

## Toni Morrison Strangers Essay

Faced with Eudora Welty's preference for the oblique in literary performances, some have assumed that Welty was not concerned with issues of race, or even that she was perhaps ambivalent toward racism. This collection counters those assumptions as it examines Welty's handling of race, the color line, and Jim Crow segregation and sheds new light on her views about the patterns, insensitivities, blindness, and atrocities of whiteness. Contributors to this volume show that Welty addressed whiteness and race in her earliest stories, her photography, and her first novel, *Delta Wedding*. In subsequent work, including *The Golden Apples*, *The Optimist's Daughter*, and her memoir, *One Writer's Beginnings*, she made the color line and white privilege visible, revealing the gaping distances between lives lived in shared space but separated by social hierarchy and segregation. Even when black characters hover in the margins of her fiction, they point readers toward complex lives, and the black body is itself full of meaning in her work. Several essays suggest that Welty represented race, like gender and power, as a performance scripted by whiteness. Her black characters in particular recognize whiteface and blackface as performances, especially comical when white characters are unaware of their role play. *Eudora Welty, Whiteness, and Race* also makes clear that Welty recognized white material advantage and black economic deprivation as part of a cycle of race and poverty in America and that she connected this history to lives on either side of the color line, to relationships across it, and to an uneasy hierarchy of white classes within the presumed monolith of whiteness. Contributors: Mae Miller Claxton, Susan V. Donaldson, Julia Eichelberger, Sarah Ford, Jean C. Griffith, Rebecca Mark, Suzanne Marrs, Donnie McMahan, David McWhirter, Harriet Pollack, Keri Watson, Patricia Yaeger.

Ultimately moves beyond these to propose a new cultural aesthetic that aims to center black women and their philosophies. Book jacket.

The classic reader that has introduced millions of students to the essay as a genre.

**NATIONAL BESTSELLER • A New York Times Notable Book •** This fiery and provocative novel from the acclaimed Nobel Prize winner weaves a tale about the way the sufferings of childhood can shape, and misshape, the life of the adult. At the center: a young woman who calls herself Bride, whose stunning blue-black skin is only one element of her beauty, her boldness and confidence, her success in life, but which caused her light-skinned mother to deny her even the simplest forms of love. There is Booker, the man Bride loves, and loses to anger. Rain, the mysterious white child with whom she crosses paths. And finally, Bride's mother herself, Sweetness, who takes a lifetime to come to understand that "what you do to children matters. And they might never forget."

Although most writing instructors know the benefits of collaborative learning and writing in college writing classes, many remain unsure how to implement

collaborative techniques successfully in the classroom. This collection provides a diversity of voices that address the “how tos” of collaborative learning and writing by addressing key concerns about the process. Fresh essays consider the importance of collaborative work and peer review, the best ways to select groups in classes, integration of collaborative learning techniques into electronic environments, whether group learning and writing are appropriate for all writing classes, and ways special populations can benefit from collaborative activities. Despite its challenges, collaborative learning can prove remarkably effective and this study provides the advice to make it work smoothly and successfully.

Jacqueline Woodson's National Book Award and Newbery Honor winner, now available in paperback with 7 all-new poems. Jacqueline Woodson is the 2018-2019 National Ambassador for Young People's Literature A President Obama "O" Book Club pick Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Touching and powerful, each poem is both accessible and emotionally charged, each line a glimpse into a child's soul as she searches for her place in the world. Woodson's eloquent poetry also reflects the joy of finding her voice through writing stories, despite the fact that she struggled with reading as a child. Her love of stories inspired her and stayed with her, creating the first sparks of the gifted writer she was to become. Includes 7 new poems, including "Brown Girl Dreaming". Praise for Jacqueline Woodson: A 2016 National Book Award finalist for her adult novel, ANOTHER BROOKLYN "Ms. Woodson writes with a sure understanding of the thoughts of young people, offering a poetic, eloquent narrative that is not simply a story . . . but a mature exploration of grown-up issues and self-discovery."--The New York Times Book Review

Ravishingly beautiful and emotionally incendiary, *Tar Baby* is Toni Morrison's reinvention of the love story. Jadine Childs is a black fashion model with a white patron, a white boyfriend, and a coat made out of ninety perfect sealskins. Son is a black fugitive who embodies everything she loathes and desires. As Morrison follows their affair, which plays out from the Caribbean to Manhattan and the deep South, she charts all the nuances of obligation and betrayal between blacks and whites, masters and servants, and men and women.

