

RESEARCH TITLE

According to Du.Bois's perspective Investigation of double consciousness in Lorraine Hansberry's A Raisin in the Sun

Safaa Sattar AL-Dammy¹

¹ University of Ahlulbayt. Email: Safaasttar@gmail.com

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Abstract

African American Literature is literature created in the United States by writers of African heritage. These writers use creative writing to create their own unique literature with expressive complexity and social insight, providing insightful appraisals of American identities and history. This paper investigate double consciousness in Lorraine Hansberry's play A Raisin in the Sun. Double consciousness, according to W.E.B. Du Bios, a feeling that black Americans of African descent are forced to see themselves through the lens of the dominant white society, is constitute an essential and important framework In Lorraine Hansberry's play A Raisin in the Sun. The play takes place in the 1950s in Chicago. it revealed Younger family's aspirations for social ascent and a better life also reveals the complexities of identity and the impact of social and racial constraints on personal dreams by analyzing the personal motives for some behaviors and the conflict between generations .this article investigate how double consciousness impacts the self-perception within Africans Americans who opposed for systematic oppression. this investigation is not only highlighting the psychological affect and social prejudice on individual but also clarify how Hansberry's characters resist and redefine identity under Du Bois's framework, ultimately affirming the resilience within marginalized communities.

Key Words: W.E.B. Du Bois, Double consciousness, Lorrain Hansberry.

Introduction

African American theory introduces a comprehensive framework for understanding the complexities and issues of the black people and communities in the United States. W.E.B. Du Bois's theory of double consciousness, introduced in *The Souls of Black Folk*, describes a unique psychological struggle experienced by African Americans. According to Du Bois, double consciousness is the sense of "always looking at one's self through the eyes of others," which creates a "two-ness" in being "an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings" (Du Bois, 1903, p. 8). This internal conflict reflects the ongoing struggle to reconcile one's Black identity with the broader American identity, in a society that often devalues Blackness.

in *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry, the idea of "double consciousness," originally presented by W.E.B. Du Bois, serves as an essential framework for examining the complex identities and social challenges faced by African American characters. Du Bois's theory, introduced in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), outlines the internal struggle that Black individuals experience as they attempt to balance their African heritage with the prevailing white culture. This "two-ness" leads to a fragmented self-perception, torn between societal expectations and the deep desire to embrace one's own cultural identity. Hansberry's play, set in the 1950s, explores these themes through the experiences of the Younger family, who face economic struggles and racial discrimination while striving to improve their lives. Each family member uniquely navigates the challenges of double consciousness, contending with societal pressure to conform to mainstream norms while trying to uphold their cultural heritage and personal dreams. This article analyzes how Hansberry's characters embody and confront double consciousness, connecting their experiences to Du Bois's theoretical framework. Through this lens, the study reveals that *A Raisin in the Sun* acts as a narrative of resistance, emphasizing the resilience and identity struggles of African Americans in a racially prejudiced society (Du .Bios,1903.3)

This study will examine how the phenomenon double consciousness is represented through *A Raisin In the Sun*, both in its characters and also with its narrative structure. At least in part, it does this by dealing with both the internal and external family conflict the Younger family faces when grappling with that bisection of cultural heritage and societal expectations. Hansberry's characters become an almost perfect archetype for examining the struggle between autodensifying ones own multitudes and resisting outside forces who have decided to define (and confine) their existence.

Previous Studies on Raisin in The sun

In "A Marxist Reading of Lorraine Hansberry's a Raisin in the Sun" (2022), Ohood Alaqeel analyzes the political and social context of Lorraine Hansberry's Raisins of the Sun through the lens of Marxism. By reinforcing her conviction that Hansberry's devotion to the fight for human betterment was paramount, she believes that this endeavor must happen within certain parameters determined by the times and place in which one lives.

