ABOUT THE BOOK:

Ta-Nehisi Coates’ letter to his teenage son is a moving personal account of what it’s like to be black in America.

It’s also about:

- Race as the child of racism, not the father
- Resilience in the face of racism
- The “American Dream,” including its myths, privileges, and prejudices
- The power of education for growth and awareness
- The irreplaceable value of the body, individual lives, our collective resources

This is not an easy book, but it is a powerful and important one. As Coates says: “I hope to haunt [my readers], to trouble their sense of how things actually are.”

One thing Coates teaches is that it’s okay not to have answers. He encourages us to face our discomfort—to sit with our questions. It’s the asking and the seeking that matter most.

Let’s start the conversation!

THOUGHTFUL READING AND CONVERSATIONS:

When reading this book…

- Begin with self-reflection.
- Be curious about your own response.
- Challenge yourself to think deeply about the content.
- Examine your reactions and assumptions.

When discussing this book…

- Speak from your own lived experience.
- Ask permission to ask questions; not everyone may want to share.
- Respect each other’s boundaries.
- Invite respectful feedback.
- Be aware that your experience is unique and valid.
- Remember that everyone’s lived experience is unique and valid.

TOOLS TO HELP YOU:

- UO Common Reading: ow.ly/ruTl300F2TP
- Reading the Book (Prof. Howard Rambsy’s blog): ow.ly/e2TQ300F34y
- Coates on Questioning: ow.ly/TuGX300OFzI
- “The Conversation”: ow.ly/bEIm300F3lS
- “Explaining White Privilege”: ow.ly/yNfe300F3if
  (Note: profanity used in this article)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Ta-Nehisi Coates at UO
School of Journalism and Communication’s Ruhl Lecture
February 3, 2017

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