

Literary analysis battle royal by ralph ellison

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



The society is mainly composed of different individuals with their own unique sense of personality, idealism and characteristics. Each of these factors symbolizes the critically means of becoming an individual significantly apart from the group of humanity as an existent being. In relation to this concept that the aspect of socio-cultural identity is established wherein different individuals bind themselves together through developing their cultural identity and anthropological affinity into groups. Thus, the cultural and race identity factor became a part of the social development of the people.

As each cultural and race background was developed unique to the social group that harbors an affinity to this factor, society developed a disparity barrier surrounding each socio-cultural groups based on their anthropological development and historical relationship with the general community. The historical development of each social group indeed played a significant factor in the present identity of that particular division. These differences in the cultural factor and historical background breed in one of the most alarming ethical issue in the present global community, the issue of discrimination.

Discrimination is mainly the oppressive social view towards a certain socio-cultural division. This problem is mainly a threat to the ideal vision of social equality across the general human community. The negative problem of discrimination hinders the unification of the people because of the inferior views and opinion of the dominant social community towards a particular division regarding them as an inferior social breed. For the American society, this oppressive social issue became a significant problem for their people particularly the Negroes.

The historical development of American society breeds an oppressive segregation view based mainly on the factors of race and color. This negative issue has resulted to great detrimental perspective towards the established inferior class in this social perception namely the Blacks.

As their historical background denotes them as once slave to the white people, the latter continuously perceived the former as such even after the liberation. This means that freedom did not prevail over the social impact of the historical stature of the Black society. Thus, the freedom of the Blacks from the issue of slavery did not entitled them to gain an equal stand in the American society where they still have been discriminated as the inferior race to be ruled over by the Whites.

This concept of discrimination is particularly the main theme of the short literary story written by Ralph Ellison entitled “ Battle Royal”. This story was a clear depiction of the detrimental effects that the concept of discrimination posts on development of the lives of the Black people. This literary story focuses on the issue of the struggles of a boy to get a proper education over the obstacles that the issue of discrimination posts on his path to reach his goal.

Analysis of the Elements in the Story

The story of “ Battle Royal” is mainly centralized on the struggle of a particular boy over the discriminative views of the general society towards his racial background. It is emphasized on the story that eventhough he displayed a series of potential and capability to become intellectually

triumphant, he was still held back by the factor of his personal background. This concept is presented in the story through a series of encounters and elements symbolizing a significant issue to the struggles of the character over the oppression and the discrimination he must endure to realize his dream.

The story takes place mainly through one particular character who narrates the story, as he perceives it. This boy was clearly depicted as an individual who has a potential to excel on his academic affairs as he once displayed through becoming on top of his class. This character was shown to be on his path towards achieving his dream of becoming a properly educated individual and become successful on a socio-economic perspective. Indeed, this boy has an ideal view and perspective towards his life cultivating his passion to undermine the obstacles he must endure.

His awareness towards the adverse issue of discrimination comes from the dying words of his grandfather who displayed a significant passion of remorse on his final moments. He expressed his views of betraying his kind for the sole reward of gaining the favor of their social counterparts who he used to view as the superior ones. He denounced that he has betrayed his people to become a member of the society he once adored though they only rejected him on the end. Thus, he confessed that he sacrificed his racial identity to gain the image of something, which is clearly not him. He shared these opinions to his family on his dying moments as a legacy of advice for them not to follow what he claims as his mistakes.

These dying words of his grandfather took a significant toll on the views and social perception of the narrator. At first he has not yet clearly realize the effects of racial discrimination and the obstacles they posts on the path of hisdreams. He continuously pounded on the words of his grandfather searching an applicable reality into such concepts while his family members shrugged off these words from his mentality.

Then the moment came, when the boy was given a chance to stand before an audience of elite and highly viewed white people to display his intellectual abilities and gain support for his struggle towards gaining proper education. One of his first obstacles was to endure the event of the “ Battle Royal”.

The Battle Royal is mainly an event where a group of black boys fights and brawls against each other to gain the dominant position in their group. Symbolically, this event is rooted on the similarly experiences during the period of the African American’s slavery. Battle Royal is particularly where African Americans fight against each other to gainmoney, prominence, social position among their society though the winner is still segregated from their racial counterparts.