Antal Asifebrisa searches the American Dream : The American Dream as Reflected in

the Character of Lorraine Hansberry's A Raisin in the Sun, MA thesis (2008). The drama depicts the challenges of African Americans in achieving their ambitions in the 1950s as well as the obstacles they faced from others while trying to do so. Each character in A Raisin in the Sun has their individual ideal for a better existence in various aspects of their lives. The characters have to literally fight to pursue their dreams — and nothing in this world is more brutal than people trying to do what they love. The all of the African-American characters in the play experience bigotry, but they keep striving for the American Dream.

Higashida (2008) examines the Existentialism of America and Europe that motivated Hansberry's theatrical aesthetic. This has led to black, anti-imperial and anti-colonial ideologies. The statement also referenced Anderson's views on race and sexuality in the post-World War II era.

Matthews (2008) explores the ambiguities of "housing" in A Raisin in the Sun (1959). These physical reflections of home through stylized houses allowed mid-twentieth-century psychological hurdles to provide empathy for African Americans attempting to acquire and hold feelings of place-making, or "home" against the onslaught of systematic socioeconomic racism.

Definition of Key Terms

Double consciousness :Double consciousness refers to the internal conflict experienced by subordinated groups in an oppressive society and has been described as looking at one self through the eyes of another (in this case that one being white Americans doubting/ invalidating their racial identity), a term created first by W.E.B. According to Du Bois, this "twoness," instills an ongoing feeling of being "an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings (Du Bois 1903).

Racism : Racism is a belief that describes the relative supremacy of human races based on certain distinct characteristics rooted in race and leads to prejudice and discrimination against people based either on their race or their power of association (Feagin, 2006, p.10).

The Veil: the Veil" is a metaphor for the barrier that exists between Black Americans and white Americans its consider as a lack of understanding, a lack of empathy, and a dearth of recognition on either side. The veil allows white society to see, know and understand black people but unlike the white counterpart, they are invisible to them, which gives them an insane double conscious of their position in society (Du Bois 1903 p.7)

Research Questions

Q1: In what way does the reality of racial, social and economic struggles revealed in Hansberry's A Raisin in the Sun align with the concept of double consciousness?

Q2: In what ways does Lorraine Hansberry's A Raisin in the Sun demonstrate W.E.B. Du Bois's notion of double consciousness within the struggle for identity and dreams between African American characters?

Discussion and result

Double Consciousness in A Raisin in the Sun

The symbolism of the house

Lorraine Hansberry devoted her writings to expressing the suffering and tragic situation that blacks live in, the contradictions, the identity crisis, discrimination and racism. Therefore, we find that she chooses even her expressions and descriptions very carefully.

The YOUNGER living room would be a comfortable and well-ordered room if it were not for a number of indestructible contradictions to this state of being. Its furnishings are typical and undistinguished and their primary feature now is that they have clearly had to accommodate the living of too many people for too many years and they are tired. Still, we can see that at some time, a time probably no longer remembered by the family {except perhaps for MAMA), the furnishings of this room were actually selected with care and love and even hope and brought to this apartment and arranged with taste and pride. ” (Hansberry, p.1)

Her precise description of the room and the furniture in the room indicates two important meanings that have great symbolism. The modest and perhaps old furniture indicates that they are somewhat proud of their African identity and their African origins, and their wild desire and overwhelming ambition to change their life situation indicates their integration into the American situation. They live in a state of duality and contradiction within themselves. Sometimes they see themselves as Africans and sometimes as Americans.

Another symbolism is her description of the crowded situation inside the room, indicating that the white racist society has imposed restrictions on blacks, and these restrictions have made them suffer on the one hand, created internal conflicts on the other hand, and created a kind of double consciousness among them.

Walter Lee Younger Dreamer and Identity Crisis

Walter represents double consciousness when he seeks material possessions as proof of acceptance by society. Walter dreams of living the American Dream ,financial independence and success in business ,only to be forced to confront a struggle within: How can he pursue his buried vision without compromising it and reconciling his identity as a Black man succumbing to the economic mobility restrictions imposed on him by White society.

