

University of Diyala
College of Education
for Human Sciences
Department of English

*This research is done
under my supervision*

Inst. Zeina Salim
Zeina
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August Wilson's Fences

A Research

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Prepared by

Eman Qais Tabaan

Huda Ahmed Abdul- Rhman

Supervised by

Inst. Zeina Salim Hamoudi

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Dedication

- *To the fountain of patience ,optimism and hope.*
- *To each of the following in the presence of God and his messenger my dear mother.*
- *To those who have demonstrate to me what is the most beautiful of my brother's life.*
- *To the big heart my dear father.*

Eman & Huda

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The Researchers

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Wilson born on 27 April 1945, Wilson grew up in his mother's house at 1727 Bedford Avenue in the Hill District of Pittsburgh. Wilson was the fourth of six children. His father name, Frederick (Fritz) - Kittle. Wilson would later choose to take his mother's surname, because memories of his father were of a destructively Wilson's mother, Daisy, married to another black man called David Bedford. He became Wilson's stepfather, who seems to have been model, though he died when Wilson was twenty-four. There was not ambiguity in Wilson's mind about his racial identity.

Wilson's father European ancestry, his whiteness meant nothing to Wilson who lived in his mother's house. Daisy Wilson cleaned houses and the family lived in two rooms. Their life was struggle. Wilson grew up feeling to become over concerned with white world which sought to limit and define black possibility was to succumb to temptation best resisted. (Bigsby, 2007: p8)

In 1959 Wilson was the only African American student at the Central Catholic High School. Where he was soon driven away by threats and abuse. Wilson then attended Connelly Vocational High School, but found the curriculum unchallenging. He dropped out of Gladston.

High school in 10th grad in 1960 because his teacher accused him of stealing a 20-page paper he wrote on Napoleon of France. Wilson did not tell his mother about his decision because he did not want to disappoint her. After that he began working menial jobs and allowed him to meet different people, on some of whom he later based his characters, such as Sam in *Janitor* (1985) - (The New York Times, October 3, 2005). Wilson began to write seriously when he was twenty years old. He was twenty-three when he co-founded the Black Arts Theatre in Pittsburgh. For Wilson the new black theatre came as something of revelation. Wilson was never protest literature. Rather, it was an attempt to sustain a culture and to bring the writer in to closer alignment with his own community. His plays themselves may not have been political, in the sense of being shaped to a political objective beyond that implied in the presentation of black life as a central fact and black culture as arch and living truth. Wilson was not interested in going back to Africa but in asserting that Africa was already inside him (Bigsby, 2007: p 8, 20). Frederick August Kittel, Jr. - changed his name to August Wilson to honor his mother after his father's death in 1965 (Bonnie Lyons George Plimpton (winter 1999)). In 1980 Wilson received a fellowship for the playwrights center in

minneapolis. He quit the museum in 1981, but continued writing plays (Little, Jhuang, 2000). Although he was a writer dedicated to writing for theater. A Hollywood studio proposed filming Wilson's play Fences. He insisted that a black director be hired for the film, saying "I declined a white director not on the basis of race but on the basis of culture of black Americans". The film was never made. Wilson received many honorary degrees including an honorary Doctor of Humanities from The University of Pittsburgh, where he served as a member of the University's Board of Trustees from 1992 until 1995. (Bruce Steel, October 10, 2005)

Wilson writes his play, Fences, because he wants the blacks to discover themselves authentication. Also he believes that the only way for the African American to pass the limited existence in white racist America is by recovering their African roots. He was so excited to keep the African American to remember their cultural heritage and their entirety which are remained for ages though their suffering and painful sense. Wilson also believed that the African American must have an evidence of pride because they have their cultural distinction; for example, they have their own customs, music, food, clothing, language and funerals which are different from the whites (

Early 2005, Wilson was diagnosed with liver cancer. He passed away on October 2 of that year. His legacy lives on through his plays and the lives he touched (The New York Times, October 3, 2005)

CHAPTER TWO

FENCE REVIEW

The play contains two acts. The play starts in Troy and Bono's pay day, which is in Friday. The play talks about Troy and his family. Troy has a wife called Rose and he has a son called Cory. Troy was a player at Negro leagues. He does not play at a major league because he was too old and the major league does not allow the blacks to play. Troy and Bono decided to go to Troy's house to spend their weekend there, to talk and drink. Troy's struggle begins in July of 1943.

