

My Life Page:

“The fear in my father’s voice, for example, when he realized that I really believed I could do anything a white boy could do, and had every intention of proving it” (Baldwin, Down at the Cross).

Baldwin and Coates shared many similarities throughout their youth, they both believed in themselves and wanted to express themselves in unfiltered and true ways. However, their main difference and what could be considered an evolution through time is the parents and influences present in both their lives.

Baldwin, one of his biggest and core memories are “the fear in [his] father’s voice” when Baldwin “believed [he] could do anything a white boy could do” and more so when he expressed his “every intention of proving it” (Baldwin, Down at the Cross). Baldwin's parents weren't as supportive of his activism, they acted out of the fear that they were systematically made to have. America created an environment where living in it stripped this fear out of you. While Coates isn't the ‘new James Baldwin’ and they are very different people they have very similar core qualities. They both from a young age were exposed to a very brutal showcasing of America's realities. The difference in Coates’ life was his supporting parents in defying his societal mold. This led him to an easier route to activism throughout his life.

Hot Takes:

James Baldwin takes stances against America and white people in very unpopular and unconfoming ways. He attempts to expose what he believes is the truth despite the public backlash he may receive. In that way him and Coates are extremely similar, such as where Baldwin spoke on “White people [being] [...] astounded by the holocaust in Germany. They did not know they could act that way” however he “very much doubt[s] whether black people were astounded--at least in the same way” (Baldwin, Down at the Cross). Baldwin expresses what America did not enjoy hearing, by subtly comparing Americans to the Nazis of the holocaust to try and enact change with inspiring guilt or at least acknowledgement in the past. Coates does mostly the same thing now especially with the Gaza Palestine situation. Coates compares it to the past of African Americans, "I first thought about it and said – well, these people have actually advanced past Jim Crow by segregating water itself" (Eltohamy). While they are not on the same intensity for the time period and the ideas being conveyed are similar, both unpopular sentiments that are constructed to enact societal change. All these quotes are examples of evolution of those unpopular opinions creating discussion.

Instagram Page:

The instagram page is just a farther evolution of influential people use platforms as a way to connect with their supporters and enact change. In Baldwins era his influence was contained to newspapers and televised segments from speeches and talk shows however as time has passed and platforms like social media have risen up to allow an easier and more effective way to reach the people the methods by which to get a message across has changed. However the platform is used for much of the same purposes.

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