These essays look at U.S. immigration and the nexus between urban realities and immigrant destinies. They argue that immigration today is fundamentally urban and that immigrants are flocking to places where low-skilled workers are in trouble.

Archival photographs paired with fictional text depicting thoughts and emotions of students who lived through school desegregation capture the spirit, sadness, and struggle of the time.

An arresting story by the legendary Nobel Prize-winning author—the only short story she ever wrote—about race and the relationships that shape us, in a stand-alone hardcover, with an introduction by Zadie Smith. In this 1983 short story, as timely now as it was then, we meet Twyla and Roberta, who have known each other since they were eight years old and spent

four months together as roommates in St. Bonaventure shelter. Inseparable as girls, like “salt and pepper,” they lose touch as they grow older, only later to find each other at a diner, a grocery store, and again at a protest. Seemingly at opposite ends of every problem, the two women are, like it or not, still held by the deep bond their shared experience forged between them. Described by Zadie Smith as a “work of genius,” *Recitatif* keeps Twyla's and Roberta's races ambiguous throughout the story. We know that one is white and one is Black, but which is which? Morrison herself described *Recitatif*, a story which will keep readers thinking and discussing for years to come, as “an experiment in the removal of all racial codes from a narrative about two characters of different races for whom racial identity is crucial.” Carrying within its short span the complexity and richness of a novel, moving effortlessly through time, *Recitatif* is a masterful look into what keeps us together and what keeps us apart, and how perceptions are made tangible by reality. Testament to Morrison's incomparable humanity and wisdom, this story is a gift to readers in these changing times.

“Uniformly sophisticated, interesting, and worthwhile” essays focusing on the often misunderstood experiences of Anabaptist women across 400 years (Agricultural History). Equal parts sociology, religious history, and gender studies, this book explores the changing roles and issues surrounding Anabaptist women in communities ranging from sixteenth-century Europe to contemporary North America. Gathered under the overarching theme of the insider/outsider distinction, the essays discuss, among other topics: • How womanhood was defined in early Anabaptist societies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and how women served as central figures by convening meetings across class boundaries or becoming religious leaders • How nineteenth-century Amish tightened the connections among the individual, the family, the household, and the community by linking them into a shared framework with the father figure at the helm • The changing work world and domestic life of Mennonite women in the three decades following World War II • The recent ascendancy of antimodernism and plain dress among the Amish • The special difficulties faced by scholars who try to apply a historical or sociological method to the very same cultural subgroups from which they derive. The essays in this collection follow a fascinating journey through time and place to give voice to women who are often characterized as the “quiet in the land.” Their voices and their experiences demonstrate the power of religion to shape identity and social practice. “Makes a major contribution to our understanding of Anabaptist history and the ongoing construction of Anabaptist identity.” —Mennonite Quarterly Review “This work is significant both for its breadth . . . and for offering glimpses into the varieties of Mennonite and Amish life.” —Annals of Iowa

Studies on foreignness have increased substantially over the last two decades in response to what has been dubbed the migration/refugee crisis. Yet, they have focused on specific areas such as regions, periods, ethnic groups, and authors. Predicated on the belief that this so-called “twenty-first century problem” is in fact as old as humanity itself, this book analyzes cases based on both long-term historical perspectives and current occurrences from around the world. Bringing together an international group of scholars from Australia, Asia, Europe, and North America, it examines a variety of examples and strategies, mostly from world literatures, ranging from Spain's failed experience with consolidation as a nation-state-type entity during the Golden Age of Castile, to Shakespeare's rhetorical subversion of the language of fear and hate, to Mario Rigoni Stern's random status at the unpredictable Italian-Austrian borders, to Lawrence Durrell's ambivalent approach to noticing the physically visible other, to the French government's ongoing criminalization of hospitality, to Sandra Cisneros's attempt at straddling two countries and cultures while belonging to neither one, to the illusive legal limbo of the DREAMers in the United States. We are not born foreigners; we are made. The purpose of the book is to assert, as denoted by the title, this fundamental premise, that is, the making of strangers is the result of a deliberate and purposeful act that has social, political,

