

## The Crux - February 2022 James Baldwin's Shadow (podcast)

Listen Here: <https://www.npr.org/2021/04/27/991219491/james-baldwins-shadow>

### What it's about:

The Through line podcast titled, "The Shadow of James Baldwin" reviews the ideas of James Baldwin-- a man who was unapologetically himself and didn't shy away from challenging discussion. A black, gay man from Harlem, NY was one of "America's most amazing and accomplished writers" and faced the issues of his day head-on. Through his writing and speeches, he encouraged readers to challenge problems such as systemic racism, white supremacy, and police brutality; he reminded us to confront our issues within ourselves; and demanded that we overcome our fears around race and skin color. The podcast is a window into Baldwin's philosophies which prove to still be relevant today.

### Why it's Important:

Black history month offers us a moment to acknowledge the accomplishments and contributions that Black people have made nationally and internationally. The month also serves as an opportunity to reflect on our relationships with Black brothers, family members, colleagues, and peers. Through this reflection, you may find that, like the systems in which we live, Blackness is multifaceted; it is complex, beautiful, and misunderstood. No one icon understood this balance of complexity and beauty better than James Baldwin. His take on race, the treatment of Black people, and our responsibility to be critics of our society, are not only poetic, but also insightful. Despite having written and spoken about these topics nearly 6 decades ago, much of what Baldwin said is still applicable today.

### Reflect & Discuss:

1. Identify and share a quote from the podcast that stood out to you or challenged your thinking
2. What is an idea or outcome that James Baldwin shared that you believe has not yet come to fruition?
3. Despite passing on nearly 35 years ago, many of the societal challenges that Baldwin spoke and wrote about are still ongoing. What role could you and your chapter play, if any, in rectifying our most challenging societal issues?

### Want to learn more?

[Learn more about James Baldwin's Legacy](#)

[Take a look at Oprah's list of Baldwin's most impressive books](#)