

## “Don DeLillo’s Place in English Literature as an American Novelist”

<sup>1</sup>J. Kastrokumar, <sup>2</sup>Dr. V. Gnanaprakasam

<sup>1</sup>Ph.D, Research Scholar, Department of English Annamalai University

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Enlisa, Annamalai University

**\*Corresponding Author:** J. Kastrokumar, Ph.D, Research Scholar, Department of English Annamalai University

### ABSTRACT

*Don DeLillo’s first novel is Americana, and title of the fiction would preserve his whole body. Americana is generally an aimless trip involves much of the united states- New York City, Maine the Midwest, and Texas. Americana’s first person narrator, David Bell, utters it a “mysterious and sacramental journey”. The novel has two satiric cartoon figures, which have enabled DeLillo, a master satirist to evoke American life effectively while engaging the traditional reader expectations of plot and suspense. Don DeLillo’s protagonists in his novels are frequently dispossessed, alienated, and paranoia. Don DeLillo’s title of his early works added rock music, food ball, mathematics, an “airborne toxic event”, and emissions of nuclear devastation. Don DeLillo treats some of his works implied criticism of the irrationality of much of American life is inevitable, but Delillo’s treatment of his characters es generally even-tempered rather than corrosive.*

**Keywords:** *Mysterious, Satire, Mixed culture, Oedipus complex, Narcism, and Identity.*

### INTRODUCTION

Americana is ongoing praise of folly is Don DeLillo’s extraordinary comic sense. The reality of his fiction stands out immediately, but most of the discussions of his novel try to keep a secret. During the 1960’s, manic preoccupations of the United States’ none of them had more intense or better publicized than rock and roll and recreational hallucinogenic drugs. These two objects are often intimately identified in the popular imagination, and they become the twin plot states that Americana. They featured protagonists who were vulnerable, human, and sympathetic. Americana was mostly genial in mode. Don DeLillo’s universe derives from metaphysical evidences rather than the political issues in the bleakness.

According to Christopher Marlowe’s very famous tragedy Doctor Faustus, find the seven deadly sins as endemic throughout the body politic, but their etiology traces to human nature rather than to political figures such as Lyndon B. Johnson or Richard Nixon.

Don DeLillo’s Americana always appeals highly in the language and it is the product of much conscious attention. Don DeLillo lectures his concern with language in an interview with Tom LeClair: Which writing means to me is trying to

make interesting, clear, beautiful language. Working at sentences and rhythm is probably the most satisfying thing I do as a writer. I think after a while a writer can begin to know himself through his language. He watches someone or somebody reflected back at him from these constructions. DeLillo believes that the power of fiction deeper intertextuality, over time, a writer might be able to “shape himself as a human being” through the language, he uses to “remake himself”. DeLillo’s Americana, he expands that interest in language as a vehicle for self-expression to investigate how a culture shapes itself and its identity using language. Don DeLillo explores the implications of American history itself and the responsibility of those who engage raw event and attempt to shape it into historic record.

During the 1990’s Don DeLillo recognized as an engaging and often satiric cultural anatomist, explored a wide range of issues that have defined America since the end of World War II, including the paranoia Cold War era, the impact of burgeoning media technology, the pressures of celebrity and the cult of charismatic figures, and the American fascination with violence. Don DeLillo is regarted as one of the finest novelists and sharpest social critics of postmodern American fiction. The social critics

of contemporary American life, DeLillo, like such authors as John Barth, Thomas Pynchon, and Kurt Vonnegut, writes in a postmodernist vein. Don DeLillo’s fiction *Americana* (1971) is more satirical than penetrating portraits of contemporary American society consider as its rampant paranoia and malaise, its myths, obsessions, and manias. In his satire, DeLillo exploits the discrepancy amidst appearance and reality, aiming the power of mass media, the spread of cultural politics and crowd psychology, and the excess of consumer culture. Don DeLillo’s fiction features terse prose, displaced bits of dialogue, conventional plotting, postmodernism theories which also underscore his preoccupation with the ritualistic aspects of words, the nature of language, and its myriad uses.

