

Hypocognition and Social Privilege in Lynn Nottage's *Sweat*Asmaa Sadoon Falih¹, Elaff Ganim Salih^{2,*}¹ Department of English, College of Arts, University of Anbar, Ramadi, Iraq² Department of English, College of Education for Women, University of Anbar, Ramadi, Iraq* elaf1977@uoanbar.edu.iq**KEYWORDS:** Hypocognition, Lynn Nottage, privilege, Robert Levy, Sweat, working class.<https://doi.org/10.51345/v37i2.1273.g683>**ABSTRACT:**

Most of the previous dramatic studies focused on the social and cultural issues related to privilege, race, and gender, but they rarely talked about their linguistics representation in the individual's mental framework in some cultures. This lack of the linguistics expression for these social and cultural practices and experiences is called hypocognition which is the main concern of the present paper. Thus, this study examines the concept of hypocognition in a working-class community of Reading, Pennsylvania, and its relation to social privilege in Nottage's *Sweat*. It examines how privilege shapes individuals' lives and relationships. Moreover, it investigates the conditions where the characters fail to find suitable linguistic articulation for their social, cultural and economic troubles. It adopts Robert Levy's perspective of hypocognition (1989) as a theoretical framework that reveals the role of culture in articulating conceptualization patterns in the cross-cultural structuring of experience. The study conducts a textual analysis of the characters, themes, and narratives enhanced by the framework's assumptions. Therefore, the study concludes that people who have the sense of hypocognition of privilege experience misunderstandings, conflicts, and systemic inequalities. It finds that hypocognition manifests the inability or unwillingness of the privileged characters to comprehend the challenges faced by the working-class characters. So, working-class characters experiences become invisible because their voices and concerns are ignored.

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Introduction:

The first thing that draws attention when speaking about privilege is its relation to human identity. The legal advantage that an individual enjoys that surpasses what is available to others is known as a privilege (Black & Stone, 2025). Most people feel comfortable believing that privilege is not inherently a bad thing, but it is how you utilize it and how others are affected by it, that you must vigilantly note. In relation, hypocognition plays a crucial role in shaping people's perceptions and actions. The absence of awareness of understanding and articulating the systemic forces leads to misdirected anger, fractured relationships, and the perpetuation of prejudices. This study connects between social privilege and hypocognition in Lynn Nottage's *Sweat*, which tries to clarify how hypocognition affects people and how it affects social privilege systems in societies

Nottage is one of the most critically contemporary playwrights and her plays are considered the most produced plays in American theatre. She is also doubly valued in the logic of the theatrical marketplace, where plays about women and her plays about blacks are perceived as universally appealing tales. Nottage's plays portray meaningful and accurate accounts of black women's experiences and the economic success of her production, demonstrating the value of black women's contributions to the theatre (Hamilton, 2020). Nottage's *Sweat* was written in

2015 and takes place in Reading, Pennsylvania. This city is predominantly white, and the early 2000s decline profoundly influenced the largely working-class population in the manufacturing industry. Being an established community that is closed off to outsiders and steeped in tradition, its downturn makes Reading's white working class, a town already entrenched in tradition and antagonistic to outsiders, downright hateful toward black and Latin people even those they formerly considered friends because they feel minorities are taking their jobs. Thus, the play illustrates how a lack of resources can exacerbate racial tensions between the white population and other minority groups by driving blue-collar workers to despair and arousing deeper racial conflicts (Brown, 2016). The decline in the manufacturing industry has caused financial difficulties for its workers either by employing fewer people or by paying less money at their jobs.

Pennsylvania is considered one of the poorest cities in America. It contains a group of factory workers who suffer to keep their present lives in balance, unaware of the financial devastation looming in their near future. Based on extensive interviews with residents of Reading, *Sweat* is a topical reflection of the present and poignant outcome of America's deindustrialization:

The difference the play makes to the people whose stories are being told is extraordinary," said Nottage, standing in the makeshift theatre in one of Erie's poorest neighborhoods, where the "*Sweat*" "I think that what red and blue can recognize is that we all share the same narrative. (Williams, 2017, 33)

In general, the plot of American drama, especially the kitchen-sink play, which was written and performed by white dramatists, did not directly deal with whiteness itself. In contemporary drama, Nottage's *Sweat* presents the economic anxieties of white and black families in the midst of a vanishing middle class. The drama explores these blue-collar workers' emotional issues, racial tensions, and economic hardships as they deal with the effects of globalization and deindustrialization. The main concern of the play not only racism but the economic difficulties, which lead to cultural and social struggles between the whites and the blacks.

