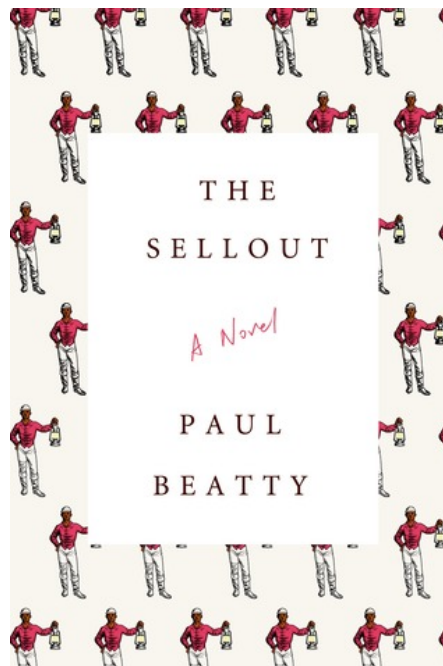




The Sellout

Paul Beatty

Download now

Read Online ➔

The Sellout

Paul Beatty

The Sellout Paul Beatty

A biting satire about a young man's isolated upbringing and the race trial that sends him to the Supreme Court, Paul Beatty's *The Sellout* showcases a comic genius at the top of his game. It challenges the sacred tenets of the United States Constitution, urban life, the civil rights movement, the father-son relationship, and the holy grail of racial equality?the black Chinese restaurant.

Born in the "agrarian ghetto" of Dickens?on the southern outskirts of Los Angeles?the narrator of *The Sellout* resigns himself to the fate of lower-middle-class Californians: "I'd die in the same bedroom I'd grown up in, looking up at the cracks in the stucco ceiling that've been there since '68 quake." Raised by a single father, a controversial sociologist, he spent his childhood as the subject in racially charged psychological studies. He is led to believe that his father's pioneering work will result in a memoir that will solve his family's financial woes. But when his father is killed in a police shoot-out, he realizes there never was a memoir. All that's left is the bill for a drive-thru funeral.

Fueled by this deceit and the general disrepair of his hometown, the narrator sets out to right another wrong: Dickens has literally been removed from the map to save California from further embarrassment. Enlisting the help of the town's most famous resident?the last surviving Little Rascal, Hominy Jenkins?he initiates the most outrageous action conceivable: reinstating slavery and segregating the local high school, which lands him in the Supreme Court.

The Sellout Details

Date : Published 2015 by Farrar, Straus and Giroux

ISBN : 9780374260507

Author : Paul Beatty

Format : Hardcover 289 pages

Genre : Fiction, Humor, Race, Abandoned

 [Download The Sellout ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Sellout ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Sellout Paul Beatty

From Reader Review The Sellout for online ebook

Jessica Woodbury says

If Kurt Vonnegut and Dave Chappelle had a baby and really messed with its head, it would write this novel. I hope Paul Beatty takes that as a compliment because it's meant that way.

This is some seriously biting satire. You know it right away, since it begins with the main character, a black man, before the Supreme Court because he's charged with keeping a slave. Most of the novel is a flashback, showing us how the protagonist not only kept a slave but attempted to re-segregate his formerly all-black now mostly hispanic city. Yes, it sounds crazy. It sounds even crazier because the narrator isn't a racist crazy person, but a relatively enlightened guy who's decided this is how he gets his city back on the map.

It's a zany book, a constant study of and commentary on race. It's often hilarious and not for the faint of heart or tired of mind. I had a great time reading it, but I admit now I'm hesitant to know how to talk about it. So much in this book is untouchable and off limits and taboo. It's also brilliant and constantly unexpected.

Rebecca Foster says

(3.5) This is such an outrageous racial satire that I kept asking myself how Beatty got away with it. Not only did he get away with it, he won a National Book Critics Circle Award, and now the Booker Prize. The novel opens at the U.S. Supreme Court, where the narrator has been summoned to defend himself against a grievous but entirely true accusation: he has reinstituted slavery and segregation in his hometown of Dickens, California. All the old stereotypes of African Americans are here, many of them represented by Hominy Jenkins. This reminded me most of Ishmael Reed's satires and, oddly enough, Julian Barnes's *England, England*, which similarly attempts to distill an entire culture and history into a limited space and time. The plot is downright silly in places, but the shock value keeps you reading. Even so, after the incendiary humor of the first third, the satire wears a bit thin. I yearned for more of an introspective Bildungsroman, which there are indeed hints of.

See my full review at Shiny New Books.

