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Research Article

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Trivialising the Truth and the Humiliation of Identity: *Death of England: Delroy*

Mesut Günenç [1]

[1] Aydın Adnan Menderes University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of English Language and Literature, Aydın, Turkiye

Abstract *Death of England: Delroy*, the second monologue in Clint Dyer and Roy Williams' trilogy (*Michael*, *Delroy*, and *Closing Time*), debuted on November 4, 2020, but due to COVID-19 restrictions, it closed on the same night. The play depicts a complicated monologue with fragmented narration, oblique explanations, thoughts, and some dramatic dialogue. Dyer and Williams consider theatre as a means of revealing relationships, power struggles, and destructive lies of racism. In the play, the protagonist questions Britain's island mentality and the validity of national identity, stating that he has no question that he is British but that the white people are still living on the island. Delroy confronts how he has been damaged despite his support for Boris Johnson and the accompanying Tory propaganda. He desires to confront the individuals and the nation who have lied to him. The play portrays society's emotional, affective response to the Brexit campaign, during which people *Delroy* through the lens of national and racial relations and the fake news propaganda of post-truth discourse. In a more specific context, the play exposes relations destroyed by lies.

Keywords Post-truth · Propaganda · *Death of England: Delroy* · Identity · Brexit.

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2025. Günenç, M.

Corresponding author: Mesut Günenç mesut.gunenc@gmail.com

No Truth, No Identity

Introduction

Within technological developments in constant motion, the emergence of fake discourses and fake news—often produced with deepfake technology- poses a threat to the concept of truth. These devalued truths bolster the discourses of politicians. The speed at which fake news spreads, fuelled by social media and partisan journalists, leads society to be imprisoned within the intensity of propaganda supported by fake news. Discourses of freedom and democracy are core values although individual rights are further undermined. Moreover, societal identities are systematically destroyed or de-identified through falsehoods. Propaganda created by intentional false narratives prepared the masses, who acted on their emotions and ignored other identities, for the post-truth era. This study, therefore, analyses Death of England: Delroy in relation to post-truth discourse, examining the concept of truth and personal humiliation within the contexts of justice, racism, fake news, and propaganda.

Death of England is a trilogy written in collaboration between Black playwrights Roy Williams and Clint Dyer during the early days of the Covid cases in England. The trilogy comprises three plays (*Michael*, *Delroy,* and *Closing Time*), (plus the film *Face to Face*). The first part, *Death of England: Michael,* was staged on 6 February 2020. The first play deals with the subject of racism and questions the concept of the state of the nation. In the play, a one-man performance, Michael (39 years old and a white member of the working class) and his father reflect a conventional British national identity with their fondness for football, their support for the Tories and their vote to leave the European Union.[1] The final chapter, *Death of England: Closing Time*, was performed at the Dorfman Theatre at the National Theatre. In the trilogy, we witness "several political events in Britain's very divisive political climate at the moment, including the UK EU Referendum".[2] Williams and Dyer focus on topics such as nationalism, racism, and social and political debates. They focus on the lies told during the Brexit process, like the lies preceding the invasion of Iraq, and broader lies about core values such as freedom and democracy.

Taking my cue from post-truth discourse and the recent surge of the COVID-19 pandemic, Brexit and racism, this paper will analyse *Death of England: Delroy*, the second part of the trilogy. The focus of this analysis will be on national and racial relations, emotional truths, and the propaganda inherent in post-truth discourse. This analysis is essential for two reasons: first, this paper will explore the concept of post-truth discourse as defined by various theorists and authors and analyse post-truth discourse and politics within a specific historical context; second, in the process, it will explore the relation between post-truth discourse, politics, racism and *Death of England: Delroy*. As it delves into post-truth discourse and how the notion of truth is degraded, *Death of England: Delroy* will be the main focus of the study. I will also address the growing issues of racism, xenophobia and propaganda, particularly the role of the government in criminalising black identity through propaganda and oppression. The expression of black culture in a polyphonic manner serves as a powerful counter to a traditional racist discourse.

