

**RACIAL STEREOTYPING IN BRUCE NORRIS PLAY
SCRIPT *CLYBOURNE PARK* (2010)**

THESIS

*Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement to Obtain Strata One (S1)
Degree in English Department*



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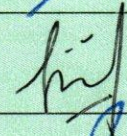
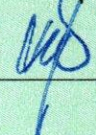
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ABSTRACT

Sofiani. 2020. *Racial Stereotyping in Bruce Norris Play Script Clybourne Park (2010)*. Thesis. English Department. Faculty of Languages and Arts. Universitas Negeri Padang.

Advisor: Dr. Muhd. Al-Hafizh, S.S., M.A.

This thesis is an analysis of a play written by Bruce Norris, entitled *Clybourne Park* (2010). This study is aimed to expose the issue about racial stereotyping which is done by the white people toward the Black and to know contribution dramatic elements; character, plot (conflict), setting, and stage direction in revealing the issue of racial stereotyping. This analysis is related to the concept of Orientalism by Edward Said in the post-colonial approach and also supported by the concepts of stereotype by Gamble. The result of this analysis is to expose the forms of stereotype toward black people. White sees blacks as poor people and black as a barbaric group.

Keywords: *Racial, Stereotyping, The White, The black*

ABSTRAK

Sofiani. 2020. *Racial Stereotyping in Bruce Norris Play Script Clybourne Park (2010)*. Skripsi. Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris. Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni. Universitas Negeri Padang.

Pembimbing: Dr. Muhd. Al-Hafizh, S.S., M.A.

Skripsi ini adalah analisis sebuah drama yang ditulis oleh Bruce Norris, yang berjudul *Clybourne Park* (2010). Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap masalah tentang stereotip rasial yang dilakukan oleh orang kulit putih terhadap orang kulit hitam dan untuk mengetahui kontribusi elemen drama; (karakter, latar, alur/konflik, dan *stage direction*) dalam mengungkap masalah stereotip rasial. Analisis ini terkait dengan konsep Orientalisme oleh Edward Said menggunakan pendekatan post-colonial dan juga didukung oleh konsep stereotip oleh Gamble. Hasil analisis ini adalah untuk memaparkan bentuk-bentuk stereotip terhadap orang kulit hitam. Orang kulit putih menganggap orang kulit hitam sebagai orang yang miskin dan kelompok yang barbar.

Kata kunci: *Rasial, Stereotip, Si Putih, Si Hitam*

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Sofiani

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Despite its existence as a multicultural country, America still facing racial problems. In America, it is still found how people judge someone else more inferior just because they have different colors, just because they are not white. This happens due to the existence of one race that feels dominant and feels superior to other races so that discrimination is created. Discrimination is realized in the form of attitudes called racial prejudice, and discrimination that realizes in the belief of cognitive form called a racial stereotype and racism (ideologies) that may be associated with racial disadvantages (Quillian, 2006). Discrimination may be motivated by prejudice, stereotypes, or racism.

It has been widely known that white American established itself as superior. It cannot be separated from history when black became a slave to white people. White people affirm a belief known as white supremacy. White supremacy is a racist belief that white people are superior to people of other races and must, therefore, be more dominant than they are (Gillborn, 320). Caused by white supremacy comes the stereotype that considers that black is a group who are not cultured, have no norms, religious, custom, uneducated, criminal, and also poor. The judgment that black is inferior makes black treated arbitrarily.

In 1955-1968 the people carried out a movement to seize their rights known as the African-American civil rights movement. This movement is led by Dr. Martin Luther King, an American pastor, and the fighter has taken a major

step in eliminating discrimination against black people and voicing their civil rights by enacting civil rights rules. According to Konstantinos D. Karatzas in his article entitled *Lyndon B. Johnson and the Civil Rights Act of 1964* (2016), in 1964 the civil rights Acts were issued by the American government which was signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

During the movement, racism in American society continued to demand casualties. Malcolm X, a prominent Muslim, and black rights activist were murdered in 1965. The leader of the civil rights movement Martin Luther King who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his activities was also killed in 1968. When Barack Obama was confirmed as the first president from the black in America, society assessed that America had entered the post-racial era, a country without racial differences and discrimination. Society assumes that America will be a country without discrimination to people based on skin colors. However, this assumption is only a camouflage. African Americans, representing 11% of the workforce but only 6.3% of the workforce manager (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2007). According to Bodenhausen in his article entitled *Racial Assumptions Color the Mental Representation of Social Class* (2017), black people rated as residents who are at a low economic level and also have less positive psychological characteristics.

