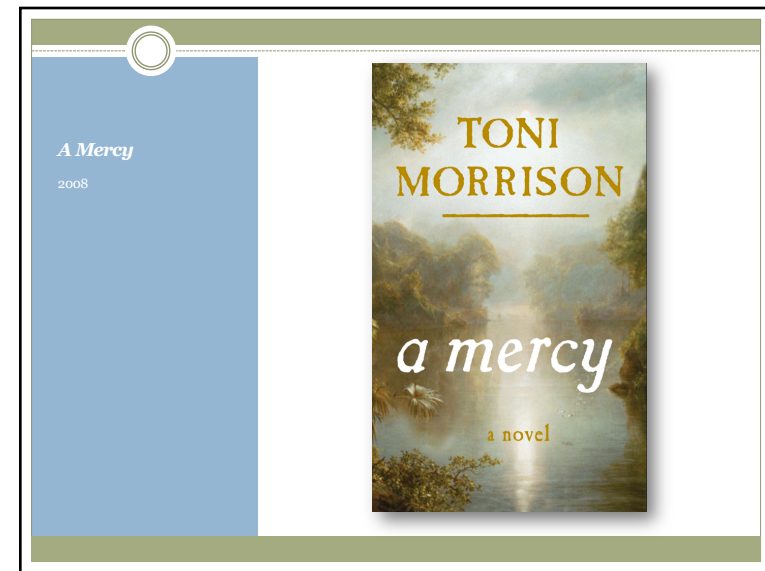
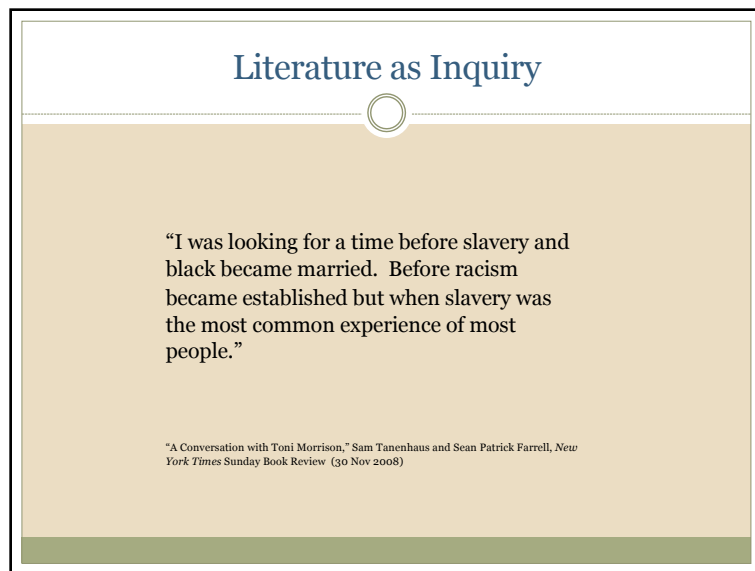




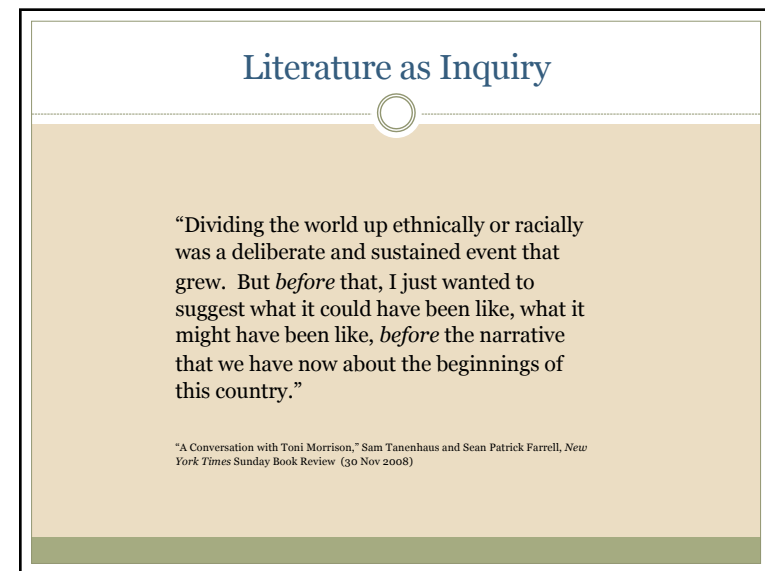
1



2



3



4

What might be gained by looking
back to a time before race?