and linguistic implications. The ultimate expression of this phenomenon is the compulsive labeling of people along artificial categories such as race, gender, religion, birthplace, or nationality. A corollary purpose of the book is to help shed light worldwide on one of the most pressing issues facing the world today: the place of “the other” amid fear-mongering and unabashedly contemptuous acts and rhetoric toward immigrants, refugees and all those excluded within because of race, gender, national origin, religion and ethnicity. As illustrated by the examples examined in this book, humans have certainly evolved in many areas; dealing with the “other” might not have been one of those. It is hoped that the book encourages reflection on how the arts, and especially world literatures, can help us navigate and think through the ever-present crisis: the place of the “stranger” among us.

From the acclaimed Nobel Prize winner, a passionate, profound story of love and obsession that brings us back and forth in time, as a narrative is assembled from the emotions, hopes, fears, and deep realities of Black urban life. In the winter of 1926, when everybody everywhere sees nothing but good things ahead, Joe Trace, middle-aged door-to-door salesman of Cleopatra beauty products, shoots his teenage lover to death. At the funeral, Joe’s wife, Violet, attacks the girl’s corpse. This novel “transforms a familiar refrain of jilted love into a bold, sustaining time of self-knowledge and discovery. Its rhythms are infectious” (People). “The author conjures up worlds with complete authority and makes no secret of her angst at the injustices dealt to Black women.” —The New York Times Book Review

An immensely persuasive work of literary criticism that opens a new chapter in the American dialogue on race—and promises to change the way we read American literature. Morrison shows how much the themes of freedom and individualism, manhood and innocence, depended on the existence of a black population that was manifestly unfree--and that came to serve white authors as embodiments of their own fears and desires. According to the Chicago Tribune, Morrison “reimagines and remaps the possibility of America.” Her brilliant discussions of the “Africanist” presence in the fiction of Poe, Melville, Cather, and Hemingway leads to a dramatic reappraisal of the essential characteristics of our literary tradition. Written with the artistic vision that has earned the Nobel Prize-winning author a pre-eminent place in modern letters, *Playing in the Dark* is an invaluable read for avid Morrison admirers as well as students, critics, and scholars of American literature.

A reading of the oeuvre of Toni Morrison — fiction, non-fiction, and other — drawing extensively from her many interviews as well as her primary texts. The author aligns Morrison's novels with the works of Virginia Woolf and William Faulkner, assessing her works as among the most innovative, and most significant, worldwide, of the past fifty years.

"She was our conscience. Our seer. Our truth-teller. She was a magician with language, who understood the power of words." - Oprah Winfrey A vital non-fiction collection from one of the most celebrated and revered American writers. Spanning four decades, these essays, speeches and meditations interrogate the world around us. They are concerned with race, gender and globalisation. The sweep of American history and the current state of politics. The duty of the press and the role of the artist. Throughout *Mouth Full of Blood* our search for truth, moral integrity and expertise is met by Toni Morrison with controlled anger, elegance and literary excellence. The collection is structured in three parts and these are heart-stoppingly introduced by a prayer for the dead of 9/11, a meditation on Martin Luther King and a eulogy for James Baldwin. Morrison's Nobel lecture, on the power of language, is accompanied by lectures to Amnesty International and the Newspaper Association of America. She speaks to graduating students and visitors to both the Louvre and America's Black Holocaust Museum. She revisits *The Bluest Eye*, *Sula* and *Beloved*; reassessing the novels that have become touchstones for generations of readers. *Mouth Full of Blood* is a powerful, erudite and essential gathering of ideas that speaks to us all. It celebrates Morrison's extraordinary contribution to the literary world.

