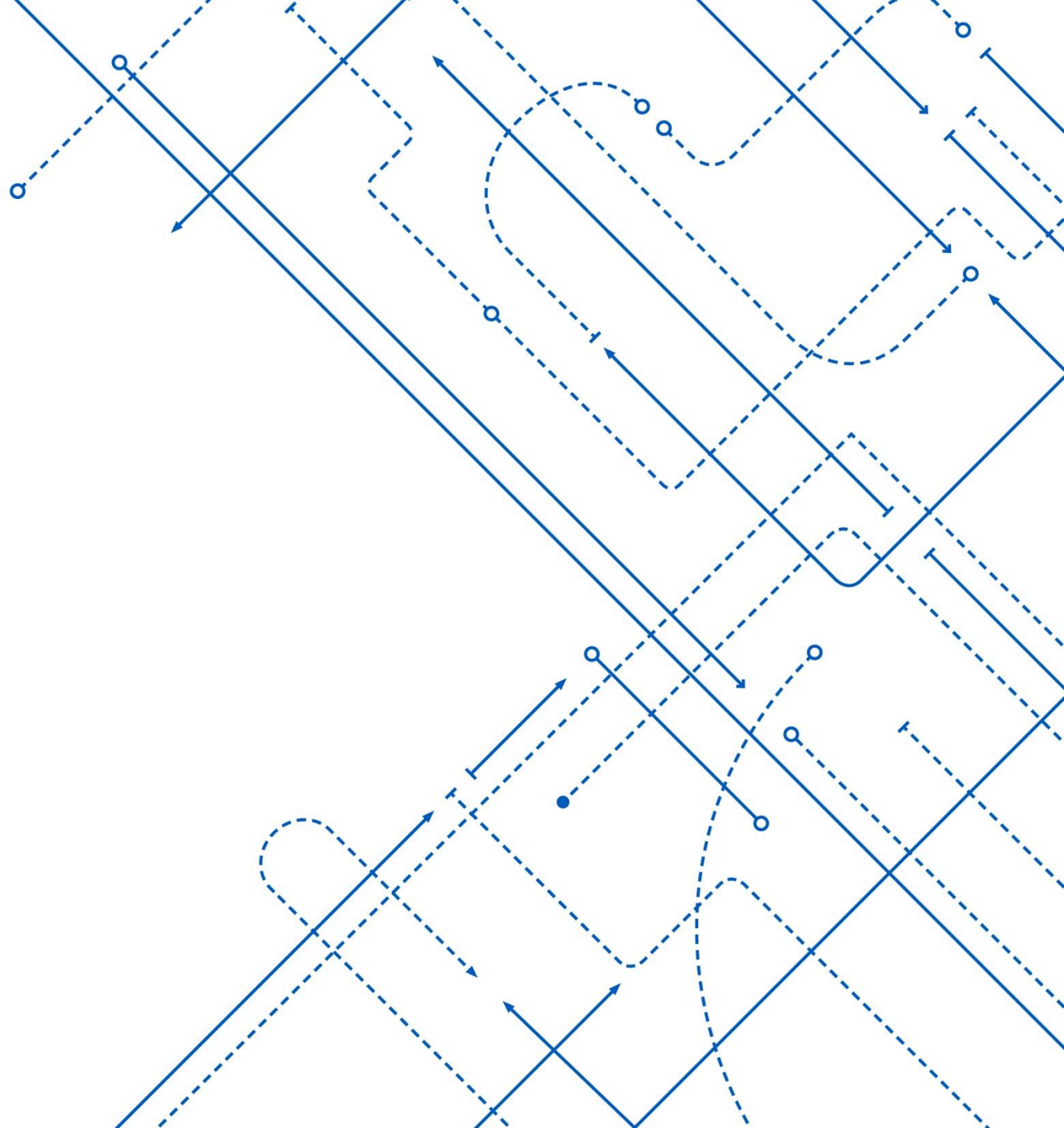


Lecture 2

AI & Society



James Baldwin

James Baldwin

48 languages ▼

Article Talk

Read Edit View history Tools ▼

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

This article is about the American writer. For other people with the same name, see [James Baldwin \(disambiguation\)](#).