Post-Truth Discourse

When we lack sufficient information about a subject or have not researched it using reliable sources, we rely on ready-made information, unverified data, and feelings. This approach can lead us to conclusions that may not be trustworthy or true. People attempt to live in a period where the boundaries "between truth and lies, honesty and dishonesty, and fictional and non-fictional" phenomena have disappeared, and they prefer

[1] Aleks Sierz, "Death Of England; *Death of England: Delroy*." *PAJ*, 129, 43, No. 3 (2021): 47, https://doi.org/10.1162/pajj_a_00580.

[2] Gemma Edwards, "Racism Isn't Just Someone Shouting at You from a Passing Car: Roy Williams in Conversation with Gemma Edwards", *Journal of Contemporary Drama in English*, 11, No. 1, (2023): 177.

the fictional simulation universe.[3] The term "post-truth age" refers to a time when the concept of truth has lost its significance. The American playwright of Serbian descent Steve Tesich first coined this term in 1992 in *The Nation* magazine. Montoya Camacho indicates that "Tesich, when writing about the Watergate scandal and the Iraq war, indicated that at the time we had already accepted we were living in a post-truth era, in which lies are told indiscriminately and facts are hidden"[4] and moreover, propaganda is being disseminated to lie to the public and conceal the truth. Later, in 2004, Ralph Keyes used the term in his book *The Post-Truth Era: Dishonesty and Deception in Contemporary Life*. Keyes notes that "Embellished information is presented as true in spirit, and truer than truth itself".[5] News disseminating media and propaganda serve up embellished information to the public and present it as the truth. In 2010, David Roberts framed that "we live in a post-truth politics: a political culture in which politics (public opinion and media narratives) have become almost entirely disconnected from policy (the substance of legislation)"[6] leading to a political culture in which "we are rapidly becoming prototypes of a people that totalitarian monsters could only drool about in their dreams. All the dictators up to now have had to work hard at suppressing the truth...In a very fundamental way we, as a free people, have freely decided that we want to live in some post-truth world."[7] According to the Oxford Dictionary (2016), post-truth "relates to or denotes circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief".[8] As the Oxford Dictionary defines it, people have started to make decisions based on emotions and perception, relying on perception management fuelled by fake news and misinformation rather than the truth. Reason and truth no longer guide individuals. Post-truth is a discourse that ignores the facts, the truths, and the knowledge that affect individuals and societies. In this postmodern era, people are said to have entered a simulated universe and "the notion of truth itself was now under scrutiny, for one had to recognise that in the act of deconstruction, the critic was bringing his or her own values, history, and assumptions to the interpretation as well".[9] Power, dominant ideology and fake news created digital prisons where people imprisoned themselves within the digital prisons of their own creation. Fake news and social media also create new fictional demagogues controlling everything in this postmodern era and "during the gradual development of the society the term "post-truth" has taken place of "Demagogue" in the post-modern era".[10] During the Brexit campaign, the propaganda, conspiracy theories, and fake news disseminated by politicians advocating Brexit reveal that many voters were encouraged into an emotional embrace of the ideas of the nation and the state of the nation. Politicians create misleading claims, and De Ridder indicates that "What they have in common is that they are produced through processes that are structurally unreliable, either intentionally or unintentionally, while their unreliability isn't obvious to producers, distributors, and audiences".[11] The post-truth regime has discarded identities as it has eliminated truth, and lies accepted as rational have distanced individuals from rationality. Instead of relying on objective facts and evidence, the truth is often ignored, and lies can be substituted for the truth in support of a fictitious and false agenda. The notion of post-truth is applicable worldwide given the widespread nature of misinformation and propaganda. Post-truth discourse is constituted by and encompasses "European and world politics, Richard Nixon's presidency, the Vietnam and Iraq Wars, the election of Donald Trump, and Brexit".[12] Politics,