Speculative essays that probe the mythology of the face by the author of *The Old Drift* James Baldwin in Context provides a wide-ranging collection of approaches to the work of an essential black American author who is just as relevant now as he was during his turbulent heyday in the mid-twentieth century. The perspectives range from those who knew Baldwin personally, to scholars who have dedicated decades to studying him, to a new generation of scholars for whom Baldwin is nearly a historical figure. This collection complements the ever-growing body of scholarship on Baldwin by combining traditional inroads into his work, such as music and expatriation, with new approaches, such as intersectionality and the Black Lives Matter movement.

“A dazzling debut, establishing Namwali Serpell as a writer on the world stage.”—Salman Rushdie, *The New York Times* Book Review **NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY** Dwight Garner, *The New York Times* • *The New York Times* Book Review • *Time* • *NPR* • *The Atlantic* • *BuzzFeed* • *Tordotcom* • *Kirkus Reviews* • *BookPage* **WINNER OF:** The Arthur C. Clarke Award • The Los Angeles Times Art Seidenbaum Award • The Anisfield-Wolf Book Award for Fiction • The Windham-Campbell Prizes for Fiction 1904. On the banks of the Zambezi River, a few miles from the majestic Victoria Falls, there is a colonial settlement called *The Old Drift*. In a smoky room at the hotel across the river, an Old Drifter named Percy M. Clark, foggy with fever, makes a mistake that entangles the fates of an Italian hotelier and an African busboy. This sets off a cycle of unwitting retribution between three Zambian families (black, white, brown) as they collide and converge over the course of the century, into the present and beyond. As the generations pass, their lives—their triumphs, errors, losses and hopes—emerge through a panorama of history, fairytale, romance and science fiction. From a woman covered with hair and another plagued with endless tears, to forbidden love affairs and fiery political ones, to homegrown technological marvels like Afronauts, microdrones and viral vaccines, this gripping, unforgettable novel is a testament to our yearning to create and cross borders, and a meditation on the slow, grand passage of time. Finalist for the Los Angeles Times Ray Bradbury Prize • Longlisted for the Center for Fiction First Novel Prize “An intimate, brainy, gleaming epic . . . This is a dazzling book, as ambitious as any first novel published this decade.”—Dwight Garner, *The New York Times* “A founding epic in the vein of Virgil’s *Aeneid* . . . though in its sprawling size, its flavor of picaresque comedy and its fusion of family lore with national politics it more resembles Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*.”—*The Wall Street Journal* “A story that intertwines strangers into families, which we’ll follow for a century, magic into everyday moments, and the story of a nation, Zambia.”—*NPR*

*A Country of Strangers* is a magnificent exploration of the psychological landscape where blacks and whites meet. To tell the story in human rather than abstract terms, the Pulitzer Prize-winning writer David K. Shipler bypasses both extremists and celebrities and takes us among ordinary Americans as they encounter one another across racial lines. We learn how blacks and whites see each other, how they interpret each other's behavior, and how certain damaging images and assumptions seep into the actions of even the most unbiased. We penetrate into dimensions of stereotyping and discrimination that are usually invisible, and discover the unseen prejudices and privileges of white Americans, and what black Americans make of them. We explore the competing impulses of integration and separation: the reference points by which the

racers navigate as they venture out and then withdraw; the biculturalism that many blacks perfect as they move back and forth between the white and black worlds, and the homesickness some blacks feel for the comfort of all-black separateness. There are portrayals of interracial families and their multiracial children--expert guides through the clashes created by racial blending in America. We see how whites and blacks each carry the burden of our history. Black-white stereotypes are dissected: the physical bodies that we see, the mental qualities we imagine, the moral character we attribute to others and to ourselves, the violence we fear, the power we seek or are loath to relinquish. The book makes clear that we have the ability to shape our racial landscape--to reconstruct, even if not perfectly, the texture of our relationships. There is an assessment of the complexity confronting blacks and whites alike as they struggle to recognize and define the racial motivations that may or may not be present in a thought, a word, a deed. The book does not prescribe, but it documents the silences that prevail, the listening that doesn't happen, the conversations that don't take place. It looks at relations between minorities, including blacks and Jews, and blacks and Koreans. It explores the human dimensions of affirmative action, the intricate contacts and misunderstandings across racial lines among coworkers and neighbors. It is unstinting in its criticism of our society's failure to come to grips with bigotry; but it is also, happily, crowded with black people and white people who struggle in their daily lives to do just that. A remarkable book that will stimulate each of us to reexamine and better understand our own deepest attitudes in regard to race in America.

