

THE CONFLICT OF MAIN CHARACTERS IN KATHRYN STOCKETT'S *THE HELP*

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INTRODUCTION

In this paper, the writer analyzes the conflicts experienced by the main characters in the novel *The Help*. This novel depicts the life experience of an African-American who works in a white environment as a housemaid at Jackson Mississippi. Domestic helpers often get abusive behavior from white people who work with African-Americans. Based on this explanation the aim of this research is to describe conflicts that occur among characters. The study applies Structuralism theory. Emzir and Rohman said that structuralism is a theory that explores the intrinsic elements in literary works [1]. Character traits and setting are two elements that trigger conflict, therefore an analysis of these two elements is need to reveal the conflict. Simon Fisher said conflict is not the same thought, and involves two or more people [2]. Disagreements of opinion and nature trigger conflict between the main characters in the novel *The Help*. The writer considers knowing the conflicts that occur in the novel is very important to know.

METHOD

Data is taken from the novel *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett[3]. This study uses close reading and interpretation. Where close reading is an approach by reading over and over and carefully using the pause technique to understand the contents of the text and make notes related to the topics discussed [4]. In conducting the analysis of this novel, the author collected all data related to conflicts that occurred between white people and African-Americans who worked as domestic servants. Conflict-related data on the main character in the novel are found through words, sentences and behavior. Data showing a conflict that has occurred are classified and

interpreted. And, the data were analyzed using the chosen theory.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The two main characters who are in conflict are Skeeter and Aibileen. The explanation starts by analyzing the traits of these two main characters. Skeeter has a stubborn nature, which is very visible when Skeeter says whatever the work is she will do it until it is done regardless of the risk.

"Aibileen pauses a moment. "She say she don't want your Cadillac anywhere this 'side a the Woodrow Wilson bridge."

"Alright," I say. "I guess I could... drive the truck in."

"And she say. . . she say you can't set on the same side a the room as her. She want a be able to see you square on at all times."

"I'll . . . sit wherever she wants me to."

Aibileen's voice softens. "She just don't know you, is all. Plus she ain't got a real good history with white ladies."

"Whatever I have to do, I'll do it." (77)

Stubbornness is one of Skeeter's trait justifying any means to be able to achieve all his desires. "And she say. . . she say you can't set on the same side a the room as her. She want a be able to see you square on at all times. " she can go anywhere she does it, and Skeeter say "Whatever I have to do, I'll do it." it was clear how stubborn skeeter was in achieving her desires.

For the traits below shows that Miss Skeeter is kind. Here Miss Skeeter writes stories about Minny all night to post. Speed up the process of sending to the post office so that it is not seen by the police on duty around the house.

"Windy outside?"

"please. Can you get this out today? It's going to New York."

He looks at the address. "Out-a-town truck's gone, ma'am. It'll have to until morning."

He stamps the postage and I head back home.

As soon as I walk in, I go straight to the pantry and call Enain Stein's office. Her secretary puts me through and I tell her, in a hourse, tired voice, I mailed the manuscript today.

"the last editors' meeting is in six days, Eugenia. Not only will it have to get here in time, I'll have to have to reas it. I'd say it's highly unlikely."

There is nothing left to say, so i just murmur, " I know, Thank you for the chance." And i add, " Merry Christmas, MissStein."

"We call it Hanukkah, but thank you, Miss Phelan." (27)

Here Miss Skeeter looks very kind, gives what she should say, has helped and asks for thanks too. Skeeter was so kind, she hurriedly put a postage stamp on the book to be sent to Miss Stein, and rushed straight into her kitchen to tell Miss Stein that the manuscript had been sent by the post office. Skeeter tired voice informed Miss Stein's secretary that the manuscript would be dispatched today. Skeeter is impressed not just waiting to hear from Miss Stein's office, otherwise doing everything seems impossible, Skeeter just mutters "I know, Thanks for the opportunity." And I added, "Merry Christmas, MissStein." Skeeter felt a little at peace that her manuscript had been sent to Miss Stein.

Aibileen hasoptimistic trait. Her optimistic trait is seen in the conversation between her and Gretchen. Aibileen looks very optimistic with her conversation defending white people, where the conversation goes that there are no good white people.Theyare just playing tricks, but Aibileen turns him off and throws him out of his house. How optimistic Aibileen is for white people.

"You don't have to do this," I said. "You volunteered—"

"You know the nicest thing a while woman's ever done for me? Given me the heel on her bread. The colored women coming in here, they're just playing a big trick on you. They'll never tell you the truth, lady." (118)

Aibileen still feels optimistic about whatever has happened to her, continues what she should continue like the insult she received from Gretchen, namely "And you know what, Aibileen? You are just as dumb as she is," Gretchen said. And at that time Aibileen pointed at the door and kicked Gretchen out of his place, Gretchen was angry and made a shudder when she saw her angry.