[3] Ralph Keyes, "Life in a Post-Truth Era", *Oklahama Humanities*, 11, No. 1, (2018): 14.
[4] Martin Montoya Camacho, "The era of post-truth, post-veracity and charlatanism" (2019).
[5] Camacho, "The era of post-truth", 2019.
[6] David Roberts, Post-truth politics. *The Grist*, 2010.
[7] Steve Tesich, "Watergate Syndrome: A Government of Lies." *The Nation*, 6, No: 13, (1992): 13.
[8] World Of the Year. https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/ word-of-the year/ word-of-the-year-2016.
[9] Lee McIntyre, *Post-Truth*. (The MIT Press 2018), 126.
[10] Gopal Krishna Sharma, "The Post-Truth Era: Ana Analysis with Reference to Contemporary Politics" *DLR*, 11, No.1, (2019): 1.
[11] Jeroen De Ridder, "What's so bad about misinformation?" *Inquiry*, 67, No. 9, (2024): 2959, https://doi.org/10.1080/0020174X.2021.2002187.
[12] Mesut Günenç, "A Post-Truth Shakespearean Reading in Mike Bartlett's The 47th: To Win or

wars, and elections supported by troll tropes cultivate a "new nihilism"[13] because, as Han describes, "in the age of fake news, disinformation and conspiracy theories, we are losing our sense of reality and its formal truths".[14] We have to deal with political shocks and hyper-mediatisation because the "shocks of Brexit and Trump in 2016 led to fevered speculations that the world had entered an era where power is gained through emotional narrative and media spectacles"[15]. Misinformation, propaganda, social media, and fake news control communities, and political parties use power to take control of the masses "to create false consciousness" and not just control but to "colonise" the life of communities. Post-truth "promotes social pathologies but also limits the democratic, secular, and plural spirits of multicultural nations".[16] Post-truth politics is generated through propaganda, politics, lies, and denying certified documents. Those who have seized the throne of truth are busy imposing on society what to think, what to believe, and how to live. Society is living in a post-truth age, where lies and fake news undermine our ability to think judgmentally and leech off people's values. Before the post-truth age, of course, "truth has actually been used and abused".[17] Through the authoritative and official truths or lies, communities were deceived by such dictums as: "The rich man in his castle, the poor man at his gate. God made them high and lowly and ordered their estate"[18]. Such 'truth' encouraged people to believe that class differences were innate and that it was divinely ordained for the lower class to serve the upper class or for the poor to serve the rich. Today, politicians and administrators continue to use these authoritative truths or falsehoods to manipulate others. They exploit the truth to further their own agendas, colonising the values, emotions, boundaries, and rights of those who have been deceived. Abusive politicians use peripheralising and racist discourses to outvote or govern the majority.

For that reason, such discourses create otherness, xenophobia and new forms of racism, which "appear as the enduring or covert presence of inequality, injustice, and racial distinctions"[19]. In post-truth contexts, those in power often seek to dominate groups over which they can exert dominance or scapegoat those who oppose them, exposing past judgments and traumas[20]. In the new racist discourses, they put pressure on individuals they see as other, causing them to be trapped in their societies. This situation creates social and political polarisation.

Death of England: Delroy

The second monologue of the trilogy, during the first lockdown, *Death of England: Delroy,* debuted and closed on the same night, 4 November 2020. Delroy "is a thirtysomething working-class black man whose girlfriend, Carly (Michael's sister), is about to have their first baby. On his way to the hospital, he's in a hurry, and when he's unexpectedly stopped by the police, he reacts badly. They arrest him and he misses his baby's birth."[21] Delroy "was raised by his Jamaican-born mother and remained silent in that play, though

Not to Win", *Kafkas University Journal of the Institute of Social Sciences*, Vol. 32, (2023): 486.

