**CORE106 Fall 2015**

**October 19, 2015**

**Notes**

* Notice something about the ages of these characters (Douglass and Oswald). How much of a difference does their ages make? Are you impressed, or unimpressed, by the fact these people are essentially the same age as you?
* A central theme: **Lee becomes a toy (object) of manipulation.**

**LANGUAGE**

* Language is an instrument for deception and confusion, as much as communication and clarity.   
    
  “Parmenter was interested in the way this language constantly found a deeper level, a secret level where those outside the cadre could not gain access to it.” (117)

Language is a reality distortion field. “Rumors, false battle reports, meaningless codes…” CIA’s deception that helped the Guatemala overthrow. (125)

“Always the pain, the chaos of composition. He could not find order in the field of the little symbols. They were in the hazy distance. He could not see clearly the picture that is called a word. **A word is also a picture of a word.** He saw spaces, incomplete features, and tried to guess at the rest.” (211)

**THE BASICS OF SOCIAL INTERACTION**  
Beginning with his mother, Lee did not have the basic ability to generate social cues that explained who he was, and his intentions. (His mother and deodorant.)

“There was some trick he hadn’t mastered which might easily set things right.” 151  
  
  
  
**LEE’S SELF HATRED AND DESIRE FOR REVENGE; HIS DESIRE TO OVERCOME HIS LIFE**

**The nature of things was to be elusive. Things slipped through his perceptions. He could not get a grip on the runaway world. (211)**

**His alias “Hidell”**

Lee wanted to throw away his identity. Passages with Alek Kirilenko:

* “[Lee] struggled against his fate, yes, exactly, like someone in the social universe of Marx.” (165)
* “That’s what they all want, isn’t it, these people who live in corners inside themselves, in blinds and hidey holes?” (166)
* “This boy played ping pong in his head.”
* Alek is a father figure to him. “Alek, how do I get ahead?” (198)
* His obsession with becoming a father.

**SOCIAL ISOLATION:**  
  
Page 173: Most political statement so far: “You go into the woods and dig your own personal latrine…” (173)

Page 181: Passage about Branch. “After Oswald, men in America are no longer required to lead lives of quiet desperation.”

Page 203: Some of the boys from the plan told Marina that he was a good enough fellow but always kept to himself, always the loner…”

Notice how he lies to Marina.

He changes his mind and decides he wants to go back to the U.S.

**PLOT**

**20 May (117)**

* Everett communicates with Mackey about Oswald
* Everett emphasizes need to not kill the president.
* Mackey gets Vasquez and Raymo engaged near The Farm in Virginia
* Note the introduction for the first time of mobsters on p. 129. Mafia held huge stakes in the Cuban regime before Castro.  
    
  Oswald has gone into the office at Camp Street and has applied to be a spy.

**In Fort Worth (132)**

“It is the struggle hanging over my life that made him go away.” (Father?) (133)

Passage to Europe

**19 June (135)**

Verification of the plot (139)

Guy Banister: “One thing Guy couldn’t stand about these sitins and marches. When the goddamn whites get to singing the whole occasion falls apart…” (141)

Note the emphasis on paranoia. “Ferrie recommended him. He’s a David Ferrie project.” (142)  
  
Wayne Elko is introduced, calling from Denver (145)

Everett’s “gunman would emerge and vanish in a maze of false names.”

**In Moscow (149)**

**It is 1959.**

KEY: “There was some trick he hadn’t mastered which might easily set things right.” 151

He tries suicide, and fails at that.

He meets Alex Kirilenko. We don’t know this, but he’s a KGB agent. Lee’s knowledge of the U-2 program is valuable.

“He hated to say he didn’t know.” (161)

But he also loved the sensation of control

“[Lee] struggled against his fate, yes, exactly, like someone in the social universe of Marx.”

(165)

**2 July (169)**

David Ferrie and Carmine Latta. Introduction of Jack Ruby. Ferrie gathers a large amount of cash.

Lee Oswald becomes “real” to Everett, in the sense that he is an independent force. He has making his own fake identification, for example.

Passage on Raymo and Frank watching old men play baseball.

**In Minsk (189)**

The episode of the U-2 plane being shot down. Kirilenko realizing Oswald doesn’t really know that much about the program.

“He told them to call him Alek.” (199)

Postcard #4: Marguerite trying to get information about Lee.

“[Marina] was drawn to people who were different. Ilya told the American she had breezes in her brain.” (201)

He returns in 1962, but not before a series of humiliations that suggest he has been abandoned by the KGB. **He can’t even be a successful traitor.**