

# Analysis of native son by richard wright

Literature



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According to a collection of maps in an article on the Big Think webpage, there were at least 126 occurrences of lynching between 1930 and 1938. However, in opposition to these concrete statistical analyses, one man published a novel in 1940 that would oppose the theory of a physical warfare, and claimed that the era of the 1930s was home to a “battle of words”. This man is Richard Wright, and his novel, “Native Son”, introduced the protagonist Bigger Thomas as a character whom was oppressed by racism leading to his murder of 2 women.

The novel involved 3 detailed chapters separated as “Fear”, “Flight”, and “Fate”, each with a major theme in mind. Bigger Thomas was triggered by a fear of oppression that forced him into placing the blame of murder on other individuals. Furthermore, the protagonist’s decision to challenge authorities ignited a crowd of thousands. Unfortunately, toward the end of the novel, Bigger was jailed to show the childish attempt of walking in a blizzard with a torch of passion.

Despite the various methods of bodily harms that were inflicted on Negroes in the 1930s, the major source of conflict in “Native Son” came from verbal arguments and well-constructed lies. In the first chapter, “Fear”, the author expressed the theme of “Damage Heads” whereas several characters in the novel were injured in their head, which is the shell of their mind, after failing to make an impact with their words. For example, on page 70, Bigger felt a sense of hatred toward Mary after she had questioned about the lifestyle of blacks. Ultimately, Bigger silenced Mary in her room with a pillow and tossed her in the furnace. Once again, Mary’s existence was in defiance with Bigger’s goal of hiding his murder, and her head was cut off. Furthermore,

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the conflict of beliefs was demonstrated on page 152 when Bigger felt cornered out of fear of the law. Britten, a private investigator, smashed Bigger's head against the wall to show the imminent exposure of Bigger's murder and Britten's ability to overlook Bigger's lies.

A second theme of Native Son was introduced by a static character, Bessie, whom has often complained about her poor lifestyle. " I ain't never bothered nobody. I just worked hard every day as long as I can remember, till I was tired enough to drop." Bessie said on page 215. The author of " Native Son" corrected the fallacy of passiveness by showing that doing nothing could still trigger negative emotions from an activist: Bigger murdered Bessie because she was reluctant to escape with him. Another example of the theme " Lead or Be Lead" is expressed toward the end of the first chapter, " Fear", whereas Mary has simply donated money to the communist party instead of taking an active role. Mary could've done a lot more to help the Negroes. In Mark 12: 41-44, Jesus called his disciples together after seeing a widow put a few cents into the church's offering box and told them, " Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything - all she had to live on." Mary is like the rich people whom came before the widow and put their excess earnings, for donating \$3, 000 out of her families million-dollar treasury is a miniscule amount. Richard Wright also modeled the character of Bigger after the poor widow that followed the rich and started a revolution. Mary did not put enough effort into making a better future for Negroes and paid the consequences with her own life under the hand of an activist.

Richard Wright utilized realism in his novel by also presenting the negatives to an exorbitant amount of passion. On page 255, the narrator described Bigger's state after being captured for his crimes, " Even when they snatched him up by the collar, his weak body easily lending itself to be manhandled, he looked without hope or resentment..." Too great a passion is often followed by technical miscalculation and costly consequences. In an article titled " Why Passion for Your Work Isn't Always a Good Thing" published by Anna Medaris Miller, a Senior Health Editor at U. S. News, workers whom exhibited symptoms of passion in the workplace often claims that they cannot think about anything else. Bigger was too passionate in his attempt to challenge the large white world and in the process murdered 2 innocent bystanders.

Richard Wright wrote " Native Son" to share his enthusiasm for the bullies in his life, as demonstrated in the author's note at the beginning of the novel. Even though Richard was attacked physically and emotionally by the bullies, some part of him wanted to be a bully, to be brave enough to stand up against the injustice of the 1930s. Evidences of Richard's eagerness toward speaking out are shown through Bigger's contemplation on page 110, " He liked to hear of how Japan was conquering China; of how Hitler was running the Jews to the ground..." Bigger knew that Hitler and Mussolini was murderer, but he did not care because they were activists, and Bigger acknowledged their bravery. These two historic figures changed the way Americans and people from various other countries see the world. During Hitler's era, there were supporters of his plan that eventually realized Hitler's cruel methods of " purging" Germany. What if someone stood up for injustice

instead of creating injustice? Bigger Thomas has acted out of his boundary as a Negro and brought with him individuals such as Max and Jan whom could now build a more convincing claim against racial inequality. Bigger had acted out of repressed rage and became a murderer. However, in the last sentence of the novel, Bigger was smiling as he freed himself of his desires. “ Therefore, instead of stressing out about matching passion with purpose, just do it. Do something. Anything” said Viktorija Veltmane, an author of Prsuit. Bigger did something, he expressed his concerns and gathered a mob at court. Richard Wright did something too, he published a book attacking injustice during a time that might cost him his life. Richard Wright’s message of assertiveness were received and confirmed with the introduction of leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. A dream has changed the world; an act could change a lot more.