[13] Byung-Chul Han, *Infocracy: Digitization and the Crisis of Democracy*, Daniel Steuer (Trans.). (Polity Press, 2022), 79.

[14] Han, *Infocracy*, 79.

[15] Joseph Dunne-Howrie, "Theater in a Post-Truth World: Texts, Politics, and Performance", *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 33, No.4, (2023):450, DOI: 10.1080/10486801.2023.2257971.

[16] Biswajit Ghosh, "Politics of manufacturing consent in a post-truth society", *Journal of Developing Societies. Dev.* 38, No. 1, (2022):7, doi: 10.1177/0169796X2110.

[17] Julian Baggini, *A Short History of Truth Consolations for a Post-Truth World* (London: Quercus, 2017), 9.

[18] Baggini, *A Short History of Truth*, 23.

[19] Christina Hajisoteriou, "Rethinking education in the light of post-truth "new" racism and xenophobia: the need for critical intercultural media and news literacy", *Frontiers in Education*, 9, (2024):1.

[20] Darren G. Lilleker, Introduction: Politics in a post-truth era. Int. J. Media Cult Polit. Vol. 14, (2018), Pfeifer, S Melo, and Gertz, H Dedecek, "Transforming disinformation on minorities into a pedagogical resource: towards a critical intercultural news literacy". *Media Commun*. 10, (2022) in Christina Hajisoteriou, 1.

[21] Sierz, "Death of England", 50-51.

his Britishness was questioned and his pro-Brexit politics mocked".[22] The year the play was performed was also the year of Brexit, which was decided after the 2016 referendum. Additionally, 2016 was the year "post-truth" was chosen as the word of the year. As in the first series of the post-truth era *Death of England* trilogy, racial division is a central theme in *Death of England: Delroy*. Michel Foucault clarifies that racism "splits off a single race into a super race and a subrace".[23] Delroy's race is divided into a subrace. "As the first function of racism"[24], Delroy faces ongoing struggles with societal fragmentation and has experienced suspicion from society his entire life. He is portrayed as a reflection of the social system, leading to instances where the police stop and arrest him. The play is a sharp critique of the social structures that perpetuate racial inequality. It deals with identity, justice, and issues of belonging issues with a disturbing yet necessary clarity. Delroy's monologue is a mighty outpouring of words and emotions that forces the audience to confront the harsh realities faced by many Black Britons. Written with a harsh, rhythmic style and unflinching honesty, the piece vividly captures the complexity of Delroy's world in great detail.[25] The social and political polarisation that emerges after the distortion of truth further marginalises individuals and exacerbates racial segregation.

In the second series, we witness Delroy's identity confusion on the island and his struggle with his sense of belonging. Therefore, his discourse is characterised by feelings of anger because he, as a black man, starts to interrogate his British identity, asking, 'How British is he'? Despite these inner conflicts, he supports the island because it is his place of birth:

> *… I'm a black man. Of West Indian descent, claiming some kinda Britishness … on the account of the fact that I was born here and my grandparents was born in a British colony that 'reach inna England' with a British passport in the fifties, and had learnt all the British values there, of not giving a shit about anybody! Part from their kin … I'm a product of this country!*[26]

Delroy indicates that he is part of this island no less than others; however, he constantly struggles to convince society of this. Lies and humiliation have shattered his commitment to the island and weakened his sense of British identity. After being arrested, Delroy is subjected to ongoing humiliation, compounded by the fact that he is unable to see his daughter, though "she was born eight weeks ago"[27], and nobody, not even his wife Carly and his best friend Michael, attends court to support him. Delroy interrogates, "Who am I, how British am I?"[28] and revives the notion of the state of the nation. Williams and Dyer indicate that the play is about "a Black man living in a post-Brexit world. Delroy is born and bred in England: he is a Londoner and a Brexiteer. For the first time in his life, a series of circumstances happens to him that makes him think: am I British or not?"[29] Delroy starts to question the people, the system, and the institutions he once regarded as honest and reliable because his confidence has been damaged. This loss of confidence also brings the problems of the past to the surface:

[22] Arifa Akbar, "Death of England: Delroy review-brash and brilliant theatre. 5 November 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2020/nov/05/death-of-england-delroy-review-olivier-national-theatre-london-roy-williams-clint-dyer.

