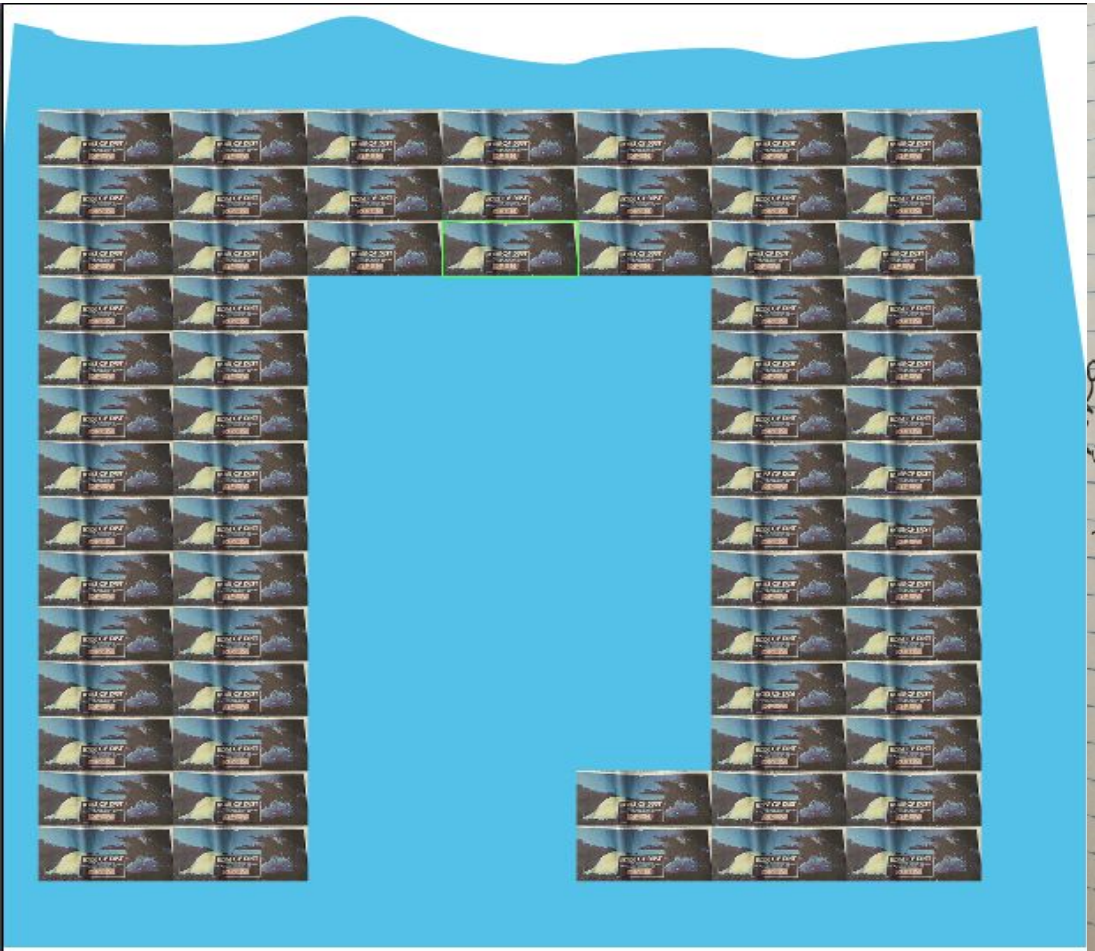
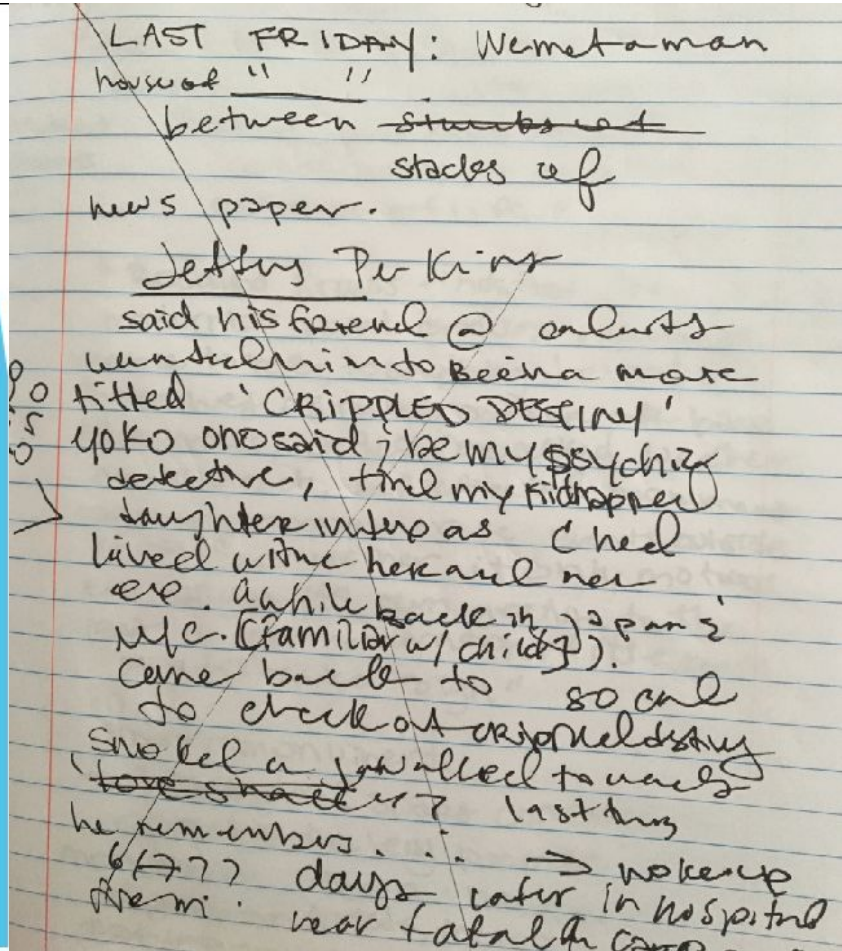
consciousness of the times and relation to the past