A box set of Toni Morrison's principal works, featuring *The Bluest Eye* (her first novel), *Beloved* (Pulitzer Prize winner), and *Song of Solomon* (National Book Critics Award winner). Staring unflinchingly into the abyss of slavery, *Beloved* transforms history into a story as powerful as *Exodus* and as intimate as a lullaby. This spellbinding novel tells the story of Sethe, a former slave who escapes to Ohio, but eighteen years later is still not free. In *The New York Times* bestselling novel, *The Bluest Eye*, Pecola Breedlove, a young black girl, prays every day for beauty and yearns for normalcy, for the blond hair and blue eyes, that she believes will allow her to finally fit in. Yet as her dream grows more fervent, her life slowly starts to disintegrate in the face of adversity and strife. With *Song of Solomon*, Morrison transfigures the coming-of-age story as she follows Milkman Dead from his rustbelt city to the place of his family's origins, introducing an entire cast of strivers and seeresses, liars and assassins, the inhabitants of a fully realized black world. This beautifully designed slipcase will make the perfect holiday and perennial gift.

Long recognized as a master teacher at writing programs like VONA, the Loft, and the Stonecoast MFA, with *A Stranger's Journey*, David Mura has written a book on creative writing that addresses our increasingly diverse American literature. Mura argues for a more inclusive and expansive definition of craft, particularly in relationship to race, even as he elucidates timeless rules of narrative construction in fiction and memoir. His essays offer technique-focused readings of writers such as James Baldwin, ZZ Packer, Maxine Hong Kingston, Mary Karr, and Garrett Hongo, while making compelling connections to Mura's own life and work as a Japanese American writer. In *A Stranger's Journey*, Mura poses two central questions. The first involves identity: How is writing an exploration of who one is and one's place in the world? Mura examines how the myriad identities in our changing contemporary canon have led to new

challenges regarding both craft and pedagogy. Here, like Toni Morrison's *Playing in the Dark* or Jeff Chang's *Who We Be, A Stranger's Journey* breaks new ground in our understanding of the relationship between the issues of race, literature, and culture. The book's second central question involves structure: How does one tell a story? Mura provides clear, insightful narrative tools that any writer may use, taking in techniques from fiction, screenplays, playwriting, and myth. Through this process, Mura candidly explores the newly evolved aesthetic principles of memoir and how questions of identity occupy a central place in contemporary memoir.

Coming-of-age is complicated by coming-out in personal essays leavened with humor, generosity, and all the awkward indignities of growing up.

Though we all think we know what good writing is when we see it, it's difficult to define it precisely; and without a satisfactory definition, it becomes problematical to assess as well as to teach. In *What Is Good Writing?*, Geoffrey J. Huck advances the contemporary debate on writing achievement by drawing on empirical research in linguistics and the other cognitive sciences that shed light on the development of fluency in language. The utility of defining "good writing" as "fluent writing" or writing that is on par with the typical fluency in speech attained by normal adults, is demonstrated by the progress it permits in evaluating the success of current writing programs in school and university--programs which, for the most part, have proved unable to deliver writing assessments that are both valid and reliable. Huck advances an alternative approach that rests on more scientific footing. He explains why reading is key to good writing and why standard composition programs often do not live up to their aspirations.

