

Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*

Spring 2021 – Ten Sessions

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Assignment for Session 10

Reading:

- > Chapter 9 of *Absalom, Absalom!*, pp. 288-302
- > Porter Comments on *Absalom*, on the course website.

Selection of Passages (the last time):

Identify at least one passage that strikes you of deserving attention in class:

Note the page, line number, the first few words of the section, and where it ends.

Email your selections to me at sds@mit.edu. I will assemble them into an agenda for the day of the session.

Discussion Topics:

Chapter 9 brings us to the shocking end of the story, looping back to the opening day, when Quentin accompanies Miss Rosa to Sutpen's Hundred in the middle of the night (timing that matches the time at which Shreve and Quentin are having their final conversation).

We will consider Porter's commentary and think more broadly about this novel. Topics to be discussed include the following:

- > Clarifying the final events – what Quentin actually witnessed, and why it might motivate him to understand the Sutpen history.
- > The structure of the novel as a whole: The narrative structure. Who (or what) is the protagonist? The antagonists? Is there a proper denouement?
- > The major themes, reviewed: the Old South and its class structure; slavery; incest; miscegenation; the persistence of the memory of the Civil War.
- > Anything else the group wishes to pursue ...