Nottage's *Sweat* is a representation of the American working class. It expresses many themes including relationships, racial identity, gender, intersectionality and privilege. Nottage's empathetic storytelling provides an honest portrayal of how economic downturns impact communities and individuals. The play's characters are multi-dimensional, each one represents different faces of the working-class experience, and their stories interweave to draw a broader picture of societal issues. Furthermore, every writer has his own values, concepts, and beliefs inside that naturally govern their awareness whether he feels them or not and subsequently manifest in some manner in his creative works. A privilege is an advantage that an individual or group enjoys above what is available to others. The word privilege originates from the Latin *privilegium*, which means a law for just one person. gaining benefits or privileges merely by virtue of belonging to a specific group or identity. Many times, these privileges and rights are unearned and/or undeserving, so "interrogating hierarchical relations should at least make clear how our privileges are intertwined with our penalties, and how both are structured on the backs of other women" (Razack, Sherene, 2000, 52). The Random House Dictionary defines privilege as "a right, immunity, or benefit enjoyed only by a person beyond the advantages of most" (1993).

Hypocognition is the lack of language or cognitive framework to understand or articulate a concept (Levy, 1989). In literary analysis, hypocognition refers to the absence of cognitive or

linguistic representation of a concept in a culture, which has garnered increasing attention. As such, this study examines how privilege shapes individuals' lives and relationships. It investigates the phenomenon of hypocognition in Lynn Nottage's *Sweat*. It sheds light on how hypocognition affects the representation of disadvantaged identities in modern drama by examining the characters, themes, and narrative techniques and their connection with the social privilege in *Sweat*.

Conceptual Framework:

Robert Levy's Hypocognition theory, developed in the late 1970s, emphasizes the intersection and interaction of various identity aspects, such as race, gender, class, and sexuality, in shaping individual's experiences and social position. The term hypocognition describes the inability of some ideas or events to have a cognitive representation, which makes them challenging to comprehend, identify, or deal with (Levy, 1973). Conversely, social privilege refers to unmerited benefits that are bestowed upon specific groups on the basis of attributes like gender, color, socioeconomic status, or other identifying markers. It refers to "the rights or advantages that people of dominant social groups receive as a consequence of their group membership" (Black & Stone, 2005).

Hypocognition is a concept that was first introduced by the anthropologist and psychologist Robert Levy in the 1970s. Levy made highly distinction between "hypercognition" and "hypocognition," in his work *Tahitian* (1973). He argues that several emotions, including "anger," appear hypercognizable in society. There is much doctrine regarding anger, its effects, and strategies for dealing with it compared to certain other feeling states, such as interpersonal desire and loneliness, which may be read as some generic "being out of sorts" (Levy 1973, 287). He adds that there are a number of other affective states that are not so clearly delineated or culturally elaborated, so, Levy is hypocognized for emotion. Levy observed that Tahitians did not show signs of protracted mourning after suffering terrible losses. They did not attempt to define the emotions; instead, they only described their grief and suffering as sickness or feeling strange. Hypocognition is a term that originated from cognitive science, which describes an individual state through a lack of comprehension of a certain phenomenon. Such absence may prevent awareness, discourse and recognition of those individuals for critical issues. (Levy, 1989). Hypocognition refers to the absence of a linguistic or cognitive representation of a particular concept within a culture or individual's worldview. It occurs when a society lacks the language or mental frameworks to fully understand or articulate a specific idea or experience. Levy's ideas on hypocognition emphasizes how language and culture have a limited ability to influence how we perceive the outside world. He believes that people may find it difficult to understand or empathize with experiences that lie outside of their own cognitive structures, so the hypocognition can result in misconceptions, biases, and the maintenance of their stereotypes.

However, the study distinguishes hypocognition from other concepts related to linguistics. This explanation of hypocognition may remind some readers of the linguistic relativity hypothesis. However, our goal is to demonstrate how deficiencies in cognitive representations, which can occur independently of language, impact identification, recognition, and retention of information. This contrasts with the linguistic relativity focuses on how language limits human thoughts. (Dunning & Wu. 2000).

On other hand, privilege is "unearned access to some social power only available to some people as a result of their advantaged social group membership" (Peggy 1990, 80). It can be

seen when a group within the society has a specific value that others deny because of the group they belong to. It doesn't deny that they have done or failed to do anything. He adds that those who are privileged usually believe that privileges are "conditions of daily experience universally available to everybody" (Peggy 1990, 83). On the other hand, social privilege refers to the systemic advantages a group enjoys due to characteristics such as race, gender, class, or other social categories. These privileges are often invisible to those who possess them but are deeply embedded in social structures and practices. Privilege as a concept doesn't limit one's outcomes, but it shows the ability and aspirations of a person that will result in something positive for them. Additionally, Peggy illustrates that "the advantage of White persons, for example, creates disparities between Whites and non-Whites as economic, educational and political systems seem to indicate that people conduct their everyday lives differently depending on whether or not they possess privilege" (Peggy 1990, 894). Moreover, Crenshaw (1991) sheds light on the ways in which societal power systems both establish and preserve privilege. In addition to being based on personal experiences, privilege is also ingrained in institutional procedures and laws that favor some groups over others. Privilege operates on personal, interpersonal, cultural, and institutional levels and gives advantages, favors, and benefits to members of dominant groups at the expense of members of target groups. In the United States, privilege is granted to people who have membership in one or more of these social identity groups, like White people, Christians, middle class and middle-aged people (Peggy, 1990).