For Aibileen's kind traits where she is willing to tell stories she experienced while working for white people.

Aibileen says nothing for a while. Keeps peeling tomatoes around and around. "He read this book call *Invisible Man*. When he done, he say he gone write down what it was like to be colored working for a white man in Mississippi." (42)

In the data section of the conversation that took place at Miss Sketeer's residence, Miss Skeeter asked Aibileen a question, but Aibileen was silent, and Miss Skeeter wanted to know what it was like to be a white worker in Mississippi. Here Miss Skeeter looks away so that her mother does not listen to what they are talking about, if her mother hears her mother will definitely stop the conversation and will change the subject. Here he read a book about the Invisible Man. After that Aibileen wrote down what it was like to work for white people, here it is seen how embarrassing it is for Miss Skeeter because here they are working together in gathering data for them to turn into a script, no longer concerned with different skin colors but thinking about the many data obtained, disgrace has traits. Kind of so that he wanted to tell her what she went through while working for white people.

Thenext data is setting.The setting that caused conflict in the story happened inMississippi .

Mিনny near bout the best cook in Hinds County, maybe even all a Mississippi. The Junior League Benefit come around ever fall

and they be wanting her to make ten caramel cakes to auction off. She ought a be the most sought-after help in the state. Problem is, Minny got a mouth on her. She always talking back. One day it be the white manager a the Jitney Jungle grocery, next day it be her husband, and ever day it's gone be the white lady she waiting on. The only reason she waiting on Miss Walter so long is Miss Walter be deaf as a doe-nob. "I think you're malnourished, Mama," holler Miss Hilly. "That Minny isn't feeding you so that she can steal every last heirloom I have left." Miss Hilly huff out a her chair. "I'm going to the powder room. Y'all watch her in case she collapses dead of hunger." (8)

The data above, which occurs at mississippi, shows Minny has a good ability to make cakes. Minny plays a big role here as a cake maker for the junior league events held by the white people.

The trigger for a conflict is the traits and settings of the characters. conflicts experienced by Skeeter and Hilly, there is disagreement with the opinion of Hilly and Skeeters that occurred during the campaign in Jackson, Mississippi..

"You are not a politician, Skeeter Phelan."
 "Well, neither are you, Hilly." Miss Hilly stand up then. She point her finger to the ground. "I am about to be a politician's wife, unless you have anything to do with it. How is William ever going to get elected in Washington, D.C., one day if we have integrational friends in our closet?" (95)

Talking about the law about the campaign at the time. Hilly is very angry with Skeeter for opposing what Hilly is talking about and here Hilly is very enthusiastic about the law that will be applied, seeing Skeeter enthusiastically asking what law Skeeter brings, Skeeter does not look at Hilly. Here, Hilly seems to know very well about the law by saying Skeeter is not a politician and Skeeter is again asking such questions, raising her finger on the ground saying that she is going to be the wife of a politician named William.

The conflict between Aibileen and Skeeter about hiding the truth about Constantine's life.

"This is the part I was hoping wasn't true. This is what I'd hoped Aibileen had been wrong about.

"I told Lulabelle the truth. I told her, 'Your daddy didn't *die*. He left the day after you were born. And your mama hadn't been sick a day in her life. She gave you up because you were too high yellow. She didn't want you.'" (163)

Aibileen lies about Constantine's life to Skeeter, the problem of Constantine's child and her father's not leaving and Constantine doesn't want her yellow skinned one named Lullabelle, Aibillen hides everything about Constantine which is actually not true, Constantine leaves her child orphaned and constantly takes care of her skin child white. And where Lullabelle should return to Chicago. "Because Lulabelle needed to know the truth. She needed to go back to Chicago where she belonged. " and supposedly a child should know about his family.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The results of this study indicate that what triggers conflict in the novel based on the research conducted by the writer is the traits and settings in which the condition of the character of the conflict is seen in the novel *The Help* which dominates the lives of African-Americans who are white housemaids in Jokcson, Mississippi. The conflict experienced by the main character Sketeer is a form of defense against African-Americans in working as a housemaid. Sketeer's character disapproves of legal changes taking place in the white circle for African-American domestic workers led by Hilly who come from the White people. Sketeer, the daughter of a child who owns a cotton garden in Jakarta, Mississsippi. The further study of this novel is through the perspective of the conflicts experienced by the characters in the novel *The Help*. For researchers and other researchers, the author suggests that they dig deeper into the problems that occur in the novel *The Help* and focus more on the language to be discussed for that readers better easy understand what happened in the story.

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