James Arthur Baldwin (August 2, 1924 – December 1, 1987) was an American writer. He garnered acclaim for his work across several mediums, including [essays](#), [novels](#), [plays](#), and [poems](#). His first novel, *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, was published in 1953; decades later, *Time* magazine included the novel on its list of the [100 best English-language novels released from 1923 to 2005](#).^[1] His first essay collection, *Notes of a Native Son*, was published in 1955.^[2]

Baldwin's work fictionalizes fundamental personal questions and dilemmas amid complex [social](#) and psychological pressures. Themes of [masculinity](#), [sexuality](#), [race](#), and [class](#) intertwine to create intricate [narratives](#) that run parallel with some of the major [political movements](#) toward social change in [mid-twentieth century America](#), such as the [civil rights movement](#) and the [gay liberation movement](#). Baldwin's protagonists are often but not exclusively [African American](#), and [gay](#) and [bisexual](#) men frequently feature prominently in his literature. These characters often face internal and external obstacles in their search for [social](#) and [self-acceptance](#). Such dynamics are prominent in Baldwin's second novel, *Giovanni's Room*, which was written in 1956, well before the gay liberation movement.^[3]

His reputation has endured since his death and his work has been adapted for the screen to great acclaim. An unfinished manuscript, *Remember This House*, was expanded and adapted for cinema as the documentary film *I Am Not Your Negro* (2016), which was nominated for [Best Documentary Feature](#) at the [89th Academy Awards](#).^{[4][5]} One of his novels, *If Beale Street Could Talk*, was adapted into the [Academy Award–winning film of the same name](#) in 2018, directed and produced by [Barry Jenkins](#).^[6]

In addition to writing, Baldwin was also a well-known, and controversial, public figure and [orator](#), especially during the civil rights movement in the United States.^{[7][8][9]}

Early life [edit]

Birth and family [edit]

Baldwin was born as **James Arthur Jones** to Emma Berdis Jones on August 2, 1924, at [Harlem Hospital](#) in New York City.^{[10][11]} Baldwin was born out of [wedlock](#). Jones never revealed to Baldwin who his biological father was.^[10] According to Anna Malaika Tubbs in her account of the mothers of prominent civil rights figures, some rumors stated that James Baldwin's father suffered from drug addiction or that he died, but that in any case, Jones undertook to care for her son as a single mother.^[12] A native of [Deal Island, Maryland](#), where she was born in 1903,^[13] Emma Jones was one of the many who fled [racial segregation](#) in the South

James Baldwin



James Baldwin > Quotes > Quotable Quote (?)



“The impossible is the least that one can demand.”

– James Baldwin, Holt McDougal Library, High School with Connections: Student Text *The Fire Next Time*

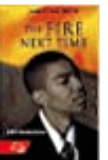
Read more quotes from [James Baldwin](#)

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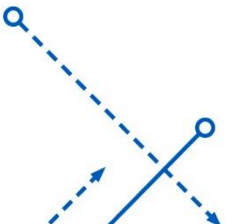
Today

- Reminders/Notes

- If you missed Monday, slides are up on course website, and make sure you read the syllabus carefully
- TQE due tonight – remember, please don't summarize

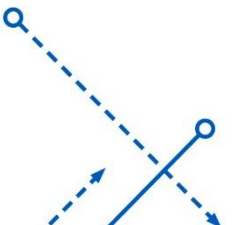
- Today

- Questions?
- Icebreaker
- Four ways to help activity



Get up and move time

- 10 minutes
- Fill the entire board! Anyone who does gets 10 bonus points
- Each person can initial up to 3 squares



The Scenario: In a Midwestern city in the US, a major tornado hits and knocks down a big manufactured home park. Almost forty people are still unaccounted for, and might be trapped in the rubble. The city's response is terribly inadequate – both in terms of preparation for a disaster like this, and in terms of execution of its flawed plan. State and federal offices have the resources to respond, but are not adequately mobilized. The bungled relief effort highlights a number of broader issues about how the government at all levels responds, especially to working poor Midwesterners.

https://www.trainingforchange.org/training_tools/tornado-warning-four-roles-of-social-change/

1. People could be dying under the rubble and need help immediately. We should go to the park right now and try to help the rescue efforts. Even if we can't help them, there are probably children who need care and could use our help.

2. We need to get on city hall's case right away, and see what is keeping the authorities from doing their jobs. We know they could get the state and the feds in here right away. There are systems in the city and we need to make sure everyone has tried all the options.

3. We need to get people together to plan an action about all the needs that aren't getting met. What can the churches do? What can the Rotarians and the Chamber of Commerce do? We should bring together the people who are suffering and allies together to put pressure on government to change the situation.

4. We can't let the government abuse people like this! Where's the governor and mayor? We need to raise our voices so they and the public can hear our outrage! Let's go camp on the state capitol grounds until he asks for a disaster declaration and gets the disaster relief funds flowing. We'll dramatize the loss of homes by setting up tents right where he has to look at them every day!

