

Analysis of walt mcgogh's the farm

Literature



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Walt McGogh's *The Farm*, focuses on the turmoil presented by CIA agent Finn, who, after being faced with a terrible series of events, including his estrangement from his son and the failure of his marriage, wishes to retire at the age of 50, after 24 years of service. His retirement, however, has sparked controversy throughout the entire agency, leaving many to question the events that took place during his last training session in Paris, that resulted in the death of a man by the name Khalil.

The tension and complexity of the situation within McGogh's one-act drama, is further heightened by the time in which it is set. Set in 2004, during the Iraq war, amidst the reveal of the CIA's shocking interrogative methods, in what is better known as the Abu Ghairib scandal, the play further addresses the multiple human rights violations performed by US officials against individuals residing in the Abu Gharib maximum security prison and execution site, including but not limited to torture by physical means, including the use of chemicals and other tools to inflict harm on detainees, rape, sodomy, murder, etc. (in text citation here), one year following the US. Led invasion of Iraq and the capture of Saddam Hussein, former President of Iraq, having been accused of dictatorship, possessing weapons and conspiring against the United States and having ties to al-Qaeda.

Not only does the play centre around Finn, and his slow deterioration of his mind during his interrogation, but also allows the audience to question the very nature of war and what it is doing to our world. Furthermore, while the CIA and other organisations meant to ensure safety and interrogate those who wish to do harm, the play explores the very means by which those

operations take place, giving an in depth perception of the hostility of such an environment.

As indicated by the playwrights production notes, the play takes place in the CIA headquarters, the George Bush Centre for Intelligence in Langley, Virginia. This setting, as well as it being a one act play, is relevant to the style of the play, being dramatic, as not only does its investigative and interrogative style create tension, but McGogh's choice to make it a one act only play, thus a shorter time frame to get answers, further intensifies the storyline alongside characters such as CIA debriefer and analyst Parker, brought in to interrogate Finn and evaluate his mental state after Khalil's death, creates a sense of urgency, as well as danger.

The extract in which my monologue was derived from in the play, is delivered by Parker, who, as indicated by the production notes, is a new recruit to the CIA after having quit her training to become a secret service agent. Parker herself, an African American female at the tender age of 30, establishing her role in an a climate defined by the surfacing of new intel on the Iraqi war and the chaos surrounding it, is the complete opposite of Finn in every possible way, from her skin tone, and age, to her sharp mind and strong, unwithering In this instance, she is both interrogating and assessing the mental state of Finn.