John Pappas says

Imagine Nina Simone singing "Mississippi Goddam" reincarnated as an atomic bomb that explodes high enough for all of America to see, while Mark Twain chuckles and says "I told ya so," from the relative safety of a bunker deep in the canon of American literature. That's nowhere near how incendiary, biting, acerbic, witty, smart, funny, explosive, hard-hitting and revelatory Beatty's satire is. The first 50 pages had me wondering if he could sustain this voice, this force for another page...the next 250 pages had me wondering how he succeeded and kept succeeding. Make no mistake, reading this book is like getting into the ring with the son of Richard Pryor and Dave Chappelle if that son was given at birth to Muhammed Ali to raise. This book's language burns bright and showed up to fight hard. This is a book made for our times, one that is willing to ask difficult questions about 21st century identity, place and politics, and one that is not for the faint of heart.

Peter Boyle says

"This may be hard to believe, coming from a black man, but I've never stolen anything."

So begins the first page in this scathing satire of race in America. Our narrator is up before the Supreme Court, charged with attempting to reinstate slavery and segregation in his hometown of Dickens, a rundown neighborhood of Los Angeles. His accomplices are Hominy Jenkins, a former child star of the Little Rascals, and Marpessa Dawson, a foul-mouthed bus driver and the object of our hero's affections. But what really drives this thoughtful, intelligent character is his relationship with his dead father - a tough and imposing psychologist who performed all manner of social experiments on his son. His authoritative presence in the black community looms over the narrator's life. But it also drives him to shake up his crumbling hometown by outrageous and controversial means.

I can certainly see why this novel has been showered with praise - it is a timely and fearless examination of race relations in present day America. In fact it may cut a little too close to the bone for some - there were several times when I thought to myself: Woah, did he actually just say that? Politics, pop culture, the media's portrayal of African-Americans - so many aspects of US life are targeted and turned upside-down by Beatty's razor-sharp musings. I'll admit that several references went over my head but that's the beauty of this book - it's so bursting with ideas that you really feel like you've learned something by the time you reach the end. As a story, I don't think it works so well - the pace is uneven and Beatty too often meanders with monologues to show off his admittedly large brain. But as a demented and daring satire, it deserves every accolade. An enlightening and thought-provoking read.

Joachim Stoop says

I don't recall reading a book which I loved so much in the beginning and was soooo fed up with in the end. It's too much of too much. There are about zero normal sentences and that was very tiring. It reminded me of Steve Toltz' Quicksand. I couldn't keep up with avalanches and avalanches of wit & satire. It's a damn shame, 'cuz I laughed out loud the first chapters.

I also think the book is better for native speakers (lots of linguistic humor) and if you live in the States (lots of inside jokes, historical/commercial/pop cultural references). I would give it a try and maybe read it slow and in several sittings.

Navidad Thelamour says

DNF

This entire novel, especially the prologue, reminded me of the ramblings of someone's old grandpa rocking on the front porch of his clapboard home. I can only assume this is exactly what Beatty was going for, by the direction the novel ended up taking, but I felt like I was reading—no, sifting through—a bunch of nonsense I just wanted to be done with. And a lot of this read like an ultra-liberal excuse to spout out the n-word (harder, mind you) as both a starting point, comma and full stop to every paragraph. It was absolutely exhausting.

I was looking forward to a good satire, but I don't think I ever laughed once, because I was too distracted by

trying to figure out what the hell he was even rambling about and how it fit into any possible plot line, ironic device, literary direction--hell, even a Katt Williams-like satirical skit--anything! I wanted to like this one – the first time non-Commonwealthers are allowed to be considered for the Man Booker Prize and an American—I'd be lying if I didn't go ahead and point out—and African American wins it. I HAVE to read it; I'm so excited...I'm so confused...I'm so let down.

I don't want to take away from the win at all. Have it; keep it, Paul Beatty. But I'm not on the bandwagon. Not even a little bit. DNF.

The Navi Review Blog | Twitter | Instagram

Claire says

One star for creativity, another for brilliant, innovative, hysterical prose, and a third for waking America up with a slap upside our "post-racial" national head. Every sentence in this novel is a combination of "Um, YES, that is so true!!" and "I can't believe I've never thought of it that way before!"

Minus a star for lack of compelling plot. Beatty gets so lost in his ridiculous subplots that I stopped caring what happened next. Will Dickens be saved from obsolescence? Will the Dum Dum Intellectuals be vindicated? Will Marpessa love our narrator again? What will Justice Thomas decide? These threads are lost in (hilarious) philosophizing about the racial implications of psychology/1950s television/marijuana/surfing. This is definitely an unprecedented, one-of-a-kind novel, but with underdeveloped characters and a nonlinear narration, at times humor is the only thing keeping it afloat.