In general, there is still judgment or belief that black and white are not equal in America. In Longman Exams Dictionary(2006), racial is relating to the relationships between different races of people who now live in the same country or area. Meanwhile, according to Oxford Learner's Dictionary(2019), stereotyping is beliefs or judgments about people based on fixed ideas about them which are

often not true. In this analysis, racial stereotyping refers to white people's bad judgment toward black which is ingrained. For example in the field of work, black is rather difficult to occupy high positions in a job, while the average white occupies a respectable position. This is caused by the belief in black is still bad.

The issue of racial stereotyping is interesting to be explored. Many literary works reveal the racial issue such as *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959), *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885), *A Soldier's Play* (1982). All of the analysis of these literary works reveal the issue of racial stereotyping. In all these literary works black is placed in an unfavorable position. Black is described as a bad person, poor, ignorant, and uncultured. Black people are portrayed as someone who always harms whites. On the other hand, white is considered a perfect figure who has never made a mistake. This study is different from the previous studies because this study wants to prove racial stereotyping that occurs after the civil rights act 1964. After 1964 there was already a ban on racism and racial stereotype treatment. This is very different from previous years where racism, such as slavery was legalized and supported by law. This study wants to prove that there is still a racial stereotype after the Civil Rights Act 1964, which is realized in a different way or a finer form. It is realized in the cognitive form.

This study focuses on a play script written by Bruce Norris with the title *Clybourne Park*. The play shows the readers how white people make judgments toward black. Within 50 years the problem of skin color and race is still a problem that is often discussed in America, in a country known as a multicultural country.

1.2 Racial Stereotyping

America has become one of the big and advance countries, but racial stereotype still becomes a serious problem in this country. American society still categorizes people based on color skin. There are two keywords to form the terminology in this study. They are *racial* and *stereotyping*. In Longman Exams Dictionary(2006), racial is relating to the relationships between different races of people who now live in the same country or area. Meanwhile, according to Oxford Learner's Dictionary (2019), stereotyping means beliefs or judgments about people based on fixed ideas about them which are often not true.

In this analysis, racial stereotyping refers to white people's judgment toward black which is ingrained. In this play, racial stereotyping is shown in two forms; black as poor people and black as a barbaric group. Black as poor people refer to how white sees blacks as unfortunate people. Black as a barbaric group refers to how white sees the black as the uncultured group.

1.3 A Brief Description of Author's Biography

The description of Bruce Norris' biography is taken and based on Dr. Ernest I. Nolan's article (2013), entitled *The Racial Politics of Real Estate: Bruce Norris's Clybourne Park*. Bruce Norris is an American playwright and actor. Norris was born in United States, May 16, 1960. He is associated with the Steppenwolf Theatre Company of Chicago. He studied at Northwestern University and graduating in 1982 with a degree in theater. Then, he set out to become an actor. He performed at Victory Gardens Theater, the Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre, and on Broadway. He wrote his first play with title

The Actor Retires, produced in a late-night venue in Chicago in 1991, and then as a radio play for later broadcast by WFMT-FM as part of the Guest Quarters Hotel's series Chicago Theatres on the Air in 1992.

According to the Steppenwolf Theatre (2014), Norris has written thirteen plays. There was some of his phenomenal plays including *The Actor Retires* (1992), *The Vanishing Twin* (1996), *The Infidel* (2002), *Purple Heart* (2002), *We All Went Down to Amsterdam* (2003), *The Pain and the Itch* (2005), *The Unmentionables* (2006), *Clybourne Park* (2010), *A Parallelogram* (2010), *The Low Road* (2013), *Domesticated* (2013), *The Qualms* (2014), *Downstate* (2018).

Norris received some awards for his works, they are Whiting Award (2006), Steinberg Playwright Award (2009), Olivier Prize (2011) for *Clybourne Park*, Pulitzer Prize for Drama (2011) for *Clybourne Park*, Tony Award for Best Play (2012) for *Clybourne Park*. The themes raised by Norris in his works are quite diverse. For the *Clybourne park* play which has received much praise and awards, the problem that appears is race. According to Norris, the writing of *Clybourne Park's* play was inspired by *A Raisin in the Sun* play written by Lorraine Hansberry. The genesis for the play came early in Norris's life, back when he was a pre-teen. He says that the first plays he was exposed to in middle school were Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* and Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*. In an interview with Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company (2010) About his work *Clybourne Park* and the relation to Hansberry's play, Norris said:

"I was obsessed with that play [A Raisin in the Sun] when I was a kid . . . I first saw the play when I was 12, right around the time that I was starting to hate authority. That play has resonated all through my life because I realized that the only character I could identify with was Karl—I was a whitey in an all-white neighborhood in Houston, Texas. I really loved the play. I was always regretful that I never got to play Karl Lindner, so I thought I'll just give him some more to do [by writing him into Clybourne Park]. That's a way of getting to play that part indirectly." (p.41)

The quotation above shows that Norris uses Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* as a jumping-off point for turning the issue of the race inside out, showing the audience what the white family in Clybourne Park, the neighborhood where Hansberry's African American family plans to move, is going through.