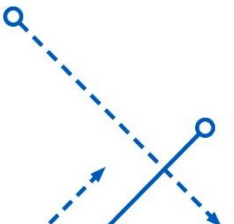
Uncomfortable discussions...

Disagree with what someone SAID **NOT** who you think they ARE



Your task

- Choose a corner of the room
- With others in that corner, discuss and answer [3 different people, if possible] the following:
 - Why did you pick this corner?
 - Why *didn't* you pick the other corners?



ORGANIZER

Effective

- Believes in people power; builds mass-based grassroots groups and networks
- Nurtures growth in natural leaders
- Chooses strategies for long-term movement development rather than focusing only on immediate demands
- Uses training to build skills, democratize decision, diversity and broaden organization and coalitions
- Promotes alternatives and paradigm shifts

Ineffective

- Has tunnel vision: advocates single approach while opposing those doing all others
- Promotes patriarchal leadership styles
- Promotes only minor reform
- Stifles emergence of diversity and ignores needs of activist
- Promotes visions of perfection cut off from practical political and social change

HELPER

Effective

- Assists people in ways that affirm their dignity and respect
- Shares skills and brings clients into decision making roles
- Educates about the larger social system
- Encourages experiments in service delivery which support liberation

Ineffective

- Believes charity can handle social problems, or that helping individuals can change social structures
- Focuses on casualties and refuses to see who benefits from victimization
- Provides services like job training which simply give some people a competitive edge over other people, without challenging the scarcity which gives rise to competition

REBEL

Effective

- Protests: says “no!” to violations of widely held positive values
- Employs nonviolent direct action and attitude, including civil disobedience
- Targets power holders and institutions
- Puts problems and policies in public spotlight
- Uses strategy as well as tactics
- Does work that is courageous, exciting, risky
- Shows in behavior the moral superiority of movement values

Ineffective

- Promotes anti-leadership, anti-organization rules and structures
- Attached to an identity as lonely voice on society’s fringe
- Uses tactics without realistic strategy
- Has victim attitude, behavior: Angry, judgmental, dogmatic
- Uses rhetoric of self-righteousness, absolute truth, moral superiority
- Can be strident; personal upset more important than movement’s needs

<https://show.pics.io/preview/6216524c711cbf00123fbffb>

ADVOCATE

Effective

- Uses mainstream institutions like courts, city hall, and legislatures to get new goals and values adopted
- Uses lobbying, lawsuits, elite networking, and coalition building for clearly-stated demands, often backed by research
- Monitors successes to make sure they are implemented

Ineffective

- “Realistic politics” promotes minor reforms acceptable to power-holders
- Promotes domination by top-down professional advocacy groups
- More concerned with organization’s status than the goal of their social movement
- Identifies more with power holders than with grassroots
- Does not like paradigm shifts

HELPER

Effective

- Assists people in ways that affirm their dignity and respect
- Shares skills and brings clients into decision making roles
- Educates about the larger social system
- Encourages experiments in service delivery which support liberation

Ineffective

- Believes charity can handle social problems, or that helping individuals can change social structures
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Argue for why a *different* corner is important for social change

Which corner is your semester-long project in?

Response Systems Work Effectively. The homeless response system continues to add more temporary and permanent beds each year. It increasingly serves more people, but needs more resources to combat the nationwide affordable housing crisis.

Record-High Homeless Counts. A record-high 653,104 people experienced homelessness on a single night in January 2023. This is more than a 12.1 percent increase over the previous year.

More People Than Ever Are Experiencing Homelessness for the First Time. From 2019-2023, the number of people who entered emergency shelter for the first time increased more than 23 percent.¹

Record High Numbers of People Living Unsheltered, Especially Among Individuals. In 2023, a record high 256,610 people, or 39.3 percent of all people experiencing homelessness, were unsheltered. More than 50 percent of individuals experiencing homelessness were unsheltered.

<https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness/>

The Activity

1. In **groups**, come up with **Options 1-4** that **use AI** that would be analogous to Options 1-4 from the [Tornado Warnings](#) activity (i.e. that represent the [Helper, Advocate, Organizer, and Rebel](#))
2. We'll discuss and choose, as a group, the most representative options
3. Then, we'll do another round of "what's the best option, and why?" except that we'll focus on the benefits and drawbacks of each approach
4. With time, we'll also discuss what implementations of these different approaches would require