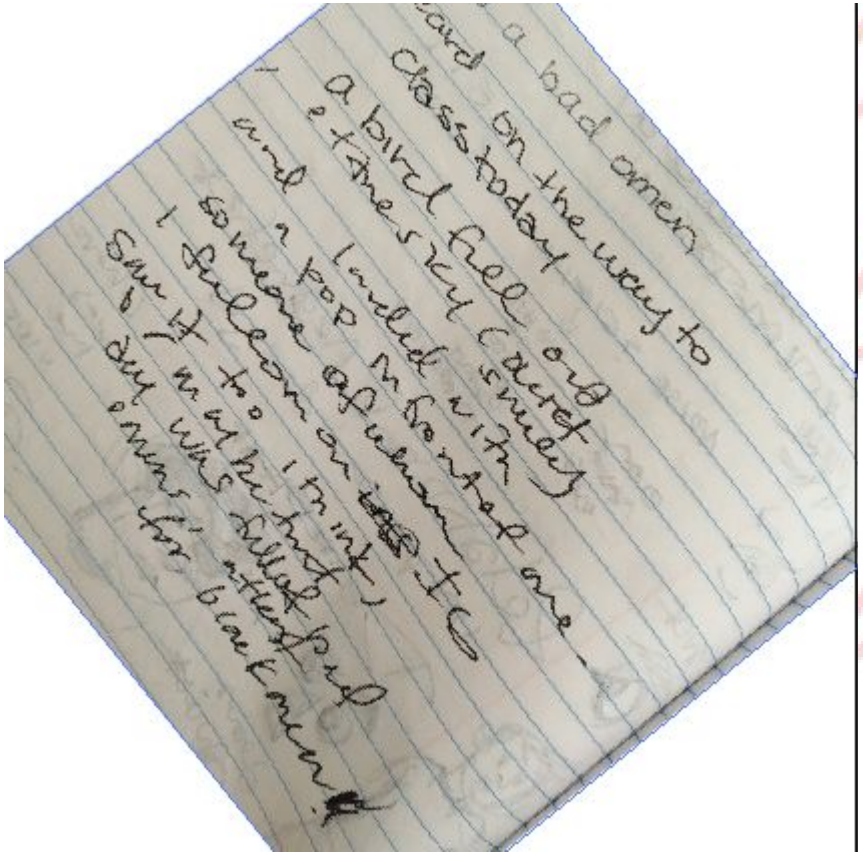
newspapers and reaction to the past + what we can learn from it… sometimes best is to just listen