Troy's son called Cory has been recruited by a College Football team. Cory was working at a local store. When Troy and Cory were building the fence, Cory told his father that he has given away his job at the local grocery store. This happened during the football season. Cory told his father to let him to play, because there is a coach come from the North Carolina to Pittsburgh in order to see how Cory play but Troy refused and told his son commendably to refrain to his job.

Then the events developed in act one, Scene four. These events happened in Friday. The events are, Troy won the case that he -

was the first colored garbage truck drivers in the city. Bono and Troy were living in the South then they moved to the North. Then, Bono and Troy sit and they start remembering ~~their~~ childhood and how they moved from South to the North, what happen then, Troy told Cory's Coach that Cory may not play on the team so Cory get so angry. Troy ~~worhs~~ Cory that his insubordinance is "Strike one" Against him.

Troy has a brother called Gabriel. Gabriel was imprison, so Troy bail him out of jail. Rose loves her family deeply that's why she wants them to build the fence, also her family will be close to her. There is a bet between Troy and Bono, Bono's bet include that if Troy finish building the fence for Rose, Bono will buy his wife. There is a speech between Troy and Rose, that Troy told Rose about three weeks to decide that Gabriel get asylum or not, and Also told her about his affair but what happen is that Rose accuse him of taking not giving. There is a fight between Troy and Rose. Troy grabs Rose's arms but Cory grabs Troy from behind at the end of fighting Troy wins the fight. After six months, Rose told Troy that Gabriel get his asylum. Troy got to the hospital to see Alberta who have a baby But died through childhood

They attack cory phisically, this happen in pay day because Cory point on the house in whic he throwing out.

At the end of the play, after eight years. They died because of his heart affect.

cory return home to attend his father funeral but what happen is that cory refused to attend but his brother told him if he does not attend his father funeral that do not make him a good man (Brain...etol, 2000: p 6-7)

- CHARACTER LIST

- Troy Maxson - He is the protagonist of *Fences*, a fifty-three year-old, African American man. He is husband to Rose, He has three children Lyons, Cory, and Raynell, and He is brother to Gabriel. He works for the Sanitation department lifting garbage into trucks. He is a former baseball star in the Negro League, But his athletic ability diminished. Troy is the family breadwinner His character is the centerpiece that all of the other relationships in *Fences* gather around. He has a weak progress. He fails to provide the love and support to his family. (Phillips et al, 2005: P 8). Troy is a storyteller he tells fanciful stories. He is at once jovial and loving, brash and overbearing. He is a complicated man embittered by the racism he has experienced throughout his life. (Penumbra Theatre company 2008)

- Cory Maxson - The teenage son of Troy and Rose Maxson. He studies in high school. He gets good grades and collage. Cory is a respectful son, Compassionate nephew to his disabled Uncle Gabriel, a giving and enthusiastic person. An ambitious young man who has talent and determination to realize his dream. (Phillips et al, 2005: P 8).