Jibran says

Subtitle: *A mini dictionary of the oddities and eccentricities of Black America mixed in with a bevy of pop culture obscurities interspersed with some brilliant flashes of satire* by Paul Beatty.

For the sake modesty, let me say that I'm in two minds whether the special outweighs the ordinary and vice versa. But there's no doubt that the book is designed as a commercial product for timely consumption given the rise in racial tensions in the US in the last few years. But this alone has never been a good reason for me to give passing marks to a book, because fictionalisation of contemporary events, dramatisation of social/political issues and suchlike require something more than what is apparent on the surface.

Like others, I love the idea of employing humour to deal with serious subjects. Recently I read *Tram 83*, a breath-of-fresh-air which uses satire to produce a stable and effective metaphor of the struggles of the post-colonial Africa, without weighing us down with the uselessness of recording real historical-political events to make it more "credible." The contrast with *The Sellout* couldn't be more obvious.

It is not essential that an event be sketched out in exact detail for literature to be believable. Sometimes the exact sketch of reality is not as powerful as one portrayed with the help of imagination. Real facts and references help up to a point, but beyond that they become obstacles to the evolution of a work. *The Sellout*, gets mired in its own mass when it offers unfettered social commentary about everything that concerns Black America, Imperial America, Provincial America....

I am about halfway through and pausing it for the time being.

August '16

Bookdragon Sean says

The Sellout is a fun novel full of humour and many moments of bitter irony. The tone is angry, full of frustration and seething with sarcasm, but it is also repetitive to a fault.

After around thirty pages I felt like I'd read everything this novel had to offer. It was abundantly clear that the remainder would be pretty much the same thing, an author satirising the realities of Black American life through using several clever and creative narrative devices. After a while it began to grow so very tiresome to the point of utter annoyingness. It lacked direction and a sense of purpose beyond what was established very early on. At times it even felt like a series of loosely connected rants and personal grievances in the form of chapters. It was a very taxing read.

The writing did begin with undeniable power and authority; it was compelling and convincing though as the narrative progressed it did not pick up any momentum but lingered on similar ideas and stayed very stationary. I found myself yawning at the forced comic moments as this narrator circulated around the same themes yet again. By the end of the book it was a relief to finish; it was a relief not to hear the voice of the narrator ever again. For me, the style in which it was told offset much of what the book did successfully do.

The Sellout won The Man Booker Prize in 2016 and despite my despondency with the book I can see why. It is a very timely piece, addressing many of the problem blacks face in a country that has supposedly moved on from its original sin of slavery. Segregation has ended, racism is officially at an all-time low, but the issues remain. Society does not change overnight, or, as it may seem, over many decades. More time is needed. Scratch but the surface, as Paul Beatty has done here, and you will see how not so far in the past some of these ideas are. It is still very much recent history.

This is undoubtedly highly intelligent writing, but the style, receptiveness and general lacklustre the narrator portrayed was not to my liking. The first hundred pages or so ought to have been followed by a story of growth of some sort or, at the very least, an explanation or perhaps a suggestion why there wasn't one from a narrator who at times appeared to be moving in a new direction but never seemed to fully commit beyond the first few steps he took. Perhaps I lacked the patience for this one. Perhaps my Englishness meant that some of the subtle nuances within the writing were wasted on me from a cultural standpoint. Whatever the reason, I can see why this book won but I don't necessarily like it personally. This is pretty much sums up my response to the winner of the 2015 Man Booker as well. *The Sellout*, like *A Brief History of Seven Killings*, is a creative piece rich in originality, but not one I can engage with.

Esil says

I read *The Sellout* for a book club. I'm new to the book club, so it felt important to read *The Sellout* from cover to cover so that I could prove myself a worthy member of my new book club. I almost made it, but I just couldn't get past the 85% mark on my kindle. By then I had caught wind that I wasn't the only one in the book club struggling with *The Sellout*. So I showed up, had a lovely time, talked very little about the book, decided I would stick to the club, and also decided that I would give up on the last 15% of *The Sellout* and hope that our next book isn't so much of a struggle...

I think I get what Beatty was doing, but, oh man, what a tortuous reading experience. Mostly, it was so

incredibly dense with language, references, Latin, plot strings, random thoughts... Also, the satire seemed heavy handed, self-indulgent and meant mostly to shock and provoke discomfort. At times, I thought Beatty's approach came at the expense of what I thought could have much been a more powerful read about contemporary issues of race in the US. I've read some great books on the topic in last year or so, but this one just didn't work for me.