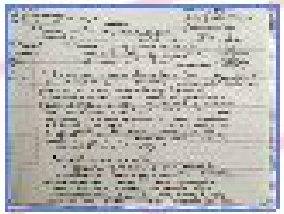


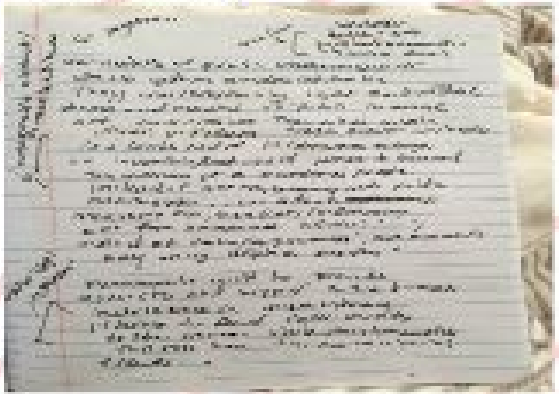


LAST FRIDAY: We met a man
hospital " "
between ~~stacks of~~
stacks of
news paper.
Jeffrey Perkins
said his friend @ colurts
wanted him to Be in a more
titled 'CRIPPLED DESTINY'
YOKO ONO said; be my psychic
detective, find my kidnapped
daughter interpo as I had
lived with her and her
ex. a while back in Japan
w/c. (familiar w/ children).
came back to so and
go check out ~~original~~ story
smoke a joint and talk
~~love shack~~? last thing
he remembers . . . → woke up
6(7?) days later in hospital
from: near fatal car

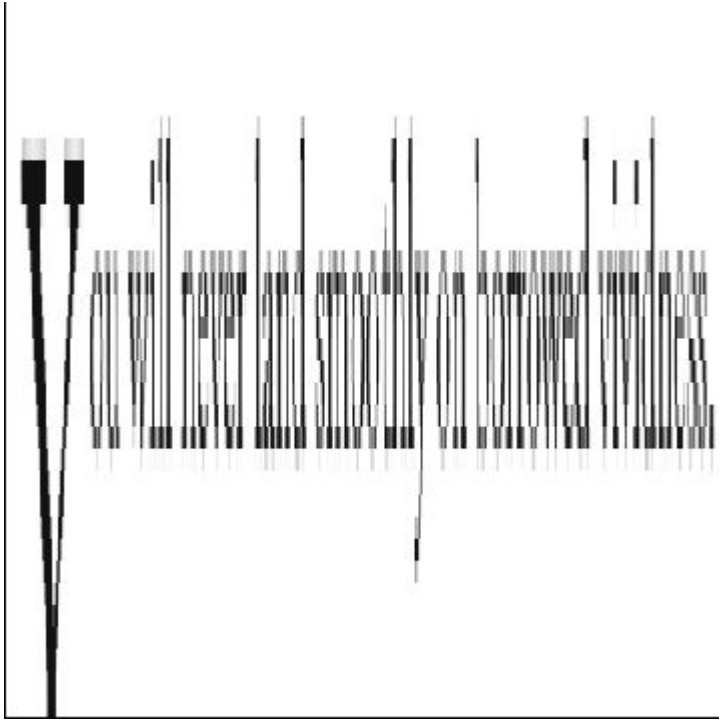
Take note of the things around you, inside and outside class (general note taking and thought development)







If you’re interested in a concept, idea, author, text, PURSUE IT!