WALTER A job. (Looks at her) Mama, a job? I open

and close car doors all day long. I drive a man around in his limousine and I say, "Yes, sir; no, sir; very good, sir; shall I take the Drive, sir?" Mama, that ain't no kind of job . . . that ain't nothing at all. (Very quietly) Mama, I don't know if I can make you understand. (Hansberry, p,19)

Walter wants to rise above his economic status and be a businessman. This ambition is both an individual one and also, symbolically, the desire to escape from the sort of stereotypical subservient positions offered then to Black men. His occupation as a chauffeur, however, betrays that definition, declining his claim against the identity he longs to define for himself. This mismatched reality heightens his identity crisis as it creates an internal dissonance that portrays the two-ness the idea itself reflects what Du Bois describes when he talks about African Americans having to be both true to themselves while filling the roles a racially biased society has set out for them.

WALTER (Quietly) Sometimes it's like I can see the future stretched out in front of me just plain as day.

The future, Mama. Hanging over there at the edge of my days. Just waiting for me a big, looming blank space full of nothing. Just waiting for me. But it don't have to be. (Pause. Kneeling beside her chair) Mama sometimes when I'm downtown and I pass them cool, quiet-looking restaurants where them white boys are sitting back and talking 'bout things . . . sitting there turning deals worth millions of dollars . . . sometimes I see guys don't look much older than me (Hansberry, 1959 , p.20)

Du Bois (1903) It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity." Walter Lee Younger contemplates his future, and this is closely linked to Du Bois' theory of double consciousness. Walter envisions his future as an empty space looming on the horizon, full of nothingness, randomness and confusion, linked to the restrictions imposed by his social reality and racial identity in a society where success is reserved only for white men. As he walks downtown, he contemplates with regret, sadness and pain the quiet restaurants where young white men of his age talking about their deals and projects. When he compares himself to them, because a person sometimes compares himself to his peers, not out of envy, but in order to realize reality, he sees himself in contrast to them, realizing his exclusion from the world of opportunities, work and ownership.

Walter looks at himself through the perspective of others, as he sees how society treats him with pity and contempt, and he realizes the discrimination in treatment according to the color of his skin, race, and origins, as he reaches the peak of frustration and feelings of inferiority when he compares the opportunities presented to him and to the white man.

WALTER (Not listening at all or even looking at her) This morning, I was look in' in the mirror and thinking about it ... I'm thirty-five years old; I been married eleven years and I got a boy who sleeps in the living room (Very, very quietly) and all I got to give him is stories about how rich white people live . . . (Hansberry, 1959 , p.5)

Du .Bios argue (1903)“ to be a poor man is hard, but to be a poor race in a land of dollars is the very bottom of hardship” Hansberry depicts the double difficulties of being economically deprived in a racist oppressive society, as Walter faces a harsh reality. He is not only a poor man seeking to improve himself and his family, but he is also a black man living in a racist society in which wealth and opportunities are monopolized by one party over the other, based on things like race, color, and origin, which increases his frustration and despair.

Walter is a thirty five-year-old man who is aware of his position in life as a father, husband, son, and brother, and has his social and economic responsibilities and obligations. He is a dreamer trapped in a difficult and bitter reality in which he feels that he has failed to help and support his family, as all he can offer to his daughter, who has his own needs and expects his father to fulfill them for him are stories about the lives of white people and their obscene wealth. Walter believes that he has failed to achieve what society calls success (financial security, a private home, and opportunities for the next generation). Du Bios' framework, known as double consciousness, is a major key to understanding Walter's problem, as his self-worth has been undermined by society's view of him as a poor black man who is unable to free himself from social, economic, and racist restrictions. He is torn between his identity as a black man with a long history of oppression, suppression, discrimination, and racism, and the appeal of achieving his American dream, which he believes is unattainable due to systematic racism.