I'm leaving this one unrated. I wouldn't have read it if it hadn't been for the new book club. And given that it won the Booker last year, maybe I'm actually missing the point...

Hugh says

Satire is a difficult genre to assess and review, particularly when it is so tightly bound to a culture one does not share. On the positive side, this book is often very funny, and is full of ideas and snipes at deserving targets. Over the length of a novel, though, the tone is somewhat relentless, and the story does not seem to have enough weight to sustain the interest - it seems more like a series of set pieces. Not a book to read if you are easily offended either, but the issues Beatty addresses about the state of race relations in America 50 years after Martin Luther King cannot be faced without such boldness. So an interesting book to have read, but maybe not quite the stuff of Booker winners, and I hope there are better ones on the longlist.

Trish says

"...when I did what I did, I wasn't thinking about inalienable rights, the proud history of our people. I did what worked, and since when did a little slavery and segregation ever hurt anybody, and if so, so fucking be it."

My copy of this novel is spiked with tabs marking something deeply insightful, stabbingly funny, or needing revisiting. There is simply too much to point to: Beatty must have been saving up observations about race relations in America to get so much into this relatively short novel. He never tells us why his fictional California town is named Dickens—it *can't* be about the author—but I think it has to do with a classic American imprecation "Go to [the] Dickens!" though I am certainly willing to be challenged on this supposition. Dickens is also used as an exclamatory "What the dickens!" standing in for "What the F@*k!" in marginally polite white dialogue, and perhaps even in the *L'il Rascals* film archives, though I am going to have to check on that.

"They won't admit it, but every black person thinks they're better than every other black person."

Beatty's narrator, Bonbon Me, is the sellout. He just doesn't seem to get the "black" thing. He identifies as human first, black second. Beatty doesn't target black folk alone. Everyone is skewered in this wild ride through a Los Angeles southwest suburb that still has farm zoning, allowing families to live among livestock, chickens, cotton, watermelon, and weed. A proud descendant of the Kentucky family called Mee and one whose forefather subsequently dropped the extraneous "e," our narrator Bonbon Me has a case before the Supreme Court, a "screw-faced" black Justice, about his ownership of a slave in the present day. That alleged slave, Hominy Jenkins, literally declaimed his status one day to our narrator as a result of Me still having agricultural interests and therefore probably *needing* a slave. Hominy moved in. What could Me do?

Well, shortly after rapacious real estate developers convinced officials to remove signs demarking the township of Dickens, Me made and put up new signs and drew a white line around the streets and houses comprising Dickens and re-segregated: “No Whites Allowed.” One may be curious why he would do this, since the town was already black, but he felt he was saving something, making a point. They can’t just muscle in and erase a town...a culture...a people. That’s not fairness. People actually *do* care if you are white, brown, black or yellow. Sellout Bonbon had mused for some that if the black community in Dickens just took “their racial blinders off for one second, they’d realize [Dickens] was no longer black but predominantly Latino.” So he was just making Dickens “equal” by excluding whites. It’s not discrimination exactly. It’s equality.

”The Supreme Court is where the country takes out its dick and tits and decides who’s going to get fucked and who’s getting a taste of mother’s milk. It’s constitutional pornography in there...and what...about obscenity? I know it when I see it...*Me vs. the United States of America* demands a more fundamental examination of what we mean by ‘separate,’ by ‘equal,’ by ‘black.’”

Beatty demurs when critics point out his work as a satire. It isn’t, he says. It’s reportage. The material in this book is, in fact, observable in everyday America.

”Black people don’t even talk about race. Nothing’s attributable to color anymore. It’s all ‘mitigating circumstances.’ The only people discussing ‘race’ with any insight and courage are loud middle-aged white men...well-read open-minded white kids...a few freelance journalists in Detroit...”

Author interviews with Beatty are some of the most uncomfortable I have ever heard or read. Beatty stutters and avoids, sometimes flat out refuses to entertain a question. (Examples: Boston NPR Onpoint, and Ebony.) He clearly doesn’t like talking about “what his book means.” He wants his book to start the conversation. We’re supposed to be telling him what it means...to us...as individuals rather than as a class. He says often in interviews, “I am uncomfortable talking about this.” He does not appear to be uncomfortable writing about what he sees and what he thinks about what he sees, so folks interested in making him a spokesperson for black people will have to turn to his writing. But there aren’t answers there, either, really. It is just raw material for the discussion we are all meant to have.

