

Gabrielle Christie

Professor Timothy Waltonen

English 206

April 17, 2014

I Pledge Gabrielle Christie

The Black Ink Cloud

A hush fell over the crowd as the silence lingered through the air. The writer stood up papers in hand ready to express the writing that changed the lives of millions as if the ink was a new cure for violence, hatred, poverty and even illness. During this course we have discovered truths of issues that have been part of our lives since the beginning of time. These issues have been seen in the eyes of the living and the dead as it has suppressed the voices of one's who try to speak the truth. That is where these writers come along becoming the voice of the silenced. Throughout the course, the writers have encompassed racialism, immigration, war and voice to expand of the global issues that have made them become the resilient writers they are today.

Racialism has been a main issue for millions of years and has made such an impact on this world with negative viewpoint of where our morals stand. Toni Morrison says in her Nobel Lecture, " Sexist language, racist language, theistic language — all are typical of the policing languages of mastery, and cannot, do not permit new knowledge or encourage the mutual exchange of ideas(Morrison 3)." Racialism is a world barrier that doesn't allow us to grow since it is always putting down one race and raising up another. This chains us to a labels that makes people believe that they can't be anything else but their race. Ngugi wa Thiong'o's excerpt from *Moving the Centre: the Struggle for Cultural Freedoms* talks about racism saying, " Hence we need to move the center.... to the real creative centers among the working people in the

conditions of —gender, racial, and religious equality.” He displays the issue that in order to become equal we have to move forward away from all of these bias issues and obstacles that keep on making the world never see its full potential. During slavery you see racialism at its prime. In the novel, *Living, Loving, and Lying Awake at Night* by Sindiwe Magona, the women talk about their new label and how difficult it is for them to not always see them as domestic servants. “ We poor domestic servants... Listen to me; here I’m the first to forget I’m not a servant anymore. I am a worker; I must remember that. I’m just as bad as these white women, hey? Can’t teach an old dog new tricks, as they say: heh?(Magona 25)” It is seen that racialism doesn’t just lie within the person being brought down but the fact that it is so hard to try to be something different after being put in that box for so long. To try to fit in a world but have a fear that you will never be accepted as an equal.

All over the world we see that people leave their home country trying to find a place where they can have freedom. Immigration has been a big part of a global issue with not only the overpopulation but how it affects the people when they have to start over. In Dunya Mikhail’s *The War Works Hard* in the poem “I Was In A Hurry,” “or scattered like the dreams of new immigrants in America.(Mikhail 31)” This poem describes the hope that people have when they first come to America trying to reach the “American Dream.” A dream that we as a nation have not seen in decades. When leaving their home land they have to deal with judgement and grievances from people trying to understand why they made the decision. In *The Bridegroom’s* “A Woman From New York” you see a struggle from a different type of immigration and that is trying to be accepted into your native country after abandoning for so long. “This has nothing to do with citizenship. We don’t know what you did in New York or how you lived in the past few years. How can we trust you? We’re responsible for protecting our country’s name.(Jin 178) ”

This statement underlines that her being a native has no value to them once she left the area.

They believe once you have left and become a citizen you are no longer accepted in your home land. The place you once called home has no closed the gates and left you with no identity.

War is as dangerous as walking on a sheet of glass. Every step you take risking the life to make a point to make a statement no matter the consequences it may leave on others. Walter Benjamin talks about the “State of Emergency” a place where you are in high alert in the reality that everything around you is not safe and that nothing can be trusted. This phrase is associated with war in the sense that there is no safe time or safe zone in war there is always danger, there is always fear, and there is always death waiting at your doorstep. In Mao 2 the writer Bill talks about another type of war: terrorism. He says, “The question you have to ask is, How many dead? How many dead during the Cultural Revolution? How many dead after the Great Leap Forward? And how well did he hide his dead? This is the other question. What do these men do with the millions they kill?(DeLillo 163) ” The idea of war is that there is no morals or barriers of how far people are going to go when they start a war. The writers talk about how war has effected so many people in not only the viewpoint of the citizens but of the one’s who are acting out the crimes. “ This devastation is the work of human hands.(“S.” Drakulic 131)” Many tend to forget that war isn’t a disease or people under a drug forcing them to pour out all of this violence this is humans who were just like you and me at one point who now point the guns toward our heads and choose if we want to live or if we want to die.

Over the years it has been shown that writers now have more of a voice than ever since they have become more rebellious to speak out against the government or force that is holding them back from speaking the truth. Amartya Sen writes, “ In the process, other voices are muffled and other concurs are silenced. The robbing of our plural identities not only reduces us;

it impoverishes the world. (“A World Not Neatly Divided”)” The main goal of writing is to let people hear their views and see what they see on the main global issues in life. As many of these writers have shown it is hard to put your voice out there when there is war, politics, gender, race, etc. that holds them to a place of exile. Voice is a way of expression that allows a person who might not be allowed to speak out to have a spark of hope that there will be a time where their voice will be heard outside of their heads. There is always a purpose to their writing as DeLillo says, “The writer sets his pleasure, his eros, his creative delight in language and his sense of self-preservation against the vast and uniform Death that history tends to fashion as its most enduring work.” It is not only a way to let their voice be heard but to remind themselves, the writers that their opinion matters and that what they are saying does affect someone else’s life.

Writers all over the world have their own struggles and views that make them unique. It makes their style either ragged or raw, resilient yet humble. Many that we have read in this course have been one’s that have gone through many lengths to get their name out even if it meant risking their lives. They know the risk of standing on that stage in front of all of those people because even with all of these global issues it doesn't stop them from standing up there, taking the microphone and letting their words encompass the room and the hearts of millions with a message that will change the view of how one looks at the world.