1.4 Clybourne Park

The playscript *Clybourne Park* (2010) by Bruce Norris reflects the issue of racial stereotyping. In this analysis, racial stereotyping refers to white people's judgment toward black which is ingrained. White people still believe that black is only a person who lives with a low economy. Black is still considered a group that is immoral, ignorant, and does not have the authority as a human being. White still think that black is the retarded people. Then, White people confirm that they are superior. They believe that they are the most powerful. In this analysis, stereotyping is shown in two forms: black as poor people and black as a barbaric group.

Black as poor people refer to how white sees blacks as unfortunate people. Through setting and characters, it can be revealed that the bad assumptions given by white people toward the black. White still assumes that black only deserves to be a servant. They do not deserve jobs other than white helpers. Black must be helped economically. White assumes that black is not sufficient people.

Black as a barbaric group refers to how white sees the black as the uncultured group. Through the plot, setting, the character it can be seen that white and black people are still considered to be not comparable. Black considered a criminal and the white people trusted as a good person who has a good speech and behavior. Black is considered a person or a group of people who are immoral and uncultured like the stereotype attached to the ancestors of black people.

1.5 The problem of the Study

This study focuses on the issue of racial stereotyping in play script *Clybourne Park* (2010) by Bruce Norris. Therefore, in order to reveal the issue of racial stereotyping, research questions are needed. The research questions are:

1. How far does the whole play script *Clybourne Park* (2010) expose the issue about racial stereotyping?
2. What are the forms of racial stereotypes in the play script *Clybourne Park* (2010)?

1.6 Purpose of the Study

This study aims to expose how far the play script *Clybourne Park* (2010) by Bruce Norris reveals the issue of racial stereotyping. It is also intended to expose the forms of racial stereotype toward black people. White sees blacks as poor people and black as a barbaric group.

1.7 Previous Study

The analysis of *Clybourne Park* (2010) by Bruce Norris that focuses on analyzing racial stereotyping has not been found yet. However, three articles give

contributions and inspiration in analyzing this play. First is the study entitled *The Racial Politics of Real Estate: Bruce Norris's Clybourne Park* (2013) by Dr. Ernest I. Nolan. Second is the study by Darbaz Zeez Sadeq (2016), entitled *The Projection of Racism in Richard Wright's Black Boy*. The third is the study entitled *The White's Felony in Five poems by Benjamin Zephaniah* by Fitri Handayani.

The first study is done by Dr. Ernest I. Nolan (2013), entitled *The Racial Politics of Real Estate: Bruce Norris's Clybourne Park*, which discusses the struggle for the strategic area between white and black. The property becomes a touchstone for exposing values and attitudes about race and class in the United States, about what Americans feel free to say about race and what they think but are afraid to articulate. It uses the concept of racial tension by Vanessa Hall. It gives a contribution to analyzes the same work, *Clybourne Park* (2010)

The second study is done by Darbaz Zeez Sadeq (2016), entitled *The Projection of Racism in Richard Wright's Black Boy*, discusses how African American people are treated unequally by white American. This analysis aims to show how violence against Black people is done by the whites. To live in America, African-Americans fight for their existence with violence too. The focus of the study is about the African-Americana character, Richard. He is always treated unequally by whites society, emotionally, or even physically. He was beaten and slapped in his cheek. They also took his money when he wanted to buy her mother the ingredient in the market. Living in a hard society made Richard must fight them with violence too. This study gives a contribution to analyzing the same topic.

The third is the study entitled *The White's Felony in Five poems by Benjamin Zephaniah* by Fitri Handayani, which discusses the White's felonies are done by the policemen, parliament members, and societies. This study is aimed to expose the issue about the White's felony which is done by the white people toward the Black and to know the contribution of poetic elements; imagery, irony, and repetition in revealing the issue of the White's felony. This analysis is related to the concept of Otherness by Edward Said. This study gives a contribution to using the theory of the post-colonial approach.