In a reading Beatty gave at Politics & Prose, the Washington, D.C. bookstore, Beatty told the audience that he teaches a writing course at Columbia University and one of his students said to him, “I feel sorry for you guys” as though the race issue were finished, and is nothing now compared with yesterday. Beatty was shocked. It reminded me of young, upwardly mobile women saying they don’t experience sexism today.

Me, I incline towards Ta-Nehisi Coates’ June 2014 *Atlantic* article, “The Case for Reparations.” Not that money will fix anything. It is the discussion about reparations that might fix something. Nigerian novelist Chris Abani, in a riveting conversation with American novelist Walter Mosley, says “America has had a unique relationship with blackness that, say, Europe really hasn’t had. As much as people like to pretend, slavery isn’t really over.”

Glenn Sumi says

Paul Beatty’s novel is a savage satire about a “post-racial America,” and it points out how absurd that notion really is.

The black narrator, Bonbon, grew up in a “disappeared” L.A. suburb – once an “agrarian ghetto,” called Dickens – where he was subjected to his father’s sociological experiments about race.

After his father is “accidentally” killed by the LAPD (see? This is some serious shit), he wants to reintroduce slavery and, gradually, segregation, first in buses and then in a school (ditto).

He elicits help from his friend, Hominy, the last surviving member of TV’s Little Rascals (he was Buckwheat’s understudy). All his efforts eventually land him in jail, where his case goes to the Supreme Court.

I read this book months ago, but didn’t review it then. I’m not sure why. I didn’t get all the references, and while I found Beatty’s prose and ideas sharp, lively and “Omigod did he just write that?” funny, I also found the experience exhausting.

Humour – and this book is hilarious at times – is a brilliant way of dealing with serious subjects. But you’ve got to mix up your act. I guess I wanted the book to be more grounded, so the angry humour could stand out in relief. There’s the opportunity to do that in the possible romantic relationship between the narrator and a bus driver, but Beatty doesn’t do much with this.

Still, Beatty takes on every African-American stereotype and politically correct notion and successfully skewers it. Goodreaders especially will appreciate his extended riff on the liberal white-washing of literature.

Thus, Mark Twain’s classic gets renamed *The Pejorative Free Adventures and Intellectual and Spiritual Journeys of African-American Jim and His Young Protégé, White Brother Huckleberry Finn, as They Go in Search of the Lost Black Family Unit*.

Some stand-alone sections are brilliant, savage little poetic salvos whose targets are worthy of sending up. (Beatty started out as a poet.) But as much as I enjoyed the book, and appreciated the ideas Beatty raised, I think I like my anger and injustice served up a bit more directly.

4triplezed says

How does a white, late 50’s, Australian come to read a satire on race relations in the USA, an area he has little knowledge about in said subject?

I had recently read the brilliant *A Brief History of Seven Killings* by Marlon James and was telling “all and sundry” what a superb read it was. I could recall a fair bit of the heady days of Marley and the powerful political fallout in Jamaica back in the late 70’s. I had got *Exodus* on release so was not in new territory subject wise. The writing and presentation was so powerful as to be mesmerising and I was hooked. But in conversation “all and sundry” began to tell me about this book by Paul Beatty called *The Sellout*. “All and sundry” finally became the final push to read *The Sellout* in the shape of a new dad at a suburban one year old’s birthday party, you know the type of event, the mums all go gah gah at the kids and the dads talk about other things while their kids gorge themselves on cake. The “all and sundry” new dad, I am not a new dad by the way, just kept shaking his head about this book *The Sellout*. He had various ways of saying read it:- “you have to read it” “by the sound of it if you liked that Marley book you have to read this” “if you like satire you have to read this” “sounds like a little bit of humour in that Marley book but this is entirely satirical humour so you have to read it” “I did not understand a lot of the references but I got the gist to the point that you have to read it” and so on and so forth. And so I did.

About 70 pages in, I discovered a few things. As mentioned above I knew little of US race relations and a fair few of the references towards that thorny subject were beyond me. So with that I started afresh and while reading marked each not or little understood reference and referred back to them with an internet search after each chapter. With that all I can say is “what a journey”. The journey has been a slow read as the enormity of my lack of knowledge loomed large. I read each wiki (or other) link as I went on a weird and wonderful journey into both a political, cultural, and most of all, satirical look at the subject at hand. My copy says that one review said the “.....longer I stared at the pages...” the smarter I would get. Nice! And with that new intelligence all I can say is what a book, what a hilarious learning curve it all was for this little white boy.