[23] Michel Foucault, '*Society Must Be Defended': Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976*. eds A. Fontana & M. Bertani; Trans. D. Macey (Picador, 2003), 61.

[24] Foucault, '*Society Must Be Defended*', 255.

[25] "Death of England: Delroy-Review". https://stagedoorjoe.co.uk/2024/08/23/death-of-england- delroy-review/, 2024.

[26] Roy Williams and Clint Dyer, *Death of England: Delroy*. (London: Methuen Drama, 2020), 5.

[27] Williams and Dyer, *Death of England: Delroy*, 6.

[28] Gemma Edwards, "Racism Isn't Just Someone", 177.

[29] Edwards, "Racism Isn't Just Someone", 178.

> *Fuck dat and fuck dem, fuck Michael … Carly, all of dem island mentality innit. All that European shit … don't connect to me, man, as long as my tax ain't too high, why should I care? …no one cares bout me. Had no European Union questioning the police stop and search figures for black people here. Checking up on our black deaths in custodies, black mental health figures … no European law on dat is there. 'Bout he's cussing me out at his dad's funeral for voting Brexit.*[30]

Delroy explains that he voted for Brexit because he believes that the European Union does not support black people but rather puts pressure on them.

Even before the concept of post-truth, politicians were lying and dissembling. British Prime Minister Tony Blair's name in the UK was changed to Bliar during the Iraq war that started on March 20, 2003, two years after 9/11. Following the September 11 attacks, the Bush administration, together with fake news, propaganda, and media powers, started to serve news that manipulated society and even stated that the Iraqi administration was preparing to use biological and chemical weapons. To gather support for the invasion, Bush called the British Prime Minister Tony Blair. First, Blair "was audibly taken aback, and he pressed Bush for evidence of Iraq's connection to the 9/11 attack and to al-Qaida. Of course, there was none, which British intelligence knew."[31] Despite this, Blair then ordered British forces to take military action in Iraq, a decision he would come to regret in the years that followed. Fake news, alternative facts, lies, and the nation's leading newspapers caused the death and displacement of civilians, and as Moustafa Bayoumi indicates "The Iraq war started the post-truth era".[32]

Post-truth era politics aims to manipulate how society reacts[33]. With the rise of propaganda and fake news, large groups often fail to question and act with their feelings and emotions. During the Brexit campaign, deceiving or fooling others became an endeavour, an attempt even a habitual state of affairs[34]. In 2016, the United Kingdom held a referendum to decide whether to leave the European Union. One of the most impactful propaganda campaigns carried out before the referendum was the placement of advertisements on buses. The assertion that Brexit would give the financially stressed NHS a weekly increase of £350 million, which was printed on the bus's side, was demonstrably untrue. After highlighting the mistake, the UK statistics agency was disappointed, adding that the campaign still hinted that the entire sum could be used for other purposes.[35] This propaganda influenced the vote for Brexit. However, a post-Brexit investigation into whether such a transfer of money occurred reveals that it did not: "Assuming we accept that definition, then it is simply and very demonstrably not true to say that Britain "sends" £350m a week to the EU. That amount of money does not leave (and has never left) Britain each week, nor does it arrive in Brussels."[36] As Delroy interrogates, "Am I British or not?" as the community asks why politicians lie to their people. Post-Brexit politics divided the society and created two opposite poles. Propaganda and advertisements to vote for Brexit created two poles of "national identity, one white, the other black".[37] Delroy and his wife's relationship portrays two opposite facets of society. Delroy's wife Carly, who benefits from white privilege, is about to give birth to their first child when he is taken into custody and placed in a police cell. He reflects,

[30] Roy Williams and Clint Dyer, *Death of England: Delroy*, 7.