Water's desire to achieve material independence is fundamental to his structure and personality, as he believes that material independence brings him self-independence and a sense of identity, as he lives in a society in which identity and self-independence are achieved according to several things, including race, color, and money. Therefore, he desires to control his life and transcend the restrictions it imposes. His race and class. Water's ambitions constitute a very cruel paradox, which is the paradox of the American dream during the period of writing *A Raisin in the Sun*, and perhaps it still exists today, as the desire for advancement Although development and the possession of wealth and money are available to everyone according to axioms and ideals, they remain out of reach for those who are marginalized because of their classes and races,

and they are matters of which they are not guilty and are not considered a sin. Basically, Walter's dream itself is a double consciousness. On the one hand, it reflects his desire to rise and be free from harsh conditions, on the other hand, fuel an identity crisis and a feeling of inferiority when a punisher finds himself in the way of achieving his ambitions and desires according to a racist societal perspective. He is deprived of it because of his origin, race, and color, which creates a constant internal struggle to reconcile his aspirations, dreams, and the bitter reality in the land of dollars.

Struggle between assimilation and African heritage

The idea of double consciousness is also represented in the character of Beneatha, as she lives in a state of internal conflict between adhering to her African origin and conforming to white American standards. From the outside, Beneatha fiercely rejects the idea of integration into white American society and its customs, but the integration of the African majority and her forgetting of her African past sometimes creates a state of internal division or internal conflict, or because the majority of those around her have been immersed in the customs of white society, perhaps a state of unconsciousness has formed in her of being involuntarily influenced by the white American heritage.

ASAGAI (Still teasing and reaching out and taking her face

in his hands and turning her profile to him) Well . . .

it is true that this is not so much a profile of a Hollywood queen as perhaps a queen of the Nile (A mock dismissal of the importance of the question) But what does it matter? Assimilationism is so popular in your country.

BENEATHA (Wheeling, passionately, sharply) I am not an assimilationist! (Hansberry, 1959 , p.15)

Du Bois, (1903) argue that “ One ever feels his twoness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body” The idea of duality is evident in Beneatha character as she struggles and fights to preserve her identity and heritage. The idea of clinging to the soil and African origin is evident in Beneatha character through her haircut, and her quest to connect with Asagai embodies the idea of clinging to heritage and origin, as well as her determination to reach her desired goal of completing her studies and achieving her goal of becoming an independent woman who is not subject to the restrictions of the racist, ethnic society. However, the surrounding environment also has an effect sometimes, as the integration of the surrounding society into the customs of the white society has created a state of internal conflict. Sometimes she may want to integrate and submit, and perhaps she may see herself as American, and other times she clings to her African origin, but in any case, she remains consistent and strict in this regard until the end of the play.

Q1: In what way does the reality of racial, social and economic struggles revealed in

Hansberry's A Raisin in the Sun align with the concept of double consciousness?

In Lorraine Hansberry's A Raisin in the Sun the idea of racial, social, and economic struggles aligns closely with W.E.B. Du Bois's concept of double consciousness Which depicts the internal and external spiritual struggle that African Americans of American origin experienced in a racist, oppressive and discriminatory society This conflict lies in the following:

Economic Struggles and a Sense of Self:

Lorraine Hansberry vividly depicts economic strife as the Younger family realizes that they are seen as a black family at the bottom of a racist, discriminatory society. Their economic struggle is closely linked to their ethnicity and origin. They also realize that their path to achieving financial independence and thus a sense of identity is fraught with a number of obstacles, including racism, discrimination, oppression and persecution. Walter wants to invest in a liquor store in order to gain some financial independence for himself and his family and to get rid of the domination and enslavement that the white masters practice on him as a black man, but he collides with societal barriers and restrictions, as he is more vulnerable to exploitation as a black man. Likewise, the mother's desire to buy a house and achieve a state of stability and independence, but she also clashes with the racist restrictions of society. All of this documents how the economic struggles that the family is engaged in are linked to the term double consciousness and how the economic struggles contribute to creating a state of fragmentation and duality within themselves.

racial, social struggles

The racial and social struggles in the play is represented by Walter's desire to improve his social status as a financially independent black man with an independent identity, and thus open the door to independence for his family members, but he clashes with the societal restrictions and obstacles that the dominant society places before him. The family's decision to move to a white-dominated neighborhood represents their struggle for a better life and reflects the state of dispersion and duality as they find themselves stuck between two things: the desire to ascend and the obstacles placed by the oppressive, authoritarian, racist society.

