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Ralph Ellison/Norman Mailer

April, 1965

Collective memory, Social conflict

Ralph Ellison talks about the beginnings of the cattle industry in the western United States and why there were Black cowboys. He moves from the suppression of memory to another topic.

Ralph Ellison talks about the development of conflict in society. As the United States development moved west there was a suppression of conflict. The story is told by those most articulate and with the most power. Culture can be conscious without being literate. He discusses Rosco Dungee who wrote editorials about hope for his group lay within the constitution. The constant wave of emigrants enriched society but did not feel it necessary to take sides in the conflict. He said recently a northern Black writer failed to write about racial conflict in the south. He was not writing about something he knew about. The meaning of social conflict within the United States has very often been one of creative enrichment. Needless conflicts are created.

Unidentified person speaks for a short period of time. Donald Kaufmann is introduced.

Donald Kaufmann introduces Norman Mailer.

Norman Mailer talks about the last time he and Ralph Ellison spoke at the same gathering. It was at the University of Iowa. He commented on the Alaska flag. He talked about Ed Skellings inviting him to Alaska. He talked about the selected topic "conflict of cultures." He said he is a city man and doesn't understand a place like Alaska. He talked about the sociologic structure that New York City is and how different it is from Chicago. He talked about the conflict of cultures and minorities. He said he was going to talk about what makes a minority group. First he read reviews of his book "An American dream."