[31] Bruce Riedel, 9/11 and Iraq: The making of a tragedy. (2021). https://www.brookings.edu/articles/9-11-and-iraq-the-making-of-a-tragedy/

[32] Moustafa Bayoumi, "The Iraq war started the post-truth era. And America is to blame. (2023). https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/mar/14/iraq-war-9-11-george-bush-post-truth

[33] Matthew D'ancona. *Post the new war on truth Truth and now to fight back*. (London: Ebury Press, 2017), 26

[34] Ralph Keyes, "Life in a Post-Truth Era", 14.

[35] Matthew D'ancona, *Post The New War on truth*, 21.

[36] Jon Henley, "Why Vote Leave's £350m Weekly EU Cost Claim Is Wrong," *The Guardian*, 23 May 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/politics/reality -check/2016/may/23/does-the-eu-really-cost-the-uk-350m-a-week.

[37] Sierz, "Death of England", 51.

"Normally, I would understand, I would just flex this shit off, but this ain't no normal day, this is the day when I become a dad".[38] Delroy states that "he has been subjected to such racial profiling since he was 15 years old. However, this particularly hostile encounter makes him realise that he cannot be black British and remain apolitical."[39] Delroy actually craves his condition and tries to portray his captivated, isolated and cursed situation:

> *…Am I cursed? Was Zeus looking down at me from Mount Olympus, going, Oi, Apollo, Let's fuck with Delroy today, I'm bored! Cos it bloody felt like he was, but I don't know if he knew… Zeus that is, cos I bleeding well didn't know I'd take to be in there. In a cell… Mate… as soon as they turned the lock… .*[40]

Delroy explains his surveillance, restriction, imprisonment, and silencing by stating that the whole universe and the gods are against him. In the post-truth period in which he lives, he is marginalised, restricted and silenced. He has to keep his mouth shut during an ID check; however, in the following part of the play, he asserts that he has paid his taxes, has never committed a criminal offense, and voted for Boris Johnson:

> *I have never committed a crime in my life. I voted for Boris, twice. I don't care that it's fucked up. Is that not allowed? Am I to be told what I can and cannot do and who I am supposed to be in my own country? NO! And then the tears started and I thought already I'd fucked it as a dad … already I was a dad my kid would have to not wanna be like or be ashamed of*[41].

Because of the racist discourse in the society, Delroy becomes a scapegoat in the post-truth environment, which "creates social and political polarisation, where individuals become entrenched in their own emotions and beliefs and are less open to cultural diversity".[42] Delroy is drawn into this polarisation to eliminate the social and political polarisation in which his feelings and beliefs are buried. Delroy has fulfilled everything that has been asked of him so far, but he has been deceived, imprisoned, and bothered. Carly is angry with Delroy for being late to the birth and not being there for her: "Get the fuck out of here. I don't want to hear your excuse or explanation."[43] Although Delroy was born in England and is a British citizen, Carly feels that he does not truly belong to her and England. She accuses Delroy of making money for imperialist and racist corporations, while in her own words, she is racist against her husband: "…No 'oh black people got it rough', sick to death of it … you and your 'it's different for us' bullshit, Delroy… like giving multi-national imperialist racist corporations money makes you Black"[44]. To Carly, Delroy remains as the other:

> ***Carly*** *I'll do this on my own, you hear me, on my own. Like I knew I would when we got together, when I got pregnant, you're the same as all of dem. Grow up, Delroy! Just grow the fuck up will yer … you're not in South Africa, bruv, you're e in Hackney … it ain' t that fucking hard! … now get out! Out!.*[45]

[38] Roy Williams and Clint Dyer, *Death of England: Delroy*, 16.
[39] Arifa Akbar, "Death of England: Delroy review", 2020.
[40] Roy Williams and Clint Dyer, *Death of England: Delroy*, 19.
[41] Williams and Dyer, *Death of England: Delroy*, 19-20.
[42] Michalinos Zembylas, "Post-truth as difficult knowledge: fostering affective solidarity in anti-racist education". *Pedagogy, Culture and Society*, 30, No. 3, (2022), doi: 10.1080/14681366.2021.1977984, in Christina Hajisoteriou, 1
[43] Roy Williams and Clint Dyer, *Death of England: Delroy*, 22.
[44] Williams and Dyer, *Death of England: Delroy, 22*.
[45] Williams and Dyer, *Death of England: Delroy,* 23.