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Cory is a good player. He is recruited by College football team. Troy refuses to let him play football, He refuses to let in the way of Cory getting a good job. in spite that his father insists him to let the football, But Cory has done the opposite of what his father told him in order to stay on the team. Cory tries to get this father to realize the changing times in baseball, but his father stills refuse to play. Troy talks over him in defense of his awkward view of the world. "if they got a white fellow sitting on the bench, you can bet your last dollar he can't play! The colored guy got be twice as good before he get on the team. That's why I don't want you to get all tied up in them sports," and Cory defines baseball by saying "... Aaron ain't nobody..." rather realizing that times have changed for better in sports (Wilson 32) - Wilson mention this in his essay titled, The Ground in which I stand in regards to Cory's education. "African Americans who were offered scholarships seldom completed their educational opportunities. The sport of football want assist you, therefore the best choice is to get a job Wilson supports Troy's decision regarding Cory" (Herrington 68, Wilson 72). But Cory insists to continue his playing. (Amersand, May 4, 2007)

- Rose Maxson - Troy's wife and mother of his second child, Cory. Rose is a forty-three year-old African American who volunteers at her church regularly and loves her family. She requests from Troy and Cory to build a fence in their small dirt backyard to represent her desire to keep her loved-ones close to her love. Rose is unlike her husband, she is a realist, not a romantic longing for the by-gone days of yore. She has high hopes for Cory and sides with him to play football, she encourages him to play football. Rose treats Troy's illegitimate daughter, Raynell, as her own daughter, and this exemplifies her compassion (Phillips, et al 2003: p8). Rose is the one and only female character in this play. Wilson uses her as a weapon to show how hard of an African American woman is. Rose fails in gaining her dream to have a happy marriage. Rose resembles the life of Wilson's own mother and even many other African-American mothers. When Rose listens to her heart and uses her liberal thought by choosing to be an independent woman, refusing to be a good wife for her husband. Rose begins to think right for herself. While in the discussion, Rose is described as a mother who has a close relationship to her children better than her husband. Rose believes that becoming a mother of compassionate and loving children will give her true happiness in her life which is her own self fulfillment.

she will create her own social reform in her life through motherhood. (Nancy Intan).

Gabriel Maxson - Troy's young brother. Gabriel was a soldier in the Second World War, during which he received a head injury that required a metal plate to be surgically implanted into his head. Gabriel receives checks from the government, because of his damage and his service, that Troy used in part to buy the Maxson's home. Gabriel wanders around the Maxson family's neighborhood carrying a basket and singing. Sometimes Gabriel thinks that he is not a person, but he is the angel who opens the gate of heaven with his trumpet for Saint Peter on judgment day (Phillips et al, 2005: p8). Gabriel is not totally out of his mind. He is aware of the world and it is changing times. Troy takes care of Gabriel, he takes his brother under his wing. Gabriel's behavior is motivated by local youth acting out in public "some kids was teasing him and he run them off how say he was howling and carrying on. Some folks seen him and called the police, that is all it was" (Wilson 63). He knows that the youth are tormenting him on account of his response behavior. (Amper sand, May 4, 2007).

Lyons Maxson - Troy's eldest son from a previous relationship. Lyons is a jazz

musician who has not another job. He is full of laughter and uses his charming personality to quell his father's quick anger (Penumbra Theatre Company, 2008). Lyons grew up without his father for much of his childhood because his father was in prison. Lyons, like some other musicians, has a hard time making a living. He depends on his girlfriend. He lives with her, her name is Bonnie whom we never see on stage. He does not live with his father Troy, Rose and Cory, but he comes by the Maxson house frequently on Troy's payday to ask for money. Lyons plays numbers, or local lottery, like Rose. Lyons jazz playing appears to Troy as an unconventional and foolish occupation. Troy perceives the music as foreign and impractical so he calls jazz "divers music". Lyons' humanity and belief in himself garners respect from others (Phillips et al, 2002: p 9).

