

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Black people are often depicted unfavorably. People often consider them to have bad characteristics. In the past they were often portrayed stereotypically as seen in the following quotation:

Until just a few decades ago, the media- with little shame or self-consciousness- openly portrayed blacks as lazy, foolish, unintelligent, primitive and undisciplined, not worthy of white civilization but desperately in need of white tutelage and guidance. (<http://www.tompaine.com/feature2.cfm/ID/2503/view/print>)

The representation of black people that was generally believed for a long time is very subjective. The stereotype makes it hard for people to believe that black people also have good qualities.

Literary works about the life of black people, describe them based on certain characteristics. Some of the literary works describe black people as slaves who are primitive and uneducated, but other literary works portray black people as proper workers or educated people and as having good qualities.

I have chosen two novels to analyze the counter- stereotype of black people. The first novel is A World of Strangers by Nadine Gordimer. The second novel is A Gathering of Old Men by Ernest J. Gaines.

These two novels tell about the life of black people. The authors want to counteract the stereotype of black people. They want to show that black people also have good qualities and that they are not exactly the same stereotyped people as they used to be. In fact, they do not want to ignore the reality that in some extent, there are some of the black people who are conform to the stereotype.

The two authors come from different backgrounds. I find it is interesting to analyze the counter- stereotype of black people because both Gordimer and Gaines use different ways in portraying the black people in their works. Both Gordimer and Gaines counteract the characteristics of black people who are considered to be lazy, foolish, unintelligent, primitive and undisciplined. Gordimer describes black people in Johannesburg, where the majority of the citizens are black, whereas Gaines portrays the black people in Louisiana where they are in the minority.

The two authors give different portrayals of black people because they appreciate the existence of black people. In analyzing the counter – stereotype of black people, I would like to use the formalism approach.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In analyzing the two novels, I would like to state the problem as follows:

1. How do the authors portray the black people in their works?
2. Why do the authors depict black people in such a way?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Based on the statements of the problem above, the study is done:

1. To show how the authors portray the images of black people in their works.
2. To reveal the authors' purposes of counteracting such stereotyped portrayal.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

To analyze the counter stereotype of black people, I use library research to support my analysis. To help me in doing my analysis, I use the intrinsic approach. I begin with reading Gordimer's A World of Strangers and Gaines' A Gathering of Old Men as primary texts, and then I read several references that are relevant to the topic being discussed and the biography of each author. I then analyze the counter-stereotype of black people by using the references that support my analysis. Finally, I draw some conclusions from my discussion.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

I organize my thesis into four chapters. I begin with Chapter One, the Introduction, containing the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problem, the Purpose of the Study, the Method of Research and the Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two contains the Analysis of Counter Stereotype of Black People in Nadine Gordimer's A World of Strangers, followed by Chapter Three containing the Analysis of Counter -Stereotype of Black People in Ernest J.

Gaines' A Gathering of Old Men. The last chapter, Chapter Four, is the Conclusion, which contains a comparison between the analysis of Nadine Gordimer's A World Of Strangers and Ernest J. Gaines' A Gathering of Old Men. This thesis ends with the Bibliography and the Appendix which contains the biographies of the two authors and the summaries of both novels.