Just as Carly accepted her husband as the other, after the Brexit referendum, the British government has marginalised immigrants who are citizens of the UK. Delroy indicates that his mother can't stand Carly... "well that's not entirely true it's... It wasn't that she didn't like white people... like her I guess... I think she just thought, well, after all the years of pain we suffer from them..."[46] and he realises that his mother's statement of 'do not trust them' is justified because with the social issues created by post-truth discourse, even though multinational countries promote democracy, they often restrict the democratic rights of their citizens, particularly those they regard as immigrants, and even imprison them. Delroy rightly resists his imprisonment, his inability to attend the birth of his child, and the marginalisation and racism he faces:

> *ENGLISH PEOPLE! Fucking 'ell ENGLISH PEOPLE. I thought. How does she think that makes me feel ... I know I'm not in South Africa but the point is if I was, I'd be fucked like them so I feel it, cos we share that knowledge ...ENGLISH PEOPLE, even when you worship the floor they tread they still can say shit like dat ... can still not see yer. 'All dem', she said I was like all of dem ... what's that supposed to fucking mean? The all of who? What kind of narrow-minded bullshit was that? But in truth ... I knew what she meant*[47]

Carly's thoughts reflect the government's post-truth policies, revealing the truth to Delroy, and Delroy realises that he will never be one of them. For that reason, Delroy votes for Brexit because, like the rest of Europe, France, Spain, and Germany, England still treats the have-nots like shit.[48] England continues to engage in racist rhetoric, such as propaganda, lies, and fake news during the Brexit process:

> *Racist fucking liars, mate. So, I say bring it down, bring it all down! T ear it up, tear it all fucking up! This is where your old man and the rest of his right-wing nut jobs got it wrong, calling for Brexshit cos they really thought that would mean they would see a few less brown faces on the streets*[49].

England creates social and political polarisation because, class-wise, Delroy states that black people do all the hard and heavy labour in all segments of society. To despise or exclude them would be suicidal for Britain. The perception created by events such as Brexit has fuelled an increasing sense of racism in society accompanied by lies. Even his wife and his best friend act with their feelings instead of their minds.

In the court scene, Delroy tries to explain the racist discourses and prejudices from the past to the present and how they have been chained and prevented:

> *...also it kinda assumed you'd be racist and perhaps fall into the same biases as I believe my case has pointed out... I was prang ... dented, out of shape, prang ... so that ... that's how I felt rushing to the hospital and dat, having got the message late ... prang ... excited but ... prang ... which is all understandable right?*[50].

Although the discourses of struggle against racism and for democracy have become more central recently, Delroy argues that this discourse has not achieved its purpose in society. He believes that restrictions continue and that the struggle against racism is a lie. In a similar vein, although post-truth discourse

[46] Williams and Dyer, *Death of England: Delroy*, 8.
[47] Williams and Dyer, *Death of England: Delroy*, 23-24
[48] Williams and Dyer, *Death of England: Delroy*, 31.
[49] Williams and Dyer, *Death of England: Delroy*, 32.
[50] Williams and Dyer, *Death of England: Delroy*, 34-35.

