

Independent Study

For my independent study, I decided to read the book *Beloved* by Toni Morrison because it is an amazing book and it is within the realm of AP Lit as well as magical realism which we were partially studying or would be to accompany the AP exam prep. For the original plan, I had decided to put together a summary or reaction to different parts of the book. Instead, I've chosen to use this first part as a reflection on the book, and accompany that with a poem relating to the book, as Toni Morrison as a writer was influential in my growth as a creative writer and thinker and putting together a piece I thought would be the right way to express that love and appropriate being that the book is by her.

This book definitely lived up to the idea of magical realism and I definitely want to re-read it to clear some things up. The time period in Toni Morrison books always has a lot to do with the message and this book does a great and very surreal job of weaving the black experience into the mind of the reader. It portrays how awful slavery was not just in the textbook fashion that shows a picture of it but also in making the psychological effects of it seem real as well as the coping mechanisms such as community the hope of education and faith all the more reasonable and make the reader empathize with the characters even more even through events that at times are confusing. The ending was abrupt and bitter sweet, but made me think about my history and the ways that people attempted to free themselves in a binding situation. If I were to place a level three question for this book it would be, do people need power or the hope of power to be properly motivated and function? Throughout the book slavery being a part of the slave owners power and how they use that power defines in part for the slaves how they should function and influences their desired actions to generate power over themselves or the people that they care for and I think that could be a good question to pose about human nature.

Beloved

Anything can be a name,
in the same way that genocide can kill any group of people,
and in the same way slaves have been around throughout
all of history, because in a conceptual form they
don't generalize but segregate like ants sifting between
piles of sand in southern heat or scoops of chocolate and vanilla
ice cream in the fifties.

Of all the inquisitive entities that occupy the body
the subconscious is clearly the most curious
asking each night through dreams of old tin boxes and
invisible train tracks, who do you love
and who do you hate along with the occasional how?

Of course there is no answer to the questions,
and there's no stationary solution to problems
that co-exist with those trying to solve it,
only crafty chemical imbalances and hypotheses
that suggest ego created it all.

How can one love with so much hate, and how
does hate mingle in a networking dinner hosted
by so much love?

What happens to those who hate and what is left of so
much love when times change, and babies mouths need feeding,
and the sounds that incite attention from another are a synonym
for anything except, a response, and the future isn't
anything but a fantasy about the last time you'll see a person
and a number you don't have time to count to?