These three articles give a contribution to the topic of racial stereotyping. The first study discusses the struggle for the strategic area between white and black. The second study discusses how African American people treat unequally by white Americans. The third study discusses the White's felonies are done by the policemen, parliament members, and societies. Unlike previous studies, this analysis focuses on the types of racial stereotyping that happens in American society. This analysis uses the fictional devices such as character, setting, plot (conflict), in revealing the issue of racial stereotyping. Furthermore, this analysis is based on the theory of Orientalism by Edward Said and the concept of stereotyping.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

The analysis of this playscript relates to the concept of Orientalism proposed by Edward Said. Said was a professor of literature at Columbia University, a public intellectual, and a founder of the academic field of postcolonial studies. He is a Palestinian-Egyptian and he was born in Jerusalem.

He was living and working in the United States of America. Said establishes the grounds for analyzing the West's discursive construction of itself concerning the Orient. Edward Said in Mary Klages's book said that Non-white or non-Western cultures created by West. The Occident (West) makes a discourse to hegemonize non-white (154). Said (1978:11) considers that “*Orientalism* is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between "the Orient" and (most of the time) "the Occident". Klages (2006) states:

"Said argues that the West's construction of the Orient projects all the things that the West considers negative, all the things that have to be repressed- all the things on the right-hand side of the slash in a binary opposition- onto our construct of the other, the Orient. So, 'the Orient' becomes the place where the body (as opposed to mind), evil (as opposed to good), and the feminine(as opposed to masculine) all reside. By placing all of these forms of 'otherness' on the Orient, Said says, the West can construct itself as all positive" (155-156).

The quotation above explains that the stereotypical discourse about the Orient is constructed by the Occident (the West). The stereotypical discourse shows the Orient as the primitive, irrational, uncivilized, and "Other", in contrast to the Occident as the advanced, rational, civilized, and "self". The stereotypical discourse that constructed White people made African-American people separate from society even though they are also American. White people act that they have more authority for African-American people from society. As with the Orientalism concept of Edward Said, White people it refers to as the advanced, rational, civilized, and "self" and contrast in African-American refers to the primitive, irrational, uncivilized, and "other".

The West makes provisions for non-western. West called the Occident and non-Western called Orient such as Asia, North Africa, and the Middle East. The West confirm that they are the superior and non-western as the inferior. Like the

binary opposition, they as the powerful one and the others as the powerless. Western constructed the concept which positions others in an unprofitable side. This concept against Edward Said. Western people constructed some rules or provisions to make non-western weak and defenseless. Then, the west intends to control and colonize the lives of the non-western. Mary Klages, *Literary Theory: A Guide for the Perplexed* (2006), says:

Said argues that the creation of the discourse about a colonized culture, which cannot 'talk back' or write about itself. Rather, such discourse renders the people of colonized culture the powerless subjects of western power/knowledge, and anything the colonized cultures try to say or write about itself is by definition considered illegitimate, non-knowledge, nonsense.

The quotation above shows that the West confirms that they are superior and makes the non-western stay in a bad position. The non-western can not fight. They can not voice their rights. In Western thought, the non-western is only the part that does not need to be considered for their existence. The non-western or the Orient could be colonized and treated as they wish. Even, the non-western tries to fight, it will be considered invalid. These assumptions and concepts rejected outright by Said. The theory of orientalism that was coined by Edward Said was used in this study to see how white which perceives as west assesses black which is categorized as east. More precisely the theory of orientalism is used to see how binary opposition between black and white, how white people make social provisions. White creates a distance between white and black. it also focuses on how the white mindset is towards black people

This analysis also supported by the concepts of stereotype. Gamble in Matuzitz (2012) said that stereotyping occurs when the perception one has about

the other is category-based, in which case he or she would be squeezing the other into a niche, judging the other based on what he or she knows about the category to which he or she feels the other belongs. Therefore, stereotyping is not a fact that contains certain truths, but only a judgment whose truth cannot be ascertained. Then, Stereotype threat is a psychological phenomenon that has been shown to negatively impact the performance of a variety of groups (e.g., racial/ethnic minorities, women, people with low socioeconomic status). In general, those who accept stereotyping are minority racial groups, such as black in America, women in androcentric circles, and groups of poor people in the environment of rich people. In this study, focused on discussing racial stereotyping.

Mark J. brandt and Christine Reyna in their article entitled *Stereotypes As Attributions* explains:

“We suggest that stereotypes serve explanatory and attributional functions at three interrelated levels of analysis: (a) individual level, wherein stereotypes are analyzed in terms of the attributional dimensions they imply (locus, stability, controllability); (b) intragroup level, in which stereotypes define and explain by combining stereotypic traits on dimensions of warmth and competence, which in turn predict unique patterns of emotions and behaviors; and (c) intergroup level, in which stereotypes explain the social order by providing compensatory or causally relevant traits about other relevant groups.”

