

Author analysis on gwendolyn brooks

Literature



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Analysis on Gwendolyn Brooks Introduction Gwendolyn Elizabeth Brooks was a famous African American poet and teacher who lived between June 7, 1917, and December 2, 2000. She remains a celebrated author, poet and linguist who contributed to the growth of American literature through her numerous collection of poems and novels. She began writing at the age of thirteen when she published her first poem in a special children's magazine. By 1941, she had begun taking part in poetry workshops key among which was Cunningham Stark's workshop in poetry. She developed to become the first African-American author to win Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1950. Furthermore, she received numerous other honors and became Poet Laureate of Illinois in 1968. She served in the capacity until her death in 2000.

Among her numerous works were *Annie Allen*, *A Street in Bronzeville* and *Maud Martha*. I select the three works that comprise of collections of poetry and a novel for the analysis owing to the author's ability to utilize literary techniques and use her works to provide a functional critique of the American society at her time. The above works have numerous tie-ins that show the authors interests, in particular, socioeconomic issues in the society. Key among the tie-ins was themes, authorial period and rhetorical styles among many others. Brooks wrote the three works between 1945 and 1950. Within the decade, America had unique social and political system that formed the basis of her books. Racial segregation and oppression of African Americans especially those living in urban centers were common themes in all the three works. Brooks used her works to portray the extent of racial discrimination and the inequalities that characterized the American social and economic systems. Her systemic works played a vital role in shaping

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interracial relations in the country.

Another equally important tie in was the coming of age genre in the works above. Coming of age is a unique genre of literature in which an author addresses the growth of character thereby portraying the character's changing perception and understanding of life. She uses the technique to show the effects of racial segregation and oppression of the African American community. Her effective use of the technique helps achieve an appropriate emotional appeal in her work as she shows the effects of the segregation to the character at various age groups. Her appropriate use of various literary, poetic and rhetorical techniques enhanced the effectiveness of her works. The feature is a vital tie in that enhances her contribution to the genre (Mickle 51).

In retrospect, Brooks' works have various similarities most of which shows her interest in the socioeconomic issues in the American society at the time. Her works are similar to the works of various other authors at the time including Richard Wright, who also portrayed race relations as a major theme in most of his works. The works of the two authors among many others at the time contributed to American expansion since they influenced the future of race relations. Racism remains a vital issue in the United States. However, Brooks and numerous other authors of her caliber initiated the debate thus contributing to the development of an ideal American society.

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