What exactly is goodness? Where is it found in the literary imagination? Toni Morrison, one of American letters' greatest voices, pondered these perplexing questions in her celebrated Ingersoll Lecture, delivered at Harvard University in 2012 and published now for the first time. Perhaps because it is overshadowed by the more easily defined evil, goodness often escapes our attention. Recalling many literary examples, from Ahab to Coetzee's Michael K, Morrison seeks the essence of goodness and ponders its significant place in her writing. She considers the concept in relation to unforgettable characters from her own works of fiction and arrives at conclusions that are both eloquent and edifying. In a lively interview conducted for this book, Morrison further elaborates on her lecture's ideas, discussing goodness not only in literature but in society and history—particularly black history, which has responded to centuries of brutality with profound creativity. Morrison's essay is followed by a series of responses by scholars in the fields of religion, ethics, history, and literature to her thoughts on goodness and evil, mercy and love, racism and self-destruction, language and liberation, together with close examination of literary and theoretical expressions from her works. Each of these contributions, written by a scholar of religion, considers the legacy of slavery and how it continues to shape our memories, our complicities, our outcries, our lives, our communities, our literature, and our faith. In addition, the contributors engage the religious orientation in Morrison's novels so that readers who encounter her many memorable characters such as *Sula*, *Beloved*, or *Frank Money* will learn and appreciate how Morrison's notions of goodness and mercy also reflect her understanding of the sacred and the human spirit.

Traces Morrison's theory of African American mothering as it is articulated in her novels, essays, speeches, and interviews. Mothering is a central issue for feminist theory, and motherhood is also a persistent presence in the work of Toni Morrison. Examining Morrison's novels, essays, speeches, and interviews, Andrea O'Reilly illustrates how Morrison builds upon black women's experiences of and perspectives on motherhood to develop a view of

black motherhood that is, in terms of both maternal identity and role, radically different from motherhood as practiced and prescribed in the dominant culture. Motherhood, in Morrison's view, is fundamentally and profoundly an act of resistance, essential and integral to black women's fight against racism (and sexism) and their ability to achieve well-being for themselves and their culture. The power of motherhood and the empowerment of mothering are what make possible the better world we seek for ourselves and for our children. This, argues O'Reilly, is Morrison's maternal theory—a politics of the heart.

"Don't talk to strangers" is the advice long given to children by parents of all classes and races. Today it has blossomed into a fundamental precept of civic education, reflecting interracial distrust, personal and political alienation, and a profound suspicion of others. In this powerful and eloquent essay, Danielle Allen, a 2002 MacArthur Fellow, takes this maxim back to Little Rock, rooting out the seeds of distrust to replace them with "a citizenship of political friendship." Returning to the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of 1954 and to the famous photograph of Elizabeth Eckford, one of the Little Rock Nine, being cursed by fellow "citizen" Hazel Bryan, Allen argues that we have yet to complete the transition to political friendship that this moment offered. By combining brief readings of philosophers and political theorists with personal reflections on race politics in Chicago, Allen proposes strikingly practical techniques of citizenship. These tools of political friendship, Allen contends, can help us become more trustworthy to others and overcome the fossilized distrust among us. Sacrifice is the key concept that bridges citizenship and trust, according to Allen. She uncovers the ordinary, daily sacrifices citizens make to keep democracy working—and offers methods for recognizing and reciprocating those sacrifices. Trenchant, incisive, and ultimately hopeful, *Talking to Strangers* is nothing less than a manifesto for a revitalized democratic citizenry.