Raynell Maxson - Troy's illegitimate daughter and youngest child from another woman, Alberta, his lover (Penumbra Theatre, 2008). August Wilson introduces Raynell to the play as an infant. She needs love, support and care. Convinced Rose to take Troy back into the house. Raynell is the only Maxson child that will live with few scars from Troy and is emblematic of new hope for

Future and positive parents and older generation pass on their young (Phillips et al, 2002, p9)

Jim Bono - Troy's best friend. They met in the prison. Jim Bono is usually called "Bono" or "Mr. Bono" in Fences (Phillips et al, 2003, p9). Bono has stayed with Troy through his legendary days in baseball and to day works beside him as a garbage-man. Bono and Troy like brothers they each rather deeply (Penumbra Theatre, 2008)

Alberta - Troy's buxom lover from Tallahassee and Raynell's mother. She die while giving birth. She symbolizes the exotic dream of Troy's to escape his real life problems and live in an illusion with no time (Phillips et al, 2003, p9)

Bonnie - Cory's girlfriend who works in the laundry at Mercy Hospital (Phillips et al, 2002, p9)

Mr. Starks - Cory's boss at the ABP (Phillips et al, 2002, p9)

Coach Zellman - Cory's high school football coach who encourages recruiters to come to see Cory play football (Phillips et al, 2002, p9)

Mr. Rand - Bono and Troy's boss at Sanitation department who doubted that

Troy would win his discrimination case
(Phillips, et al, 2005, pg)

Mrs Pearl - Gabe's landlady at his new
apartment. (Phillips, et al, 2005, pg)

CHAPTER THREE

SOCIAL RACISM IN AUGUST WILSON'S FENCES

Fences is one of August Wilson famous plays which is take place in the United States. It deals with many problems like the problem of color and social issues as racism. The play talks about an African American family in the 1950s, who try to still a life in the middle of American urban industrial city (Nancy).

Troy Maxson is the main character in the play. He was born to be a baseball legend like Babe Ruth or Willie Mays. Troy played as a second best slugger in the Negro leagues because the major league baseball was accepting only white players.

Fences start after Jackie Robinson was the first Black player in the major league baseball. But this cannot please Troy. Troy, now in fifties and he is retired from baseball, now he is a garbage man. Troy's life become worse, because of the racism of white people. Also Troy warp his son's life, his son called Cory. Troy prevent his son to attend the college

on football scholarships, telling his son that blacks athlete have to be twice as talented to make the team and that "The white man aint gonna let forget now here with that football noway [...]"

In Fences we have racial madness, which is illustrated clearly in Troy's mentally handicapped brother, Gabriel, but it is also elisit in Troy himself, who destroy his son's dreams of collage education, that most father wishes to their sons but Troy offers Cory to stick to his job at the A.P. or learn trade like carpentry or automachanics. "That way you have something can't nobody take away from you" (

)
When Wilson describes the fact of blacks who migrated to the cities of American. Also he describes the dreams of black to turn in night mare. Also there is suffering when Troy's brother, Gabriel, who is disabled war veteran is not important to the government for which he has been injured. Troy feel more desperate.

Troy also has problem in his own family. Thus, Troy has dream but his dreams goes away. All these things makes his son understand that the outside world is harsh and crule. Then Troy a bandoned by his own children and he become more hopeless

Also Tray ignored by Rose (his wife)
for his betrayed (Racism And
masculinity in August Wilson's Fences)

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

Fences depict anti Black racism in America. Although the protagonist has migrated from the South to the north. He does not seem to be totally immune from Racism. In other words having experienced overt racism in the South and they become victims of covert racism in the North that make them grow disillusioned. Troy is a good father who do not stop struggling although he is a victim of deferred dreams. Troy respect the values of black and their traditions. These values and traditions consist of the blues and the storytelling tradition.

The essential point of Fences that black nihilism does not last forever. In fact, at the end there is a ray of hope for democracy. Also at the end, although desperate Troy dies, hope remain alive in the family and the black legacy of the blues is preserved through the youngest child, Raynell, who is the ray of hope for the family and all African Americans. In other words, the African Americans hope to continue struggle in order to establish democracy is kept alive. (Reza Deadyari and Mahdis Faghhi Nasiri)

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