The statement above explains that there are three levels of stereotypes, first at the individual level, second in intragroup level, and the third in intergroup level. In this study, the stereotype to be discussed is the stereotype that occurs at the third level, namely the intragroup level of stereotype. The stereotype that occurs between white and black racial groups. Based on the concept of stereotype

above, in this study, the concept will be used to see how white people make stereotypes toward blacks.

1.9 Methodology

The analysis of this playscript *Clybourne Park* (2010) by Bruce Norris is done through text and context-based interpretation. According to Guerin (2005), context-based interpretation means that the analysis of this playscript is not only focused on the text itself but also involved the phenomenon that happens in the real world. Meanwhile, the text-based interpretation is done by exposing the fictional devices of the text itself. It is focused on analyzing the dramatic elements; character, plot (conflict), setting. and stage direction. The dramatic elements give a contribution to revealing the issue of racial stereotyping.

Character gives a big contribution to revealing the meaning of the play script. According to Abrams (2005:42), characters are the persons who have a moral, intellectual and emotional qualities that can be seen from what they say and their way of saying it, and from what they do. In literary work, the characters help the readers to understand and reveal the meaning of work by looking at the character's behavior, action, thought, and conversation. The characters of this play are two different groups of people who live in different periods. Russ and Bev are the couples who live in 1959, and Steve and Lindsey are the couples who live in 2009. All of the characters assume that black is different than white. The characters are used to reveal stereotyping toward black which was done by white people.

Another dramatic element used to analyze the play is the plot (conflict). The plot is a sequence of events for the things that happen in the story with conflict. According to Bokesch (2008), conflict can be identified into four kinds, men versus self, men versus men, men versus nature, men versus society. There are two categories of conflict, internal and external. The internal conflict that the character face in this play is they have to follow the provisions and false assumptions that society creates. While the external conflict that occurs in this play is they deal with different treatments based on the color skin. Plot (conflicts), internal and external, is used to figure out the conflict that faced by characters

The setting is another fictional device of the play. The setting also gives the contribution in analyzing the play. The setting is not only about the time and place but is also about the situation. According to Abrams (2005), Setting is the general place, historical time, and social circumstances that occur in the work. In this analysis, the setting refers to the situation and condition such as interracial racism that still occurs in Chicago, America. The setting has the function to shows the atmosphere, situation, and condition faced by characters in the play. It gives the contribution to the process of analysis by giving help in revealing the meaning. Stage direction as a fictional device also helps in analyzing the play script. It helps in revealing the movement of the character and the situation in the play script.

CHAPTER III CONCLUSION

The play *Clybourne Park* (2010) by Bruce Norris reflects the issue of racial stereotyping. Racial stereotyping in this analysis refers to white people's bad judgment toward black which is ingrained. This analysis is done through text-based and context-based interpretation by focusing on fictional devices such as character, setting, plot (conflict), and stage direction. The analysis of this playscript relates to the concept of Orientalism proposed by Edward Said and also supported by the concepts of stereotype by Gamble. This study exposes how white people make social provisions. White creates a distance between white and black. It also focuses on how the white mindset is towards black people. White people still believe that a black is only a person who lives with a low economy. Black is still considered a group that is immoral, ignorant, and does not have the authority as a human being. White still think that black is the retarded people. Then, White people confirm that they are superior. They believe that they are the most powerful.

Racial stereotyping is shown in two forms: black as poor people and black as a barbaric group. White people give bad assumptions toward black. White sees blacks as poor people. White still assumes that black only deserves to be a servant. They do not deserve jobs other than white helpers. Black must be helped economically. White assumes that black is not sufficient people. Black also stereotyped as a barbaric group. White sees the black as the uncultured group. White and black people are still considered to be not comparable. Black

considered a criminal and the white people trusted as a good person who has a good speech and behavior. Black is considered a person or a group of people who are immoral and uncultured like the stereotype attached to the ancestors of black people.

The whole play shows that racial stereotyping is related to the concept of Orientalism by Edward Said. Said shows that there were social divisions in society that harmed black people. The stereotypical discourse that constructed white people made black people separate from society even though they are also American. White people act that they have more authority for black people from society. As with the Orientalism concept of Edward Said, White people it refers to as the advanced, rational, civilized, and "self" and contrast in black refers to the primitive, irrational, uncivilized, and "other".

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