

THE PORTRAYAL OF RACISM IN BRIAN HELGELAND'S 42 MOVIE SCRIPT THROUGH JACK ROBINSON

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Abstract

The title of this thesis is Racism in Brian Helgeland's "42" Movie Script as Seen Through the Point of View of Jack Robinson. The objectives of this research is to find out the portrayal of Jack Robinson's racism experience as seen Brian Helgeland's movie script "42". In order to analyze this issue, the thesis writer employs George M. Frederickson's theory. The finding shows that prejudice is deeply rooted in black people. Prejudice is the most basic source of prejudice, as it arises from competition between groups for limited resources such as jobs, housing, or political power. The second finding shows that the racism is discrimination. The third Portrayal of racism through Jack Robinson is racial segregation.

Keywords: 42, Discrimination, Jack Robinson, Movie Script, Prejudice, Racial Segregation, Racism

A. INTRODUCTION

A multitude of races, ethnicities, and cultures mark the global landscape, exemplifying the diversity within the United States. The persistence of racism within the country, though declining in recent times, has been a concerning issue over the past half-century. McLemore (1980: 1) has highlighted how the United States is often characterized by its diverse immigrant population, contributing to disagreements, biases, and discriminatory practices. A prominent example of this discrimination is the historical mistreatment of Black individuals by White counterparts. Despite the abolishment of slavery, the prevalence of discrimination continues to be significant.

The emergence of the term "racism" dates back to the 1930s, influenced by the Nazi regime's actions against Jews, driven by misguided beliefs in racial superiority. Today's interconnected world facilitates contact between diverse cultures, resulting in the encounter of various physical attributes, such as skin color and cultural practices. Fredrickson (2002: 1-6) underscores racism as a situation where a group evaluates actions and values through its cultural lens, deeming external norms as unacceptable. This perspective reinforces antagonism and prejudice, often using cultural differences to validate discriminatory attitudes.

Racism has a pervasive presence throughout history, transcending into literature and

media. Literature, a language-based art form, holds the power to influence societal development. Klarer (2004: 1) elaborates on how literature shapes cultural understanding, signifying a dynamic connection between individual and societal literary environments. This interplay influences an individual's perception, positioning literature as a reflection of society's expressions and viewpoints.

The "42" script, written by Brian Thomas Helgeland, captures Robinson's journey and the racial adversity he experienced. Helgeland, known for his work in screenwriting and direction, tells a fascinating story about Robinson's fortitude in breaking down racial boundaries. The film script, which has received critical acclaim, navigates the complexity of Robinson's athletic career and his encounter with racial biases, which are ingeniously intertwined into the historical narrative.

In this context, this journal article endeavors to analyze the portrayal of racism in Brian Helgeland's "42" movie script, with a focus on Jack Robinson's experiences. By examining Robinson's encounters with discrimination and his personal growth, this analysis seeks to illuminate the movie's contribution to discussions surrounding racism, representation, and societal change. Through this exploration, we aim to understand how literature and film contribute to shaping societal perceptions and engaging with crucial issues such as racism.

B. RESERACH METHOD

This thesis is based on the main character's understanding and experience in the "42" movie script, which is evaluated from a psychological-social perspective, especially racism theory. The researcher employs the qualitative research method in this study. The subject of the investigation is a movie script. As a result, this study employs documentary as a data collection method because film is a subset of the documentary form. In this study, the documentary technique was applied. The documentary is completed by screening the film *42* on a regular basis and extensively reading the script. The techniques of data analysis are deductive and inductive. The techniques of data analysis applied in this study are deductive and inductive.

C FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The portrayals of Racism in Brian Helgeland's 42 movie script through Jack Robinson is as follows: The thesis writer examines the concerns by applying numerous racist practices in order to grasp Jack Robinson's racism experience. There are three characteristics that portray Jack Robinson's racism experience. Those are Prejudice, discrimination, and racial segregation.

A.Prejudice

Prejudice is a negative reaction or bias developed toward a certain group or person based on attributes like race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or social class. The color barrier in Major League Baseball was also broken by notable African American baseball player Jack Robinson when he signed with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947.

Rickey : I'm going to bring a Negro ballplayer to the Brooklyn Dodgers.

Parrot : With all due respect, sir, have you lost your mind? Imagine the abuse you'll take from the newspapers alone. Never mind how it'll play on Flatbush Please, Mr. Rickey. (Helgeland,01)

The quotation above shows that prejudice toward black people. Rickey, as manager, tries to bring a Negro baseball player to his team, but his comrade, Parrot, responds to Rickey's plan with concern and skepticism. Parrot addresses Rickey with respect, but questions the decision, implying that it might not be a wise move. Parrot expresses worry about the potential backlash and abuse that Rickey could face, particularly from newspapers and the public, if he goes ahead with integrating a Black player into a traditionally all-white baseball league. Indicates that there may be apprehension about how the local community, particularly in Flatbush (a neighborhood in Brooklyn), will react to this groundbreaking move. Flatbush is the location of the Brooklyn Dodgers' home stadium, and integrating a Black player into the team can have significant implications for the fans and the team's reputation. The negative stereotype of black people makes Parrot think that if black people would worsen the team, Ricky's name would also be abused by reporters and newspapers. In "42" movie script, as a black man, Jack Robinson faces some negative prejudice that indicates his representation of racism. Furthermore, Helgeland describes Jack's judgment as being such that he would not let Jack on his flight, regardless of whether Jack pleads or protests.

Jack : You gave away our seats! Get us back on that plane!
Miss Bishop picks up a PHONE, holds it in Jack's face.

