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The Literary Corner: Introduction to Afro-American Essays with Sarah Fabio and Thomas Schick (side a)

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WEBVTT

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<i>Sarah Fabio</i>: Well I also did "Dusk of Dawn" which he calls

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an essay toward an autobiography of a race concept,

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and because Du Bois lived so long and wrote so well and thorough,

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you know, you have him really dipping into

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forms during the Harlem Renaissance you can't overlook Alain Locke,

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who edited The New Negro,

<i>Brooks B. Robinson</i>: Of course

<i>Sarah Fabio</i>: and his essays were very important

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in terms of aesthetic considerations of new work.

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Probably with Alain you started getting essays on art, you know,

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on literature and literary essays because

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before that time we had very little need to do that kind of essay.

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<i>Brooks B. Robinson</i>: And a direct point to that one or connected with that one is the question of

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whether critiques are essays, how close are critiques to essays?

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<i>Sarah Fabio</i>: Critical analysis.

<i>Brooks B. Robinson</i>: Yes.

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Our literary are a form of literary essays, I think you'd have to say that.

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For instance such things as Saunders Redding

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who will write things like American Negro Literature,

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they became long essays on literature and Jimmy Baldwin

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who in his Nobody Knows My Name would do things like the discovery of what it means to be an American,

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and he, as Tom says, this precedence is set very early

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I mean people are still looking for what does it mean to be American,

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where do we have to go in order to fully realize ourselves,

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you know, can it be within the context of America, must it be within some other context?

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People like Ralph Ellison certainly in his shadow and act

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did a very fine book of essays that commented very widely

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on things from American literature, all kind of literary treatments.

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Richard Wright's Blues, bird watching and jazz.

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I mean he just runs the gamut of possibilities.

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<i>Brooks B. Robinson</i>: And something I- I'd like to [[?]] if you will, to talk a little bit about some more contemporary essayists.

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<i>Sarah Fabio</i>: You certainly can't overlook Malcom X, who does do some essays,

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as does Eldridge Cleaver and a whole group of people

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who are very different or not that different from maybe David Walker and his Appeal.

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<i>Brooks B. Robinson</i>: Yeah, and one thing I'd like to say that is probably one of the more useful contributions

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to the essay as opposed to any other form in Afro-American writing

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is the fact that by being a relatively short piece of work,

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the dissemination of it was a lot wider than could be anticipated for longer novels

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and other forms because many of the essays



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