The possibility that we might
envision a future beyond it.

5

Questions Posed by *A Mercy*

One question is who is
responsible?

Another is can you read?

6

If a pea hen refuses to brood I *read* it
quickly and, sure enough, that night I
see a minha mãe standing hand in hand
with her little boy, my shoes jamming
the pocket of her apron (3-4, my
emphasis).

7

Paula Moya ©2020

Reading vs. Seeing

- The question posed is not “Can you see?” but “Can you read?”
- Distinguishing “reading” from “seeing” foregrounds interpretation as a **learned** practice that depends on a reader’s culturally-competent grasp of the socially-situated conventions and codes across a range of human and non-human interactions.

8

Race in the Novel

- Race, as it emerges over the course of the novel, is not a **thing** that inheres in a person's body or blood. Rather, it is a way of **reading** human others for the purpose of deciding how to interact with them.

9



10

Decoloniality

- A MODE OF BEING devoted to dismantling colonialism's pernicious legacies related to the systemic objectification of "types" of human beings
- EXPOSE "Modernity/Coloniality" as a false way of thinking that bolsters claims for European centrality and superiority
- GOAL is overturning the matrix of being, power, and knowledge that has been constitutive of the white supremacist logic of Western modernity's project of civilization.

11

What makes a project decolonial?

- Imperative to act
- Focus elsewhere to perceive anew
- Critique autonomous individualism, binary thinking, Eurocentrism
- Champion relationality, witnessing, self-assessment
- Recognize onto-epistem-ological multiplicity
- Develop complex solidarities
- Regard the cultural practices of formerly colonized people as resources
- Reject the subordination or exploitation of others
- Remake themselves and the world(s) they inhabit
- Create a new world "in which many worlds fit"

12

By attending to occluded and
denigrated perspectives

decolonial thinkers consider

previously disregarded

as well as newly imagined

possibilities

13

Multifocal Decolonial Novels

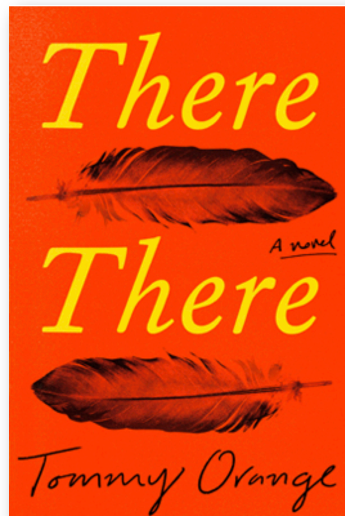
Features and Goals

14

Tommy Orange

Citizen of the Cheyenne and
Arapaho Nations of Oklahoma
Grew up in Oakland, California

There There published in 2018



15

Narrative Structure

Distribute narrative attention and
character-space more or less equally
across a large number of characters

Democratize the space of the novel

Eschew a singular protagonist; have
more major characters (among which
are character-types usually consigned to
the role of the minor character)

Refuse the idea of minor-ness

16

Content

Retell historical narratives with an attention to “histories from below”	Rectify inaccurate representations of people and groups who have been consigned to the margins or assigned the role of villain
Present a wide range of characters from ethnoracial communities historically absent from or underrepresented in literature	Establish the presence and heterogeneity of people belonging to marginalized ethnoracial groups

17

Networks

Include a focus on interiority that is dispersed across a large number of major characters	Make visible the large number of “worlds of sense” that make up any one social world
Pay sustained attention over the course of the novel to how characters are connected in an evolving network of interactions	Dismantle the idea of the autonomous individual

18

Visions

Include scenes and interactions between characters that tell about, or show instances of, violence and exclusion based on historically-denigrated human characteristics	Demonstrate the processual and evolving nature of the dynamics of subordination that occur along the lines of race, gender, sexuality, ability, etc.
Include a focus on how historical traumas are expressed at the level of the individual and a concomitant focus on rituals of healing	Rework the pains of the past as a necessary prelude to finding a way forward

19

Paratexts

Make extensive use of paratexts (epigraphs, sections, titles, prologues, epilogues) to call attention to the making of the narrative	Teach readers how to be self-aware perceivers of literary texts and their own social worlds
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