

Discussion for *the Moviegoer*, chapt. 1 (1-63)

We see right from the start that Binx only recalls major events in his life by relating to film. This is not to say just the film itself, it is the whole movie experience—the location and appearance of the theater, who is with, who is spoke to, the environmental conditions, etc.—that Binx relates his memories with.

Another immediately noticeable feature of Binx is a sort of withdrawn, and somehow inauthentic positivity. It is almost as if Binx is incapable of true emotional connections with those he interacts with, even as a child. This further gives the feeling that there is some kind of eeriness to Binx's claims that things are well, and he is feeling fine. There is something mildly disturbing about his glibness, but it is difficult to put a finger on what it is that is disturbing.

D5.1 *The Moviegoer* begins with the following quote from Kierkegaard: "...the specific character of despair is precisely this: it is unaware of being despair. What do you think this means? From what you have read so far, how do think it is a fitting way to begin the novel?

D5.2 Binx thinks that "It is a pleasure to carry out the duties of a citizen and to receive in return a receipt or a neat styrene card with one's name on it certifying, so to speak, one's right to exist" (7). What do these trophy's represent for to Binx? Why do you suppose he thinks that these tokens validate his existence?

D5.3 What seems to be Binx's concept of love at the beginning of the novel? Describe his interactions with women. What is Binx's tone as he describes these interactions?

D5.4 Given what you know so far, what do you think Binx searching for? What is the significance of seeing the dung beetle while injured in a trench during the war to Binx's search?

D5.6 How would you describe Binx's interactions with friends, and family?

D5.7 How would you describe Binx's relationship with Kate? What makes you think so?