What more can I add? I mean there are more meaningful dissertations on The Sellout than the drivel I am writing but just maybe anyone from a non US background, who is white and sheltered from US race issues can use the links I used to assist them along in this riveting read. And my apologies for missing any. I put in what I did not know, know little about or just did not recall.

Enjoy.

Prologue

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scopes_...

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hammurabi>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scottsb...>

Supreme court "Courtroom friezes: The South Wall Frieze includes figures of lawgivers from the ancient world and includes Menes, Hammurabi, Moses, Solomon, Lycurgus, Solon, Draco, Confucius, and Augustus."

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laozi>

The Shit You Shovel

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piaget&...>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dred_Scott

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plessy_...

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luther_...

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MEChA>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harold_...

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three-F...>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_...

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bystand...>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Murder_...

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bandwag...>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enter_t...

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenneth...>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harriet...>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Hor...

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1...>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/In_the_...

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_f...

<http://blog.press.princeton.edu/2016/...>

<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define...>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oedipus...>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salton_Sea

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Student...>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_Ru...

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Gab...

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phaseol...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gregor_...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chia_Pet
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Captain...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugh_Br...
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RjKtP...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ataxia>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prosopa...>

Page 66. My best effort at translation of the following:-

yo soy el gran pinche mayate! julio cesar chavez es un puto

I think it means

"I am the great dung beetle servant. Julio Cesar Chavez is a fucker" See comment 20 below.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our_Gang
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Sw...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billie_...
ol' Remus <http://www.woodpilereport.com/>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darla_Hood
http://ourgang.wikia.com/wiki/He-Man_...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Betsy_R...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nancy_C...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermene...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electra>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFnJa...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/B%C3%A9...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shonen_...
<https://teikokublog.com/2014/05/14/tr...>
Hambone? https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juba_dance
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amos_&#...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dave_Ch...
<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mike-du...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Yor...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Amistad
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lee_Str...
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/5150_\(i...](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/5150_(i...)
<http://www.imdb.com/character/ch0032774/>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Willie_...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beulah_...
<http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/ref...>
libidinal dyslexia. <https://www.appi.org/products/dsm-man...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Ber...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Pha...
Postbellum <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reconst...>
<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scotty_...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mulatto>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernie_M...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vin_Scully

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacagawea>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sure%C3...>

The Dum Dum Donut Intellectuals

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Califor...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Califor...>
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crash_\(...](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crash_(...)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dave_Eg...

Exact Change, or Zen and the Art of Bus Riding and Relationship Repair.

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guy_L...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drakkar...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilming...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masterp...>
<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/In-N-Ou...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laugh_F...
<http://florentinehollywood.com/>
I Threes. Marleys back up singers.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kristy_...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coconut...>
I never knew Prince was called His Royal Badness before.
<https://www.dennys.com/food/>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerhard...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_H...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabe...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Mi...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amoeba_...
I need to read Kafka as I never have.
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Omphalo...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gwendol...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sergei_...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bikram_...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tchotchke>
and how to pronounce Tchotchke
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xd5ij...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rodney_...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attack_...
I admit to never having heard of this book.
<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/3...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giovann...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cigar_s...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stand_i...
George Wallace was a sanga short of a picnic
<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jack_in...
In 1981, horse meat labelled as beef was discovered at a Foodmaker plant that supplied hamburger and taco meat to Jack in the Box. The meat was originally from Profreeze of Australia, and during their checks on location, the food inspectors discovered other shipments destined for the United States which included kangaroo meat.[23][24]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3w8-l...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leo_Car...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chakra>
<http://asia.christianlouboutin.com/au...>
The Color Of Burnt Toast. page 142. ?????
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederi...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Ten...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guadalu...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/D%C3%B6...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Varosha...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bokor_H...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oradour...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ouham-P...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roberto...>

Too Many Mexicans

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El_Cami...
<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define...>
<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/7...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Fas...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charro!>
<http://www.themijachronicles.com/2010...>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5iqvr...>
101 muertes del jaripeo (The 101 deaths of jaripeo)
1,000 litros de sangre (a thousand litres of blood.)
si chingas el toro, te llevas los cuernos (If you fuck the bull, you get the horns)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milk_Duds
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sing_Sing
<http://www.dict.cc/german-english/Fli...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trail_o...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1994_No...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kick_th...
<http://www.gameskidsplay.net/games/se...>
Horchata complexion. <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define...>
Page 165. Spanish translates to:-
"Every day of my professional career I think the same thing. Of these two hundred and fifty children, how many will finish high school? Forty percent? Orale, and of that lucky hundred, how many will go to college? Online, junior, clown college, or whatever? About five, more or less. And how many will graduate? Two, maybe. What a pity. We're nuts."
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%93rale>
My thanks to Antonomasia from <https://www.goodreads.com/topic/show/...> for that translation.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_He...
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wheezer ???](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wheezer_???)
I see Paris I see France. ????
<https://www.goodreads.com/author/show...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dale_Ea...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eli_Whi...
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uno_\(ca...](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uno_(ca...)
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chitlin...>

