

Mosley (3)

1952	b. Watts, LA (black father from Louisiana; Jewish mother from NY)
1957	Chester Himes, <i>For Love of Imabelle</i> (Greenwich, CT: Fawcett)
1965	Watts riots in response to police brutality
1971	attends Goddard College; “hippies”
1977	BA Poli Sci, Johnson State College
1981?	works for Mobil Oil as a computer programmer
1982	Alice Walker, <i>The Color Purple</i> (New York: HBJ; influences Mosley)
1980s	writes a novel, “Gone Fishin’”; rejected
1990	<i>Devil in a Blue Dress</i> (New York: Norton)
1991	<i>A Red Death</i> (New York: Norton); many more Easy Rawlins novels follow
1992	Bill Clinton acclaims Mosley
1996	president, Mystery Writers of America
1997	<i>Gone Fishin’</i> (Baltimore: Black Classic)
1998	<i>Blue Light</i> (science fiction)
2020	National Book Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award

Sources: John L. Cobbs, “Walter Mosley,” in *American Mystery and Detective Writers*, ed. George Parker Anderson (Gale, 2005), [Literature Resource Center](#); interview with Maya Jaggi, *Guardian*, [September 5, 2003](#).

It was safer for my father in the middle of World War II than it was for him back home in Texas.

Walter Mosley, interview with Amy Goodman, *Democracy Now!*, [February 27, 2012](#).

After the Egyptian and Indian, the Greek and Roman, the Teuton and Mongolian, the Negro is a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world,—a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.

W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk: Essay and Sketches* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1903), 3, [HathiTrust](#).

I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me. Like the bodiless heads you see sometimes in circus sideshows, it is as though I have been surrounded by mirrors of hard, distorting glass. When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination—indeed, everything and anything except me.....

I am not complaining, nor am I protesting either. It is sometimes advantageous to be unseen, although it is most often rather wearing on the nerves. Then too, you're constantly being bumped against by those of poor vision....It's when you feel like this that, out of resentment, you begin to bump people back. And, let me confess, you feel that way most of the time.

Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (New York: Vintage, 1952), 3-4.