Miss bishop : Do you want to call the Sheriff? Or should?
(Helgeland-22)

The quotation depicts Miss Bishop's prejudice towards Jack Robinson as evident when she notices his black skin and justifies her bias when Jack becomes agitated. The confrontation between Jack and Miss Bishop revolves around his seats being given away, possibly on a plane or

some form of transportation. In response, Miss Bishop holds up a phone and suggests calling the Sheriff if they have any objections. The incident highlights how Miss Bishop's prejudice negatively influences her interactions and how she resorts to threats rather than addressing the situation fairly and respectfully.

It appears that there has been some sort of mix-up or unfair treatment where their seats are given to someone else, and Jack is rightfully upset about it. Miss Bishop's response might suggest that she is not willing to address the situation properly and is attempting to intimidate Jack into accepting the situation or leaving the matter unresolved. The scene portrays a conflict between Jack and Miss Bishop, likely related to discrimination or unfair treatment, and the tension escalates as Miss Bishop introduces the possibility of involving law enforcement. It also portrays the struggles individuals encounter when confronting authority figures or systems that perpetuate injustice, as they are often faced with the authority's biased assumptions and limited understanding of their experiences. In this context, white individuals tend to believe their perspectives are more valid, demonstrating a lack of comprehension of the challenges faced by black people. This deep-rooted prejudice towards black people is driven by feelings of hatred and dislike, leading to unfair stereotyping and labeling them as troublemakers

B.Discrimination

Jack Robinson experiences discrimination in various forms throughout his life, especially during his career as a professional baseball player. These forms of discrimination have a profound impact on Robinson's life and career, and are a reminder of the systemic racism that he and other black Americans face during this time period.

As 42 is a sports movie script with a racism theme, for which Brian Helgeland is well known, there is abundant data that shows how discrimination is clearly and continuously described in the script as part of the intertwining proof that he behaves discriminatorily.

As the attendant shoves down a pump, starts filling, Jack Steps off.
He spots and heads for a restroom. White Men Only lettered on the door.
(Helgeland,05)

The quotation above depict the discrimination Jack Robinson faces when he goes to the restroom. In this scene, as the attendant begins to fill up the pump, Jack notices a restroom nearby. However, upon approaching the restroom door, he sees a sign that reads "White Men

Only." The presence of this discriminatory sign indicates that the restroom is segregated, and only white men are allowed to use it. This highlights the discrimination that is once widespread in many places, particularly in public facilities such as restrooms, during a dark period of history.

The scene vividly portrays the racism practiced by individuals toward Black people, showcasing a form of discrimination that persists despite the fact that all humans are remarkable beings in terms of physical ability, brain size, and posture. Despite these shared attributes, racism continues to create division and separation among people.

C.Racial Segregation

According to M. Fredrickson in his book, *Short Story*, segregation is a social phenomenon rooted in power dynamics and racial hierarchies. According to him, segregation is the physical separation of various racial or ethnic groups, which is frequently accompanied by unequal access to opportunities and resources. In light of Different racial or ethnic groups are compelled to be separated from one another, known as segregation. Typically, one group is viewed as inferior or denied equal rights.

30,000 FANS pack a stadium built for 24,500. Bunting and flags everywhere.

1000s of black fans are here (segregated only financially in New Jersey).

(helgeland,43)

The quotation above depicts segregation on the first day of the international league season at a baseball game where black and white people are separated in the stadium. In this scene, there is a baseball game or event happening at a stadium that was originally built to accommodate 24,500 people. However, on this occasion, an impressive 30,000 fans have gathered to attend the event. The atmosphere is festive, with bunting and flags decorating the stadium, creating a sense of celebration.

The mention of "1000s of black fans" suggests that a significant number of African-American spectators are present at the stadium. The phrase "segregated only financially in New Jersey" indicates that, although the black fans are attending the event, there might still be a form of segregation based on economic factors. This implies that even though black fans are welcome to attend the event, there might be certain seating areas or sections of the stadium that are

predominantly occupied by fans of a specific race. It was such a common phenomenon in the Robinson era that black individuals were often denied access to the same facilities and services as their white counterparts. The statement alludes to the historical context of racial segregation, which was prevalent in many parts of the United States, including New Jersey, during certain periods.

D. CONCLUSION

The conclusion is The Portrayals of Racism in Brian Helgeland's 42 Movie Script Through Jack Robinson, The Causes of Racism in Brian Helgeland's 42 Movie Script Through Jack Robinson, and The Effect of Racism in Brian Helgeland's 42 Movie Script Through Jack Robinson on himself, on his wife, and on Mr. Rickey. The thesis writer concludes, based on the result of the analysis in Chapter 4, that prejudice is deeply rooted in black people. Prejudice is the most basic source of prejudice, as it arises from competition between groups for limited resources such as jobs, housing, or political power. The second problem that is portrayed in Jack Robinson's experience with racism is discrimination. The third portrayal of racism through Jack Robinson is racial segregation.

This research highlights the causes behind Jack Robinson's racist experiences. These include white supremacy ideology, cultural bias leading to unfair judgments, and social conflicts among different racial groups.

The research uncovers the impact of racism on Jack Robinson. Racism harms mental and physical well-being, causing isolation and agitation. Unity and support help counter these effects, showcasing Jack's resilience. Racism also affects his wife, inducing fear and distress, highlighting the importance of solidarity. Furthermore, racism's impact on Rickey breaking baseball's color barrier is evident, reflecting his moral struggle and resilience against prejudice.

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