Apples and Oranges

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewis_H...
<http://www.sunnylevine.com/>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Early_b...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuskege...>
[https://www.google.com.au/#q=arschloc...*](https://www.google.com.au/#q=arschloc...)
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wannsee...>
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V8_\(bev...](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V8_(bev...)
<http://www.lowrider.com/>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patek_P....
<http://www.ticker.com/>
??? ?????? ????? (Translates as My panties are wet)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crip_Walk
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Ba...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nichola...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles...>
<http://www.streetswing.com/histmai2/d...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_W....
un millar de muchachos mexicanos (translates as a 1000 mexican boys)
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eduardo...>
<http://www.nevadawolfpack.com/sports/...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Earl_Wa...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shoni_S...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orlando...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_R...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marco_P...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_...
<https://www.holtsauto.com/simoniz/sup...>
Polynesian gardens <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaiia...>
<https://unitedgangs.com/2014/12/22/va...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bessie_Sm
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kara_Wa...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kathlee...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrick...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Killer_...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lee_Morgan
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fran_Ross
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johnny_...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuart_T...
nu iota gamma ???
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stepin_...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Betty_Boop
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max_Fle...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jackie_...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Gro...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Sec...
Tambo and bones. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christy...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mercede...>
<https://newrepublic.com/>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Los...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laurel_...

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orval_F...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yasunar...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yukio_M...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimi...>
DFW ??? https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_F... ???
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sag_Har...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeopard...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theresi...>
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vibe_\(m...](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vibe_(m...)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_R... covers the lot.

Unmitigated Blackness

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/12_Angr...
<https://www.google.com.au/#q=to+kill+...>*
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Few_G... the overacting of Cruise made this a difficult watch
<https://www.google.com.au/#q=co%C3%B1...>*
chupa mi verga, carbon (suck my dick)
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plymout...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blacula>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boba_Fett
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hikikomori>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rick_Rubin
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Atl...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brown_U...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Genet
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Young_B...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Rea...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coral_S...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tur...
The Skreeches. ???? ("It's the Turtles, the Skreetches, the David Schwimmers and the George Costanzas of the Group" refers to the meek / lovable losers / good guy characters from the following TV shows:

1. "Entourage", in the case of Turtle https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turtle_... ;
2. "Saved by the Bell", in the case of Screech (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of...) ;
3. "Friends", in the case of Ross (David Schwimmer); and
4. "Seinfeld", in the case of George Costanza.) as per comment posted Chivdog 20/6/17
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_S...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_La...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sojourn...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moms_Ma...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donald_...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chester...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abbey_L...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfre_W...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiparillo>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chitter...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clarenc...> the judge or the author?
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charlie...>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maya_Deren
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sun_Ra
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenji_M...
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frida_K...
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Lu...>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gong_Li
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Bir...
Hip Hop Cop. <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/200...> ????
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roslag>
Vara Modig (Be Brave in Swedish) When I translate this later and reread the context it adds to my consideration that this is one very witty book.
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amandla...>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonatha...>

Acknowledgements

The negro to black conversion experience

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William....>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William...>

Steve says

As an urban commuter I felt that pulling a book out with lawn jockeys on the cover should come with a disclaimer. Hey everybody, it's meant to be – you know – ironic. It's written by a black guy; it's satire. And just so you know, my iPhone doesn't have one word of Breitbart News on it.

Satires, to me, are like hoppy craft beers. The natural skew to the bitter side should be balanced out for optimal flavor. Paul Beatty's deft touch with a joke made the astringency you'd expect from charges of racism something other than a straight diatribe. Smiles open more minds than they close.