Q2: In what ways does Lorraine Hansberry's A Raisin in the Sun demonstrate W.E.B. Du Bois's notion of double consciousness within the struggle for identity and dreams between African American characters?

Raisin in the Sun shows the real and serious quest of black individuals to obtain an independent identity, as they undergo various types of clashes in order to achieve the desired goal. Their clashes and struggle are deeply linked to the concept of double consciousness, as their struggle to achieve their identities is represented as follows:

Oppression, disempowerment and identity

Lorraine Hansberry's play imposes a vision of the socio-political structure and the systematic institutionalized racial oppression of black Africans, which creates a conflict or contradiction and pushes them to reconcile their self-perception derived from their African past and African heritage with the stereotypes imposed by white

American society .the aspirations, dreams, and ambitions of Younger family are stifled by institutionalized racial exploitation, which creates a state of economic exploitation. The overcrowding of the family's home, Walter's exhausting work as a driver, Ruth's housework, and Beneatha's deferred dreams embody and demonstrate the extent of the exclusion and marginalization of black people and the limited opportunities they face.

double consciousness through Welter's desire to embody the prevailing ideals of masculinity in America and in doing so he has viewed himself through the lens of capitalist society so he even suffers from duality in the formation and feeling of his identity. also the oppression that Walter faces creates a state of helplessness within him as he desires to achieve financial independence and financial ability, but the racist restrictions prevent that, creating a state of duality inside him as a man standing in the middle between desire and oppression, not knowing which side he belongs to, as this split represents the duality of identity.

Beneatha and Cultural Identity

Beneatha character in the play represents the pinnacle of double consciousness, as she lives in a state of division and split. Sometimes she dreams of achieving her dream and completing her studies in medical school to become an independent doctor in a racist, oppressive society that oppresses black women and exploits them in the most hideous forms of exploitation. She is also the person who clings most to her cultural identity and African past, while most of those around her live in a state of integration into white American society and its customs. Her process of holding on to her cultural identity and African past begins through the way she dresses, her hairstyle, and her relationship with Asagai as Asagai always urges her to embrace her African heritage. the integration aspect is highlighted by the fusion of most of those around her with the American heritage, as well as her relationship with George Murchison. From the outside, Beneatha appears cohesive, categorically rejecting integration, and completely proud of her African past and heritage, but she also lives in a state of duality between this and that.

Conclusion

A Raisin in the Sun accurately depicts the concept of double consciousness, as the accuracy of the depiction begins through the position of the house and its symbolism, as well as the depiction of the crowding witnessed by Lorraine Hansberry, which symbolizes the surrounding society that has imposed restrictions on the black family. It also documents the meaning of black Africans in a dominant white society, as it depicts Walter's ambition to reach financial independence and then a sense of identity and Beneatha's embrace of her African identity and heritage, while most of those around her have integrated into white American culture. It also depicts the economic, social and racial struggles that the family wages against the racist, domineering society, which culminates when the family makes a courageous and bold decision to move to the neighborhood controlled by whites. It also depicts the duality experienced by the African who lives in the midst of a white American society dominated by the idea of materialism, racism and distinction.

Ultimately, Lorraine Hansberry does not only depict double consciousness in the play, but she also depicts desire, dreams and ambition between oppression and fulfillment. She also depicts the ugliness, exploitation, racism and discrimination of the dominant, authoritarian society and the systematic and regular oppression practiced against black Africans. Lorraine Hansberry also depicts the courage of black Africans through their struggles on more than one front and their serious and real quest to achieve their financial independence, sense of their identity and achieve justice and equality in American society. *Raisin in the Sun* will remain a clear, profound and accurate testimony to the struggles of black Africans, their resilience and their pursuit of their dreams. It also documents the oppression, persecution, slavery, domination and suppression to which they were subjected by white American society.

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