Whole themes of Don DeLillo’s fiction are government conspiracies, the human costs of consumerism and Mass media. *Americana* presents a composite of contemporary American society verging on chaos. It is resolved only by the benefits of language to the single human beings considers capable of imposing order on random events. DeLillo’s *Americana* recounts the odyssey of a television- advertising executive who embarks on a cross-country journey, partly to escape an unsatisfying job and marriage yet mainly to discover his identity. The forbidden wants inspiring protagonist-narrator David Bell are so outright as to appear to be very nearly a personification of Freud’s Oedipus complex. In *Technology and Postmodern Subjectivity in Don DeLillo’s Novels* (2010), Randy Laist recognizes “the sheer cartoonishness with which DeLillo dramatizes David’s oedipal desire” (39). The first analyst to stress the oedipal measurement of the novel was really DeLillo himself. In a 1972 paper with the saucy title “Notes toward a Definitive Meditation (By Someone Else) on the Novel ‘Americana,’” DeLillo announces (in third-individual voice) the creator’s goals: “The author evidently constructed two planes of incest in ‘Americana.’ One is based on relations (or near-relations) between the protagonist and his mother. The second might be called political incest—the notion that baseless patriotism is an elaborately psychotic manifestation of love for mother country” (327). Finding his perusing at the merging of these two depraved planes, David Cowart names David Bell “The American Oedipus” (144). The mark sticks. There is no overlooking the Freudian ramifications of David’s uncertain wants for his mom Ann

Ringer and for consequent mother-substitutes, especially the stone worker Sullivan.

Freudian readings of *Americana* are substantial and without a doubt required, however I find that they just take us up until this point. Peeling past the name of American Oedipus, I offer a Lacan inflected reexamination of the novel as a twisted and destabilized treatment of the postmodern subject. Seen from this vantage, *Americana* seems less a picture of the American Oedipus and increasingly a reflection from the sparkling pool of the American Narcissus. Lacan’s Mirror Stage is important to understanding David Bell’s development of self. The essential narcissism that describes puerile sense of self-improvement remains startlingly dynamic in his grown-up between and intra-individual connections; what’s more, this mirror impact is amplified in his fascination in film. Consequent improvements in Lacanian analysis give a structure and dialect to articulating David’s fixations. He returns habitually to a primal eroticized experience with his mom, reenacting it vicariously on film and in the substance with Sully. Nevertheless, not at all like Oedipus, David never effectively revels his forbidden depraved wants. Rather he stays transfixed by dreams, and misrecognized reflections from the voracious pool of Narcissus.

In *Americana*, DeLillo conveys an ascertained initial introduction of David Bell as a thorough going narcissist. David ducks out of a gathering in the main section to spend a few time alone with his most loved individual—himself: “I decided to go into the bathroom and look at myself in the mirror” (4). He is surely vain—“I was an extremely handsome young man”—yet DeLillo is building up substantially more than that (11). The American Narcissus shows a lethal fixation on his own picture.

David cases to discover comfort in his mental self-portrait. In terms that explicitly invoke psychoanalysis, he admits,

“I had almost the same kind of relationship with my mirror that many of my contemporaries had with their analysts. When I began to wonder who I was, I took the simple step of lathering my face and shaving. It all became so clear, so wonderful. I was blue-eyed David Bell” (11). As the novel unfolds, a host of neuroses and unresolved anxieties emerge from behind the blue eyes of David Bell. However, he attempts to keep his ghosts at bay with recourse to an image that reflects a Gestalt of composure and success.

David is intensely attracted to pictures anticipated on the amplified reflection of silver screen’s extra large screen. He depicts his energetic epiphany of identification with Burt Lancaster: “When I was a teenager I saw Burt in *From Here to Eternity*. He stood above Deborah Kerr on that Hawaiian beach and for the first time in my life I felt the true power of the image” (DeLillo, *Americana* 12).

As his title an *Americana* clue, DeLillo presents the peruser not just with a protagonist, yet in addition, a whole nation besotted with pictures. The plain flows that charm David in a narcissistic daze have the whole culture entranced. Amid his stumble into the dull, stunning heart of the American Dream, David analyzes his fixation with pictures as symptomatic of a bigger social plague: “The dream made no allowance for the truth beneath the symbols, for the interlinear notes, the presence of something black (and somehow very funny) at the mirror rim of one’s awareness” (DeLillo, *Americana* 130). In hindsight, the older David is skeptical of his gullible youthself.

David presents Sullivan, or “Sully,” as “, thirty-seven years old, unmarried, a tall woman who seemed by her manner or bearing or mere presence to change a room slightly, to make it self-conscious” (DeLillo, *Americana* 8). His appreciation for Sully is tangible and polymorphous. As an effective craftsman, she is as of now doing the sort of work that TV maker David just dreams of. As an appealing lady who hasn’t yet capitulated to his enticements, she remains as a test to his voracious charisma. What is more, as a lady nine years his senior, she has involvement, expert, and gravitas that at the same time pulls in and scares him. David deep down surrenders, “Whether on purpose or not, Sullivan always made me feel totally inadequate. I was drawn to her, terribly” (8). The novel’s focal excursion to Fort Curtis in the American heartland, and the “long messy autobiographical-type film” he decides to make out there, depends entirely upon Sully’s participation: “Only Sullivan, [he] believed, could save [him]” (205, 107).