The premise of the book is actually sort of absurd. Bonbon, the narrator, farms the land in the "agrarian ghetto" neighborhood of LA called Dickens. His father was a sociologist who performed half-crazy, race-centric experiments on him when he was young that never amounted to meaningful research, but did mess with his mind a bit. When his father died (shot in a police snafu), the son inherited the farm, a funeral bill, and a legacy of racial awareness. Then, since it was an embarrassment to the city of LA, Dickens just disappeared from the map. At that point our narrator mounts an informal campaign to bring Dickens back. He makes signs announcing that a driver is entering, draws lines surrounding the area, then hits on the idea of segregating it to really stand out. He had an accomplice named Hominy Jenkins, a celebrity of sorts, known for being the last surviving cast member from *The Little Rascals*. Hominy, like the more famous Buckwheat, was a "pickaninny" who could "black it up" with bug eyes and electrified hair on cue. Somehow Hominy had it in his increasingly senile head that race had more meaning to him then and that a way to recapture this feeling was to offer himself up as a slave doing light labor (he was old) on the farm. The book opens out of order, with this voluntary slavery case being heard by the Supreme Court. Like I said, it's kind of ridiculous, but it does allow a very full discussion of race – the stereotypes, the archetypes, and a panoply of attitudes from subtle to extreme.

What the book lacked in plausibility it made up for in presentation. It's like a serious essay on black

consciousness as presented by Dave Chappelle at his edgy, observational best. Let me try to convince you by way of example.

§ As Bonbon's court case was making its way up the judicial ladder, he said: "In neighborhoods like the one I grew up in, places that are poor in praxis but rich in rhetoric, the homies have a saying -- I'd rather be judged by twelve than carried by six. [...] I'm not all that streetwise, but to my knowledge there's no appellate court corollary. I've never heard a corner store roughneck take a sip of malt liquor and say, 'I'd rather be reviewed by nine than arbitrated by one.'"

§ He wondered why a certain successful type would mostly "talk black," dropping *g*'s in their gerunds, but when it came to their public television appearances, they'd sound like "Kelsey Grammer with a stick up his ass."

§ Opining about another black intellectual: "Come on, he cares about black people like a seven-footer cares about basketball. He has to care because what else would he be good at."

§ Foy Cheshire was a prominent archetype who hosted a dying cable show focusing on black issues, had become successful stealing ideas from the narrator's father, and had no original thoughts of his own. Foy was the one who had dubbed Bonbon 'the sellout' for not buying into a very particular brand of racial animosity. Someone speculated that "If he (Foy) was indeed an 'autodidact,' there's no doubt he had the world's shittiest teacher."

§ In one of the few non-race-related comments, Bonbon said: "I've always liked rote. The formulaic repetitiveness of filing and stuffing envelopes appeals to me in some fundamental life-affirming way. I would've made a good factory worker, supply-room clerk, or Hollywood scriptwriter."

§ Hominy was actually pretty lucid for someone who sought beatings and servitude. One example: "You know, massa, Bugs Bunny wasn't nothing but Br'er Rabbit with a better agent."

§ Here's a great rejoinder to all who suggest, "You'd rather be here than in Africa. The trump card all narrow-minded nativists play. [...] I seriously doubt that some slave ship ancestor, in those idle moments between being raped and beaten, was standing knee-deep in their own feces rationalizing that, in the end, the generations of murder, unbearable pain and suffering, mental anguish, and rampant disease will all be worth it because someday my great-great-great-great-grandson will have Wi-Fi."

§ I also liked the name that Bonbon imagined for the white-only school in his planned segregation – Wheaton Academy. In contrast, nonwhites had Chaff Middle School. The Wheaton/Chaff distinction was a big one.

I laughed every time I picked this book up. And I'm certainly sympathetic to the essential plight, despite the anaesthetizing humor. In addition, though I didn't catch every reference, my street smart IQ is now at least a little closer to triple digits. Plus, its recognition in winning the National Book Critics Circle award for fiction as well as the Booker Prize speaks to the quality of the writing. Beatty's background in poetry comes through with great word choices and cadences.

Even so, I had to dock one star. While it's easy enough to see the satirical poke at wrong-headedness, it was harder to figure the purpose of Bonbon's ironic prescription. I wouldn't presume that the segregation was meant to provide more motivation for Blacks and Latinos, though the Chaff School's rising performance numbers were cited as though they were a consequence of having been separated. (The fact is, though, there weren't any white kids there to begin with.) Was it more like the arguments you sometimes hear about the advantages of an education at a traditionally black university? I couldn't say. Nor do I think the counterintuitive premise was meant just for a laugh. My best guess is that the extreme actions – slavery and

segregation orchestrated by a black man – were meant to draw attention to the still existing, more subtle forms of racism. There was a line in the book about how it's illegal to shout fire in a crowded theater. Bonbon went on to say that he whispered 'Racism' in a post-racial world. Beatty himself, in interviews, is tight-lipped when asked what he thinks it all means. Maybe the discussions the book inspires are what matter most.