This is an approach of the White slave masters to prevent unity among the African American thus delimiting their capacity to fight for their freedom through a unified spirit. As history always tells, people can make significant changes through having a unified hearts and spirit. Indeed, battle royal fosters only infighting and hatred inside the racial community of the African American to delimit their capacity ideal capacities thus, rendering them further as slaves to their counterparts.

In this event, the narrator witnessed the negative impact of the segregation issue from the horrified and scared eyes of his fellow African Americans. He saw their kind as a weak and helpless group in front of the prominent and elite white community. He became part of this group and continued struggling in the event, as he perceived it as part of the challenges in his path towards the attainment of his desired education. He was brutally beaten by one of the boys sustaining physical damages on the bout yet, he remained strong and ideal on his conviction.

The payment portion afterwards was more oppressive and humiliating than the previous brawl wherein the boys must compete against each other for money while sustaining significant electrocution for the entertainment of their audience. The narrator pit against his group in this process as he waits for the moment of his stand before this elite and prominent audience. He sustained and endured the physical electrocution of his body and personal dignity regarding them again as part of his struggles until finally he was called and recognized to give his speech

His speech was the one he delivered on his graduation where he ended top of his class. His prominent society applauded this accomplishment. However, the moment, which the narrator long aspired for, became his personal testament of the oppressive views towards his racial identity. The audience clearly displayed disinterested and unenthusiastic presence during the delivery regardless of the ideal values that the speech depicts.

The narrator was only able to grasp strongly the attention of his audience at the point when he unintentionally highlighted the concept of social equality.

The audience immediately dissuaded this concept from the narrator as a mere illusion, which he later succumbed into. Finally, he was rewarded with a gift symbolizing the recognition of his intellectual triumph and potentials. He was rewarded with the strong tool for the realization and accomplishment of his aspiration for a proper education, which he viewed as a payment for his struggles. Indeed, the narrator was satisfied.

The story ended with the symbolical encounter of the narrator with his grandfather, which is highlighted as the narrator's chance to answer back the argument given by the later of his deathbed. The narrator proudly displayed his accomplishment of gaining his ticket for his desired education however, this was reprimanded by the laughter of his grandfather. In this part of the story that the author's accomplishment was regarded as an illusion perpetuated by the white society to hide the racial segregation and discrimination in the general society which the narrator falls victim into.

Indeed, the symbol of the grandfather's character questioned the integrity of the accomplishment of the narrator and the motives behind the said triumph. This reaction implied the fact that the author must not be drowned with the illusion of him being honored by the white people through their material gifts as they were mere cover for the oppressive and discriminative opinion they still hold towards him as an African American.

Conclusion

In general, the story entitled " Battle Royal" depicts a series of contradiction presented through the views and perception of the narrator. In the story, the

boy endured several challenges of social and racial relevance to gain his ticket for achieving the education he desires with. Based from the personal opinion of the author, he perceives this education as his ticket towards alleviating him and his family through life and society. With this ambition, he strongly hold on to this dream enabling him to endure the certain obstacles presented in this path including the discriminative and oppressive views towards his race.

Indeed, one of the most significant issues presented in the story as the primary to the dreams and aspirations of the narrator is the oppressive segregation that the society has for his race. Indeed, because of his racial background, he was viewed as an inferior individual regardless of his previous intellectual accomplishment and the abilities he possessed. Though the society represented by the narrator's audience in the story realizes this potential, their appreciation displayed through the scholarship award is still influenced by the segregation concept in their society.

This idea is presented through the events needed prior to the award, the reaction of the audience to the mere mention of the word social equality, and the title presented in the scholarship in particular. In addition, the oppressive and humiliating nature of the event he must first participate with to gain an audience with the prominent and elite individuals of their society also manifests as a significant challenge on his path. Indeed, events and social views such as the " Battle Royal" which are all rooted on the concept of racial discrimination and segregation become part of the challenges and

hindrances that the author must endure to achieve a decent education and a successful individual as an African American in their society.

As what his grandfather has expressed in his dying moments, to become successfully greater than their social counterparts, an African American must live in the territory of the white people and endure their oppressive perception, from it, shrugged off the hindrances and rise far greater than the oppressive dominant race.