He receives her as dream and potential guardian angel, yet most imperatively, he throws her in his film’s lead part: a change imago for the *Imago Mater*, Ann Bell.

The focal uncertain clash of David Bell’s childhood, and the climactic scene of his self-portraying film, includes a decisive experience

with his mother. DeLillo’s subversive treatment of the purported “primal scene” constitutes one of *Americana*’s best accomplishments. Keeping in mind the end goal to value the different ways he conjures and disentangles the primal scene, one should first re-examine the Oedipus complex. Freud respected this marvel as the foundation of youth psychosexual advancement. The Oedipus complex was as essential to Lacan as it was to Freud; however, he thought about it in notably unique ways. Lacan essentially embeds a fourth part into the family dramatization: the phallus. The phallus rises in Lacanian brain science as the essential signifier of the Oedipus complex and the transitional harbinger driving from the Fanciful Order to the Symbolic Order of dialect and social frameworks. The phallus absolutely holds relationship with the penis; it is a metonym for the fatherly work—what characterizes, restricts, and declares—the Law and Name-of-the-Father. However, its noteworthiness for Lacan reaches out past life systems and male centric society. The phallus is the main signifier of want, what the mother probably wants and which the kid significantly needs.

David and his company influence it to Fort Curtis where they to take up living arrangement and start shooting his “mirror reality” film. The focal point of the film and of David’s own fixations is an urgent experience with his mom. This scene is so impervious to recover that David re-enacts it in three separate structures:

- his account memory of a strangely sensual trade with his mom when he was sixteen years of age;
- his shot sensation of that scene including Sully as Ann Bell and pre-adult Bud Yost as David; and his lustful tryst in a motel room where he attempts to fulfil his perverted wants vicariously through Sully. Each of the three of these re-enactments invoke maternal dreams and oedipal tensions, and all are portrayed by muddling, redirection, slippage, and misrecognition - the business as usual of the American Narcissus.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion finds that the American mixed culture of Bells facilitated a mixed drink get-together for their Old Holly neighbours 1st September evening around 1958. The trite conditions of a rural soirée scarcely appear to be hopeful for a life changing epiphany. However, before the finish of that night, David’s stifled

## “Don DeLillo’s Place in English Literature as an American Novelist”

affections for his mom were dug up to the surface in an abnormal showdown that he has attempted to absorb from that point forward. The gathering itself is not very much. David floats erratically all through discussions.

Like Cowart, I discover the climate is similar to Benjamin Braddock’s gathering in *The Graduate* (1967), finish with Old Holly’s claim Mrs. Robinson, and “the Collier woman,” who salaciously tells David: “you’re young man now and there’s no reason why you shouldn’t know this. You’ve grown to almost your full stature. You have a man’s body and a man’s appetites. This is what I want to say. Women love to be loved” (DeLillo, *Americana* 191).

### WORKS CITED

- [1] Osteen, M 2000 *American Magic and Dread: Don DeLillo’s Dialogue with Culture* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania P.
- [2] Baudry, J-L 1974–75 Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus. *Trans. Alan Williams. Film Quarterly*, 28(2): 39–47.
- [3] DOI:<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1211632>;<http://dx.doi.org/10.1525/fq.1974.28.2.04a00080> Boxall, P 2006 *Don DeLillo: The Possibility of Fiction*. London: Routledge.
- [4] Cowart, D 2002 *Don DeLillo: The Physics of Language*. Revised Edition. Athens: U of Georgia P. DeLillo, D 1971 *Americana*. New York: Penguin.
- [5] DeLillo, D 1972 Notes Toward a Definitive Meditation (By Someone Else) on the Novel ‘Americana.’ *Epoch*, 21(3): 327–29.
- [6] Dewey, J 2006 *Beyond Grief and Nothing: A Reading of Don DeLillo*. Columbia: U of South Carolina P. Freud, S 1925 On Narcissism: An Introduction. In: Strachey, James (Ed. and trans.)
- [7] *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Vol. 14. London: Hogarth, pp. 66–102.

**Citation:** Odey, S.A., Agba, A. M. O. & Kina, A. E.” *Small and Medium Enterprises and the Wellbeing of Rural Dwellers in Cross River State, Nigeria*”. (2019) *International Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Studies*, 6(2), pp. 18-27

**Copyright:** © 2019 Muhammad Faizan Jamil,. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.