

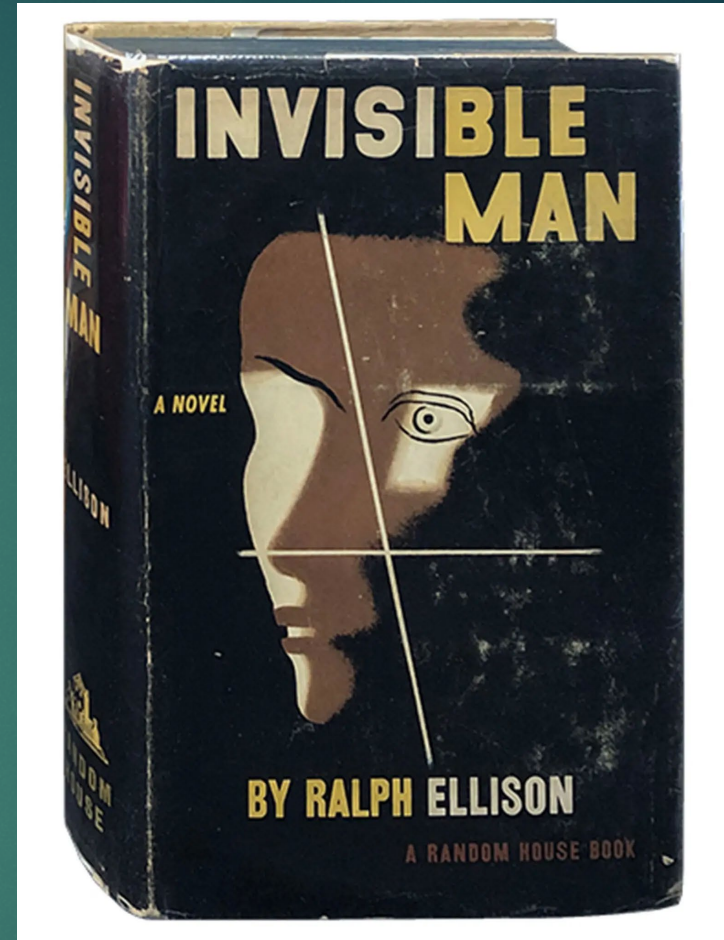
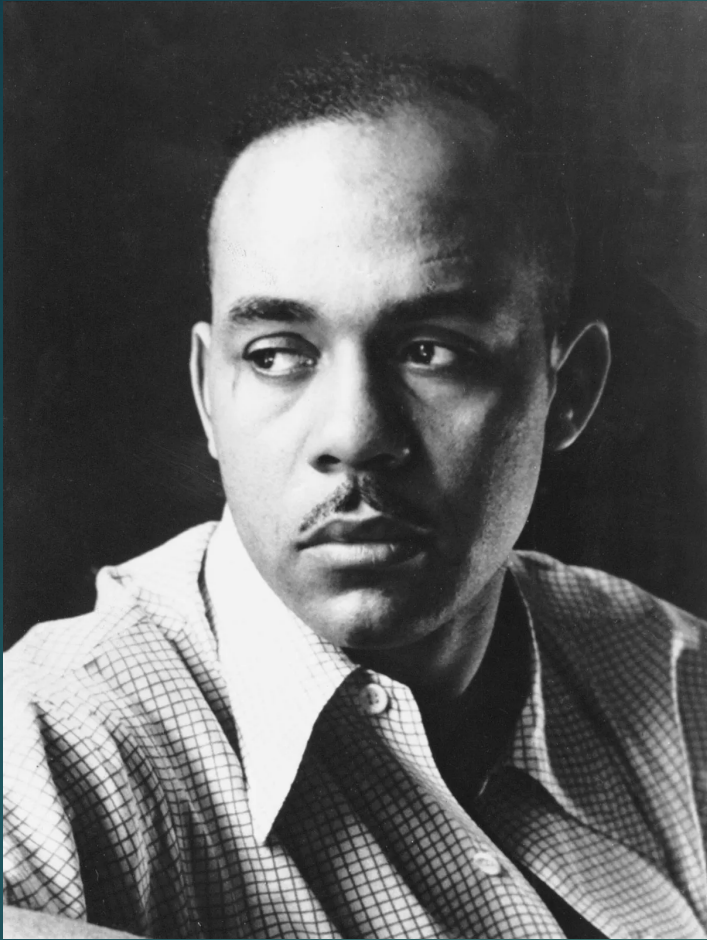
What is Race and Race-Making? How is Race Used to Control Populations?

Stephanie Li, Washington University in St. Louis



"Because they think they are white, they do not dare confront the ravage and the lie of their history. Because they think they are white, they cannot allow themselves to be tormented by the suspicion that all men are brothers"

James Baldwin, "On Being 'White' . . . And Other Lies," 1984



“I am an invisible man.” Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*, 1952