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • OPRAH'S BOOK CLUB PICK • NATIONAL BOOK AWARD LONGLIST • "An instant American classic and almost certainly the keynote nonfiction book of the American century thus far."—Dwight Garner, *The New York Times* The Pulitzer Prize-winning, bestselling author of *The Warmth of Other Suns* examines the unspoken caste system that has shaped America and shows how our lives today are still defined by a hierarchy of human divisions. NAMED THE #1 NONFICTION BOOK OF THE YEAR BY TIME, ONE OF THE TEN BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY People • *The Washington Post* • *Publishers Weekly* AND ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY *The New York Times Book Review* • *O: The Oprah Magazine* • NPR • Bloomberg • *Christian Science Monitor* • *New York Post* • *The New York Public Library* • *Fortune* • *Smithsonian Magazine* • *Marie Claire* • *Town & Country* • *Slate* • *Library Journal* • *Kirkus Reviews* • *LibraryReads* • *PopMatters* Winner of the Los Angeles Times Book Prize • National Book Critics Circle Award Finalist • Dayton Literary Peace Prize Finalist • PEN/John Kenneth Galbraith Award for Nonfiction Finalist • PEN/Jean Stein Book Award Longlist "As we go about our daily lives, caste is the wordless usher in a darkened theater, flashlight cast down in the aisles, guiding us to our assigned seats for a performance. The hierarchy of caste is not about feelings or morality. It is about power—which groups have it and which do not." In this brilliant book, Isabel Wilkerson gives us a masterful portrait of an unseen phenomenon in America as she explores, through an immersive, deeply researched narrative and stories about real people, how America today and throughout its history has been shaped by a hidden caste system, a rigid hierarchy of human rankings. Beyond race, class, or other factors, there is a powerful caste system that influences people's lives and behavior and the nation's fate. Linking the caste systems of America, India, and Nazi Germany, Wilkerson explores eight pillars that underlie caste systems across civilizations, including divine will, bloodlines, stigma, and more. Using riveting stories about people—including Martin Luther King, Jr., baseball's Satchel Paige, a single father and his toddler son, Wilkerson herself, and many others—she shows the ways that the insidious undertow of caste is experienced every day. She documents how the Nazis studied the racial

systems in America to plan their out-cast of the Jews; she discusses why the cruel logic of caste requires that there be a bottom rung for those in the middle to measure themselves against; she writes about the surprising health costs of caste, in depression and life expectancy, and the effects of this hierarchy on our culture and politics. Finally, she points forward to ways America can move beyond the artificial and destructive separations of human divisions, toward hope in our common humanity. Beautifully written, original, and revealing, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* is an eye-opening story of people and history, and a reexamination of what lies under the surface of ordinary lives and of American life today. In *Black Aliveness, or A Poetics of Being*, Kevin Quashie imagines a Black world in which one encounters Black being as it is rather than only as it exists in the shadow of anti-Black violence. As such, he makes a case for Black aliveness even in the face of the persistence of death in Black life and Black study. Centrally, Quashie theorizes aliveness through the aesthetics of poetry, reading poetic inhabitation in Black feminist literary texts by Lucille Clifton, Audre Lorde, June Jordan, Toni Morrison, and Evie Shockley, among others, showing how their philosophical and creative thinking constitutes worldmaking. This worldmaking conceptualizes Blackness as capacious, relational beyond the normative terms of recognition—Blackness as a condition of oneness. Reading for poetic aliveness, then, becomes a means of exploring Black being rather than nonbeing and animates the ethical question “how to be.” In this way, Quashie offers a Black feminist philosophy of being, which is nothing less than a philosophy of the becoming of the Black world.

The story of Pecola Breedlove profiles an eleven-year-old Black girl growing up in an America that values blue-eyed blondes and the tragedy that results from her longing to be accepted. Named a Best Book of the Year by *Time*, *The Washington Post*, and *Harper's Bazaar* “A tender, spiky family saga about love in all its mysterious incarnations.” —Lorrie Moore, author of *A Gate at the Stairs* and *Birds of America* “Absolutely luminous . . . Weaves the transience of suburbia between the highs and lows of a family saga . . . Shocks, awes, and delights.” —Bryan Washington, author of *Memorial* From the outside, the Chengs seem like so-called model immigrants. Once Patty landed a tech job near Dallas, she and Liang grew secure enough to have a second child, and to send for their first from his grandparents back in China. Isn't this what they sacrificed so much for? But then little Annabel begins to sleepwalk at night, putting into motion a string of misunderstandings that not only threaten to set their community against them but force to the surface the secrets that have made them fear one another. How can a man make peace with the terrors of his past? How can a child regain trust in unconditional love? How can a family stop burying its history and forge a way through it, to a more honest intimacy? *Nights When Nothing Happened* is gripping storytelling immersed in the crosscurrents that have reshaped the American landscape, from a prodigious new literary talent.