corresponds historically to the recent period, it has existed for a long time. Both racism and post-truth are not new challenges in post-truth societies for people of colour. For them, these epistemological, ontological, and axiological uncertainties are both familiar and profoundly harmful, which is why post-truth critique can be dangerous[51]. As mentioned above, Delroy interrogates the ontological side of his nationality, so racist discourses continue even in the most advanced countries[52]. This process is applicable not only to the black community but also to the working class. Post-truth criticism, which ignores the working class as well as the blacks, protects the rights of the upper/patron class as well as the white community and even shows them as victims. It even endeavours to exonerate them in their social status through fake news and the influence of the media. In the hospital scene, Carly is depicted as a victim because Delroy cannot arrive on time for the birth of his child; however, Delroy expresses that he is the actual victim of a post-truth society:

> *Mum! Please … just know I see you, Mum … we see you … we love you … we know what you've done and what you're doing … so don't cry … I couldn't help myself … I can't help it … I couldn't help it … it's part of my culture … my working-class culture … my British culture …*[53].

Delroy and his mother are victims of the system, and they are also representatives of post-truth and racist nostalgia[54]. Racism has already distorted the truth, and even if you are a husband or a very close friend, racist thought continues its historical influence. Delroy's mother's cries, anger, and tears embody this sense of nostalgia. Delroy is fully aware of everything and hates everyone around him except his mother. Throughout his life, he has compromised himself but has faced hypocrisy and marginalisation. For Delroy, the truth about his nation—where he was born and became a citizen—feels artificial, much like everything else did during the lockdown. The nostalgia, part of a historical process created by fiction and lies instead of truth, will not change. Within this historical process, the play confronts the themes of lies, hardship, incarceration and marginalisation in a post-truth era. Williams and Dyer's decision to write and portray societal problems through the theatre is a powerful testament to the importance of truth and their commitment to representing it to the audience.

Conclusion

Post-truth discourse, fuelled by manipulation, fake news, social media, and propaganda, promotes xenophobia and racist discourse through the act of othering. Although Delroy was born on the island and deeply rooted in his sense of belonging, he finds himself in a poignant struggle. He is unable to witness the birth of his own child. In addition to being marginalised by politicians, Delroy also faces exclusion from his white family members. He does not believe in the propaganda supporting Brexit and actively tries to expose the misleading political narratives in the UK and the whole of Europe. The transformation of Tony Blair into "Bliar" and the change of white lies into black lies are alarming indications of the power of propaganda on society. The state of being arrested is one of the sociocultural pieces that Delroy deals with. Delroy's arrest represents the captive situation of black identity in Britain. His mother's warnings, cravings, and Delroy's captivity all portray the perpetuation of racism.

Delroy recognises that shameless double-dealing continues to prevail, but he also understands the importance of truth in this post-truth era. He realises the unsettling truth that nothing will change unless

[51] Robert Mejia, Kay Beckermann & Curtis Sullivan, "White lies: a racial history of the (post)truth, Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies", 15, no.2, (2018): 113.
[52] Tommie Shelby, "Ideology, Racism, and Critical Social Theory," *Philosophical Forum,* 34, no.2, (2003): 184.
[53] Roy Williams and Clint Dyer, *Death of England: Delroy*, 36-37.
[54] Robert Mejia, Kay Beckermann & Curtis Sullivan, "White lies: a racial history of the (post)truth", 117.

the truth is upheld. In this post-truth era, that realisation is indeed a truth. Issues surrounding immigrants, racism, interrogation of the identity, xenophobia, and post-truth remain unresolved. The manipulation of politicians and rulers promotes racist discourses and social polarisation and harms familial and social relationships. Post-truth politics can adopt racist and libertarian discourses at one time and racist and totalitarian discourses at another. *Death of England: Delroy* is a manifesto that addresses the state of the nation and the struggles experienced by individuals who often seek their identity within the territories allowed by the nation.

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Author Details
Mesut Günenç (Assoc. Prof.)
[1] Aydın Adnan Menderes University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of English Language and Literature, Aydın, Turkiye
0000-0002-7077-1914 mesut.gunenc@gmail.com

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