

**RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN CHAIRMAINE
WILKERSON'S *BLACK CAKE***

A THESIS

**Presented in a Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for Completing the
Sarjana Degree in Department of English Literature**



By:

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**FAKULTAS ILMU BUDAYA
UNIVERSITAS 17 AGUSTUS 1945 SURABAYA**

2025

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This is to certify that the Sarjana Thesis of **DEVABEL JAUZAA'MIKI SUMARSONO** entitled "**RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN CHARMAINE WILKERSON'S *BLACK CAKE***" has been approved by the thesis advisor for further approval by the Examining Committee.

Surabaya, 17 December 2025

Advisor,



Mateus Rudi Supsiadji, S.S., M.Pd

APPROVAL SHEET II

This is to certify that the Sarjana Thesis of **DEVABEL JAUZAA'MIKI SUMARSONO** entitled "**RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN CHARMINE WILKERSON'S *BLACK CAKE***" has been examined and approved by the thesis Examining Committee as the requirement for Sarjana Degree in English Literature.

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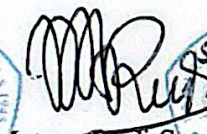
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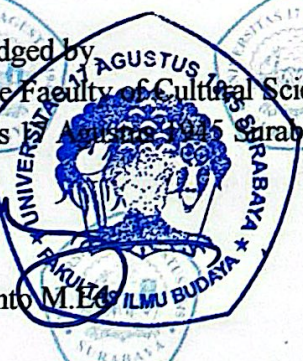
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The author realizes that this thesis still has limitations. Therefore, the author welcomes constructive criticism and suggestions for the improvement of this thesis. Hopefully, this thesis can contribute to the development of knowledge and be beneficial to readers.

ABSTRACT

This study discusses forms of racial discrimination and their impact on the identities and social relationships of characters in Charmaine Wilkerson's novel *Black Cake*. The novel depicts the lives of a Caribbean diaspora family facing various forms of oppression in the context of modern racism. The research focused on answering two questions: identifying the types of racial discrimination experienced by the characters and explaining how the impact of discrimination affected the formation of their identities and social relationships. This study uses Fred L. Pincus' theory of racial discrimination, which divides discrimination into three main forms: individual, institutional, and structural discrimination. The approach used is a sociological approach to literature with a qualitative descriptive method. Data in the form of relevant quotations from the novel are analyzed to reveal representations of discrimination and its influence on the psychological and social dynamics of the characters. The results of the study show that there are three forms of discrimination appear consistently in the novel. Individual discrimination is evident through demeaning actions directed at characters based on race. Institutional discrimination is seen in the career and economic barriers experienced by minority characters. Meanwhile, structural discrimination is reflected in the social system, colonial legacy, and cultural conditions that shape the characters' life experiences. The impact of discrimination on identity includes trauma, identity confusion, and pressure to assimilate. The impact on social relationships is evident in strained family relationships, sibling conflicts, and closed communication dynamics due to experiences of racism that are not openly discussed. Overall, this study concludes that racial discrimination in *Black Cake* is multidimensional and has a significant influence on shaping the identities and social relationships of its characters.

Keywords: *Caribbean diasporism, character identity, literary sociology, racial discrimination, qualitative method.*

TABLE OF CONTENT

COVER	i
APPROVAL SHEET I	ii
APPROVAL SHEET II.....	iii
SURAT PERNYATAAN.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENT.....	vi
ABSTRACT	vii
TABLE OF CONTENT	viii
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of The Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of The Problem	3
1.3 Objective of The Study	3
1.4 Scope And Limitation	3
1.5 Significance of The Study	3
1.6 Organization of the Study.....	4
CHAPTER II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	7
2.1 Review of Previous Study	7
2.2 Theoretical Review	10
2.2.1 Sociology of Literature.....	10
2.2.2 Discrimination	11
2.2.3 Racism.....	12
2.2.4 Racial Discrimination	12
2.2.5 The Impact of Racial Discrimination.....	14
CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	17
3.1 Literary Approach.....	17
3.2 Research Design.....	17
3.3 Data Sources	18
3.4 Research Instrument	18
3.5 Data Collection Procedures.....	19
3.6 Data Analysis Procedures.....	19
3.1.1 Data Reduction	20
3.1.2 Data Display	20
3.1.3 Conclusion.....	20
CHAPTER IV ANALYSIS.....	21

4.1	Types of Racial Discrimination.....	22
4.1.1	Individual Discrimination	22
4.1.2	Institutional Discrimination	25
4.1.3	Structural Discrimination	28
4.2	The Impacts of Racial Discrimination	31
CHAPTER V	CONCLUSION	37
REFERENCES		39
APPENDIX I		41
APPENDIX II		42