

Autobiographical Notes

“the past is the only thing that makes the present coherent...”
Does Baldwin ever admit that the present is, in fact coherent? He often uses the words unspokeable, unutterable etc. to describe the phenomenology of the present. (How) does Baldwin manage to create a past that enables him to speak?

Where you going?

In his title essay Baldwin writes of rejection, abandonment and silence in his relationship to his father and his relationship to the United States. In an interview Baldwin once said, “You take your home with you. You'd better. Or else you're homeless.” Take this with you.

Where you been?

Encounter on the Seine:

Black Meets Brown
“His mother did not sing ‘Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child’.” How does Baldwin use the encounter with “the African” to explore the idea of origin? Where does he finally place origin? Or can he?

Question of Identity / Equal in Paris
What role does Paris as location play in Baldwin's construction of a “home”?
What function does criminalization play in subjectivity for Baldwin? For Wright?

you must write “in the margins” or on the “other side”

who's your daddy?

Everybody's Protest Novel

In his next book of essays Nobody Knows My Name Baldwin describes his deconstruction of Native Son and Richard Wright as the impulse of a youth to assert himself by defying his elders. How multiply does Baldwin construct his own paternity? What does this have to do with his navigation of “this void, our unknown selves, demanding forever a new act of creation”?

whose little boy are you?

NOTES OF ~~a stranger~~ ~~an orphan~~ ~~an outcast~~ A NATIVE SON

an interactive nativity scene through James Baldwin by Alexis Pauline Gumbs

Journey to Atlanta

Here Baldwin recounts the south through the experience of his brother. The title essay of his next collection Nobody Knows My Name is about his own pilgrimage to what he calls the “old country”. Where is W.E.B. DuBois from? ;)

parlevous...?

Many Thousands Gone

As he continues to reveal the limits of Wright's project and to assert himself as a reader, Baldwin also begins to address his readers reflexively as “we”. He points out that “Our dehumanization of the Negro then is indivisible from our dehumanization of ourselves.” Where is Baldwin (here)? Where is “the Negro” (here)? Where is the audience (gone)?

Where you at?

Carmen Jones: Dark is Light Enough Note that Baldwin *has* to mention *Birth of a Nation* in his review of this film. **Note** that Carmen Jones is a remake. What happens to Baldwin's “void”, the “act of creation” and the possibility of originality within the dark, stereotype-laden and overdetermined space of the American movie theater?

Where you from?

The Harlem Ghetto

“Any negro who takes this schooling at face value will find himself virtually incapacitated for life in this democracy.” What about us? What does an emphasis on/ the process of out education a “void”? Who am I writing to?