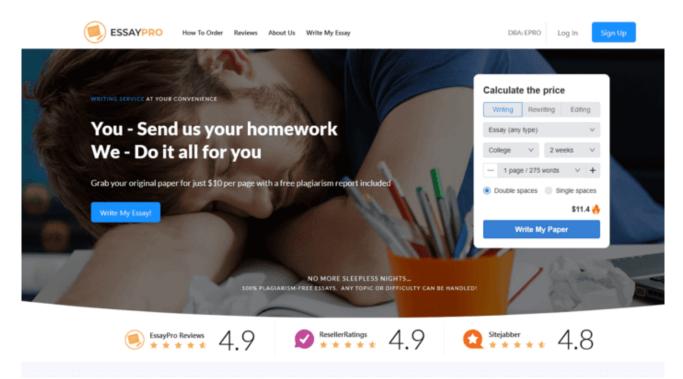
## Native Son - Segregation, Oppression and Hatred



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## Native Son - Segregation, Oppression and Hatred The novel, Native Son, portrays the struggle one black man faces while trying to live in a segregated society in the late 1930s. Growing up poor, uneducated, and angry at the whole world, Bigger Thomas seems destined to meet a bad fate. Bigger lives with his family in a rat-infested one-bedroom apartment on the South Side of Chicago, known as the "Black Belt." His childhood has been filled with hostility and oppression; anger, frustration, and violence are a daily reality. A the age of twenty, Bigger lands his first real job as a chauffeur for a rich white man, Mr. Dalton. On his first night on the job Bigger takes Mr. Dalton's daughter, Mary Dalton, to secretly meet her boyfriend, Jan Erlone, a selfadmitted Communist. Everyone gets a little drunk, especially Mary, and after a while Bigger drops Jan off at home and takes Mary home. As he carries Mary up the stairs and puts her into bed, Mary's blind mother walks in the room. Bigger panics and accidentally kills Mary while trying to keep her quiet so Mrs. Dalton would not notice that he was in the room, too. When Mary's body is discovered people initially blame Jan, but as evidence is discovered, the facts point to Bigger and he flees. He is soon caught and put on trial for murder. Throughout Bigger short life, he strives to find a place for himself in society, but he is unable to see through the prejudice and suppression that he encounters in those around

him. The bleak harshness of the racist, oppressive society that the author, Richard Wright, presents the reader closes Bigger out as effectively as if society had sh...

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... because they fear, and they fear because they feel that the deepest feelings of their lives are being assaulted and outraged. And they do not know why; they are powerless pawns in a blind play of social forces." Despite Max's efforts, the oppressors got their bitter vengeance and a jury of twelve white men sentenced Bigger to death. The <u>segregation</u> and oppression that exists between the whites and blacks has created a feeling of hatred that has torn these two groups apart, and succeeded only in perpetuating the tension and violence between them. Through Bigger's hatred and discomfort around whites, the naivety of white society, and his violent murder of a young girl, Wright demonstrates the intensity of the hatred created by the segregation and oppression that Bigger was forced to endure every day until the end of his life.

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