figures, in and out of the literary canon of African American authors, to compare to Baldwin's.
- What do you think is the most important function of an obituary? Of a eulogy? Why do some people have a longer or more prominent obituary than others? Do you believe, and for what reasons, that an obituary or a eulogy is an accurate historical record?