Ellison, Ralph (Waldo)


Ellison left Tuskegee Institute (Alabama) in 1936 after three years' study of music and joined the Federal Writers' Project in New York City. In 1939 he began contributing short stories, reviews, and essays to various periodicals. Following service in World War II, he produced *Invisible Man*, which won the 1953 National Book Award for fiction. The story tells of a naive and idealistic Southern black youth who goes to Harlem, joins the fight against white oppression, and ends up ignored by his fellow blacks as well as by whites. After his novel appeared, Ellison published only two collections of essays, *Shadow and Act* (1964) and *Going to the Territory* (1986). He lectured widely on black culture, folklore, and creative writing and taught at various American colleges and universities. He left a second novel unfinished at his death. *Flying Home and Other Stories* was published posthumously in 1996.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY.**