I like postcards and travel books better than the places they remind me of, art books better than paintings, recordings better than live performances, and fantasies more than the people I fantasize about—some of whom are not only destined to disappoint, but can’t even be forgiven for standing in the way of the pictures we originally had of them. Once in Rome, I would most certainly long to be in Straus Park remembering the Rome where I’d once remembered the beaches of my childhood. Italy was just my way of grafting myself onto New York.

the white Americas progress, or rather the progress of
edge
Americans who believe that they are white, was built on looting and violence. Hearing this I felt in old and indelible scars well up in me. The answer to this question is the record of the believers themselves. The answer is American history.

There is nothing extreme in this statement. Americans defy democracy in a way that allows for a fine awareness that they have, from time to time, stood in defiance of their God. But democracy is a forgiving God and America's heresies—torture, theft, enslavement—are so common among individuals and nations that none can declare themselves innocent. In fact Americans, in a real sense, have never betrayed their God. When Abraham Lincoln declared in 1863, that the battle of Gettysburg must ensure "that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth," he was not merely being aspirational; at the outset of the Civil War, the United States of America had one of the highest rates of suffrage in the world. The question is not whether Lincoln truly meant "government of the people" but what our country has, throughout its history, taken the political term "people" to actually mean. In 1863 it did not mean your mother or your grandmother, and it did not mean you and me. Thus America's problem is not its betrayal of "government of the people," but the means by which "the people" acquire their names.

This leads us to another equally important idea: one

that Americans implicitly accept but to which they make no conscious claim. Americans believe in the reality of "race" as a defined, indubitable feature of the natural world. Racism—the need to ascribe bone-deep features to people and then humiliate, reduce, and destroy them—inevitably follows from this irrefutable condition. In this way racism is rendered as the innocent daughter of Mother Nature, and one is left to deplore the Middle Passage or the Trail of Tears the way one deplores an earthquake, a tornado, or any other phenomenon that can be cast as beyond the handiwork of men.

But race is the child of racism, not the father. And the process of naming "the people" has never been a matter of genealogy and physiography so much as one of hierarchy. Difference in hue and hair is real. But the belief in the preeminence of hue and hair that notion that these factors can correctly organize a society and that they signify deeper attributes, which are ineffable—this is the new idea at the heart of these new people who have been brought up hopelessly, tragically, desperately, to believe that they are white.

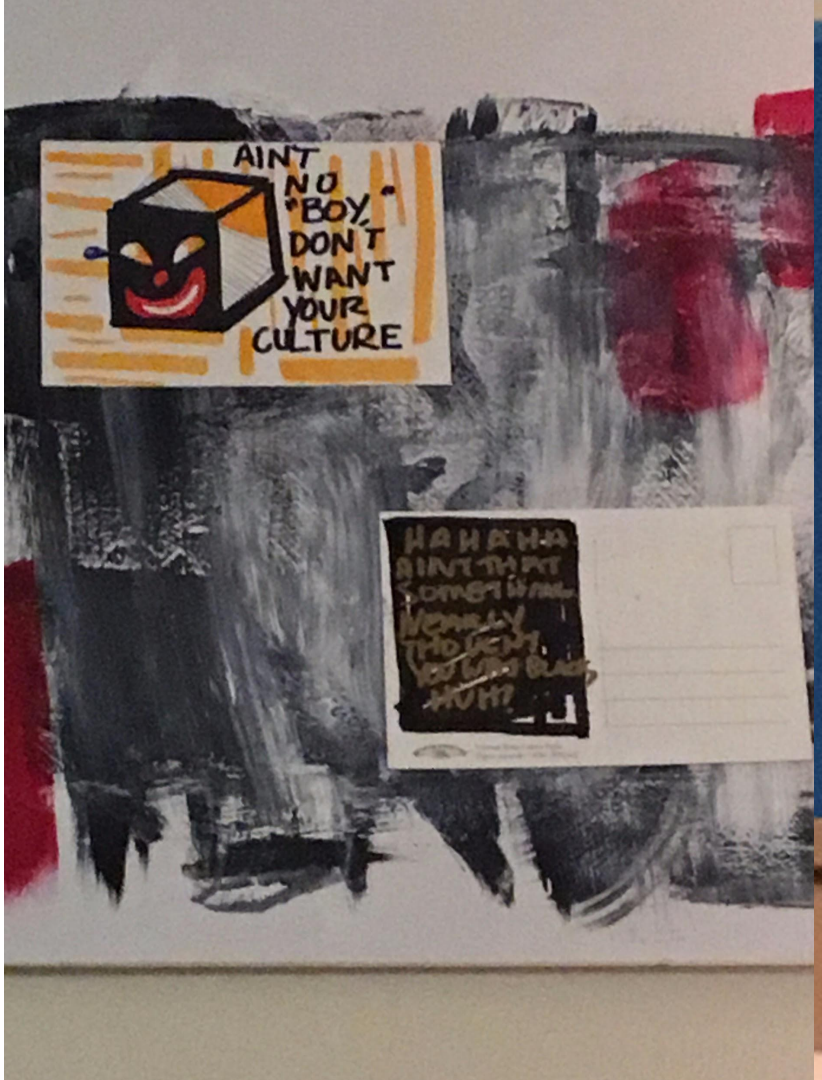
These new people are, like us, a modern invention. But unlike us, their new name has no real meaning divorced from the machinery of criminal power. The new people were something else before they were white—Catholic, Corsican, Welsh, Mennonite, Jewish—and if all our national hopes have any fulfillment, then they will have to be something else again. Perhaps they will really become American and create a nobler basis for their myths. I can-