“They shoot the white girl first. With the rest they can take their time.” So begins Toni Morrison's *Paradise*, which opens with a horrifying scene of mass violence and chronicles its genesis in an all-black small town in rural Oklahoma. Founded by the descendants of freed slaves and survivors in exodus from a hostile world, the patriarchal community of Ruby is built on righteousness, rigidly enforced moral law, and fear. But seventeen miles away, another group of exiles has gathered in a promised land of their own. And it is upon these women in flight from death and despair that nine male citizens of Ruby will lay their pain, their terror, and their murderous rage. In prose that soars with the rhythms, grandeur, and tragic arc of an epic poem, Toni Morrison challenges our most fiercely held beliefs as she weaves folklore and history, memory and myth into an unforgettable meditation on race, religion, gender, and a far-off past that is ever present.

A collection of portraits documents the appearance and spirit of Americans in the Rust Belt and on the East Coast over the past dozen years

## Get Free Toni Morrison Strangers Essay

From the acclaimed Nobel Prize winner: Two girls who grow up to become women. Two friends who become something worse than enemies. This brilliantly imagined novel brings us the story of Nel Wright and Sula Peace, who meet as children in the small town of Medallion, Ohio. Nel and Sula's devotion is fierce enough to withstand bullies and the burden of a dreadful secret. It endures even after Nel has grown up to be a pillar of the black community and Sula has become a pariah. But their friendship ends in an unforgivable betrayal—or does it end? Terrifying, comic, ribald and tragic, *Sula* is a work that overflows with life.

Adored by many, appalling to some, baffling still to others, few authors defy any single critical narrative to the confounding extent that James Baldwin manages. Was he a black or queer writer? Was he a religious or secular writer? Was he a spokesman for the civil rights movement or a champion of the individual? His critics, as disparate as his readership, endlessly wrestle with paradoxes, not just in his work but also in the life of a man who described himself as "all those strangers called Jimmy Baldwin" and who declared that "all theories are suspect." Viewing Baldwin through a cultural-historical lens alongside a more traditional literary critical approach, *All Those Strangers* examines how his fiction and nonfiction shaped and responded to key political and cultural developments in the United States from the 1940s to the 1980s. Showing how external forces molded Baldwin's personal, political, and psychological development, Douglas Field breaks through the established critical difficulties caused by Baldwin's geographical, ideological, and artistic multiplicity by analyzing his life and work against the radically transformative politics of his time. The book explores under-researched areas in Baldwin's life and work, including his relationship to the Left, his FBI files, and the significance of Africa in his writing, while also contributing to wider discussions about postwar US culture. Field deftly navigates key twentieth-century themes—the Cold War, African American literary history, conflicts between spirituality and organized religion, and transnationalism—to bring a number of isolated subjects into dialogue with each other. By exploring the paradoxes in Baldwin's development as a writer, rather than trying to fix his life and work into a single framework, *All Those Strangers* contradicts the accepted critical paradigm that Baldwin's life and work are too ambiguous to make sense of. By studying him as an individual and an artist in flux, Field reveals the manifold ways in which Baldwin's work develops and coheres.

The latest novel from Nobel Prize winner Toni Morrison. An angry and self-loathing veteran of the Korean War, Frank Money finds himself back in racist America after enduring trauma on the front lines that left him with more than just physical scars. His home--and himself in it--may no longer be as he remembers it, but Frank is shocked out of his crippling apathy by the need to rescue his medically abused younger sister and take her back to the small Georgia town they come from, which he's hated all his life. As Frank revisits the memories from childhood and the war that leave him questioning his sense of self, he discovers a profound courage he thought he could never possess again. A deeply moving novel about an apparently defeated man finding himself--and his home.

What is race and why does it matter? Why does the presence of Others make us so afraid? America's foremost novelist reflects on themes that preoccupy her work and dominate politics: race, fear, borders, mass movement of peoples, desire for belonging. Ta-Nehisi Coates provides a foreword to Toni Morrison's most personal work of nonfiction to date.

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