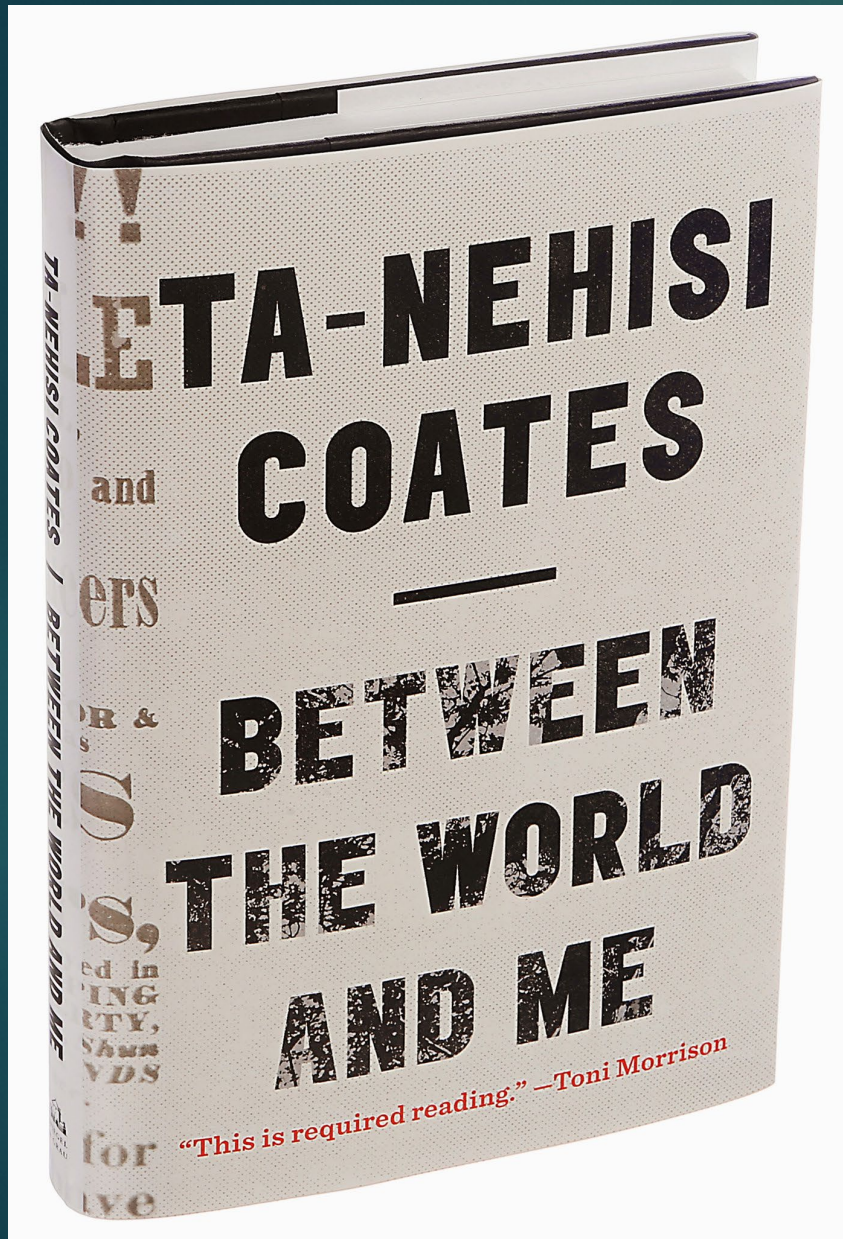
“Though the white liberal imagination likes to feel temporarily bad about black suffering, there really is no mode of empathy that can replicate the daily strain of knowing that as a black person you can be killed for simply being black: no hands in your pockets, no playing music, no sudden movements, no driving your car, no walking at night, no walking in the day, no turning onto this street, no entering this building, no standing your ground, no standing here, no standing there, no talking back, no playing with toy guns, no living while black.”

Claudia Rankine, “The Condition of Black Life is One of Mourning,” 2015

“We, immigrant blacks and African Americans alike, were treated by those who housed us, and were in charge of schooling us, as though we were members of a group in transit. The message we always heard from those who were meant to protect us: that we should either die or go somewhere else. This is the experience of a refugee.”

Edwidge Danticat, “Message to My Daughters,” 2016







“And the entire time he was leading me, I was sure he was going to make a quick turn into an alley where some dudes would be waiting to strip me of . . . what, exactly? But my new friend simply showed me the building, shook my hand, gave a fine *bonne soirée*, and walked off into the wide open night. And watching him walk away, I felt that I had missed part of the experience because of my eyes, because my eyes were made in Baltimore, because my eyes were blindfolded by fear. “

Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*,
2015



“But the kinds of traumas that marked African Americans of his generation—beatings at the hands of racist police, being herded into poor schools, grinding out a life in a tenement building—were mostly abstract for him. Moreover, the kind of spatial restriction that most black people feel at an early age—having rocks thrown at you for being on the wrong side of the tracks, for instance—was largely absent from his life. In its place, Obama was gifted with a well-stamped passport and admittance to elite private schools—all of which spoke of other identities, other lives and other worlds where the color line was neither determinative nor especially relevant.”

“What Obama was able to offer white America is something very few African Americans could—trust. The vast majority of us are, necessarily, too crippled by our defenses to ever consider such a proposition. But Obama, through a mixture of ancestral connections and distance from the poisons of Jim Crow, can credibly and sincerely trust the majority population of this country.”

Ta-Nehisi Coates, “My President was Black,” 2016





“If I had to live in a racial house, it was important, at the least, to rebuild it so that it was not a windowless prison into which I was forced, a thick-walled, impenetrable container from which no cry could be heard, but rather an open house, grounded, yet generous in its supply of windows and doors.”

Toni Morrison, “Home,” 1998

“the concrete thrill of borderlessness—
a kind of out of doors safety where a
sleepless woman could always rise
from her bed, wrap a shawl around
her shoulders and sit on the steps in
the moonlight. And if she felt like it she
could walk out the yard and on down
the road. No lamp and no fear. “

Toni Morrison, “Home,” 1998