There is nothing uniquely evil in these destroyers or even in this moment. The destroyers are merely rites inflicting the will of our country, correctly interpreting its heritage and legacy. It is hard to face this. But all our phrasing—race relations, racial crisis, racial justice, racial profiling, white privilege, even white supremacy—serves to obscure that racism is a visceral experience, that it dislodges brains, bucks airways, rips muscle, extracts organs, cracks bones, breaks teeth. You must never look away from this. You must always remember that the sociology, the history, the economics, the graphs, the charts, the regressions all and, with great violence, upon the body.

That Sunday, with that host, on that news show, I tried to explain this as best I could within the time allotted. But at the end of the segment, the host faded a widely shared picture of an eleven-year-old black boy tearfully hugging a white police officer. Then he asked me about "hope." And I knew then that I had failed. And I remembered that I had expected to fail. And I wondered again at the instinct sadness welling up in me. Why exactly was I sad? I came out of the studio and walked for a while. It was a calm December day. Families, believing themselves white, were out on the streets. Infants, raised to be white, were bundled in strollers. And I was sad for these people, much as I was sad for the host and sad for all the people out there watching and reveling in a spectacle hope. I realized then why I was sad. When the journalist asked me about my body, it was like she was asking me to awaken her from the

most gorgeous dream. I have seen that dream all my life. It is perfect houses with nice lawns. It is Memorial Day cookouts, block associations, and driveways. The Dream is barbecues and the Cub Scouts. The Dream smells like peppermint but tastes like strawberry shortcake. And for so long I have wanted to escape into the Dream, to find my country over my head like a blanket. But this has never been an option because the Dream rests on our backs, the bedding made from our bodies. And knowing this, knowing that the Dream persists by starting with the known world, I was sad for the host, I was sad for all those families. I was sad for my country, but above all, in that moment, I was sad for you.

That was the worst you learned that the killers of Michael Brown would go free. The men who had left his body in the street like some awesome declaration of their inviolable power would never be punished. It was not my expectation that anyone would ever be punished. But you were young and still believed. You stayed up till 1 a.m. that night, waiting for the announcement of an indictment, and when instead it was announced that there was none you said, "I've got to go" and you went into your room, and I heard you crying. I came in five minutes after, and I didn't hug you, and I didn't comfort you, because I thought it would be wrong to comfort you. I did not tell you that it would be okay because I have never believed it would be okay. What I tell you is what your grandparents tried to tell me: that this is your country, that this is your


AINT NO "BOY" DON'T WANT YOUR CULTURE
HAHAHA