In her play, Nottage sheds lights on the lives of working-class women in a factory in a small town and shows how intersecting(ed) identities influence their experiences. The present study views privilege as a concept that influences human relations, especially with white people. It conceptualizes the relationship between hypocognition and the power effect of social privilege according to the constitution and the disadvantage of people of colour. Although people can throw around buzzwords such as White privilege, yet stay hypocognitive of (for) them and have little cognitive representation of what other term entails (Wu & Dunning, 2018).

Literature Review:

This section reviews some past literary studies that investigated Nottage's *Sweat* through different literary perspectives. Many scholarly studies conducted on Lynn Nottage's *Sweat* underscore its rich thematic complexity and the ongoing discussions about race, class, and economic inequality. The play's critical acclaim and academic interest highlight its importance as a work that captures the struggles of the American working class in the face of profound socio-economic challenges. First, in her "The Landscape of the Invisibles in Lynn Nottage's *Sweat*" (2020), Marwa Gazi seeks to present the influence of poverty and unemployment on raising the bad part inside human nature. It emphasizes how Nottage portrays the disintegration of stable, unionized labor, which once provided economic security and social cohesion. The closure of the factory, a pivotal event in the play, symbolizes the broader trends of outsourcing that have devastated similar towns across the United States. The study shows the impact of racial and hostile actions among various ethnic groups and the reasons behind them, by considering the economic and social invisibility as diseases that cause crisis to human.

"A Socio-cognitive study of Ethnocentric Discourse in Lynne Nottage's *Sweat*" by Sanaz Bayat, and Bahee Hadaegh, (2021) is another study which deals with the play. It examines Lynn Nottage's *Sweat* as a dramatic portrayal of how racism is reproduced and communicated as a social cognition. This study applies Van Dijk's cognitively-based discourse and focuses on some micro-level concepts of racism as a social cognition more than as an abstract historical

phenomenon. The study concludes that the socio-cognitive dimension of the discourse of racism is the way for the reproduced and the communicated among the dominant in-group members in this dramatic text.

In her thesis "A Director's Approach to *Sweat* by Lynn Nottage" (2020), Sarah Lacy Hamilton makes a full analysis of this play. She focuses on some questions that the reader of this play can ask. She shows the way in which community of the play comes together in spite of their differences. She finds that the author aims to challenge the audience, when she made them feel the sense of radical sympathy for each other, so they can engage with their fellow citizens instead of judgment.

Also, in his "Sweat Equity: Lynn Nottage's Radical Dialectic of Deindustrialization" (2023), Jocelyn L. Buckner claims that Nottage dramatizes contemporary US history, shedding light on the lives of laborers disenfranchised from the Rust Belt's deindustrialization in the early 2000s. *Sweat* is a symbol of Nottage's ongoing endeavor to use playwriting as activism and show support for the people whose tales she chooses to share. In his article, Burrell, J. focuses on Nottage's *Sweat* as postindustrial futurities in contemporary black feminist theatre. He shows that this play is a well-received shift in African American women's theatre toward the postindustrial working class. It anticipates and challenges the two racialized narratives of US deindustrialization that proliferated around the 2016 presidential election.

Moreover, many studies discuss the concept of privilege itself to explain the meaning of this concept and its types. In his study, "The Invisibility of Privilege: A critique of intersectional models of identity" (2008), Anna Carastathis argues that the prevailing is the means for presenting the relation between axes or systems of oppression just like race, class and gender. It illicitly imports the very model it purports to overcome: the unitary model of identity. He explains the concept of "privilege" and distinguishes between three senses that are frequently conflated. He presents the hidden presuppositions about identity by using the model in an analytic critique.

In the same vein, Janak Paudyal in his article "Compounded Oppressions and Intersections of Identities in Nottage's *Sweat*" (2026) connects between privilege, race, gender, and identity. Depending on Kimberle Crenshaw's concept of intersectionality (1980), he claims that there is an overlap between all these social components. According to Crenshaw, these multiple forces form identity (1980). They work together to promote oppression and marginalization of migrants, menial workers, and African-Americans. It is clear from the title when the author names them "Compound Oppressions", that these overlapping identities produce compound oppression by the white privilege. They work together to form and fuel the Whites' supremacy and oppression against these minorities.

As such, no previous studies tackled the concept of Hypocognition and privilege together in Lynn Nottage's *Sweat* in light of Robert Levy's perspective of hypocognition (1989).

Discussion:

The study provides a compelling framework to analyze hypocognition, particularly through socio-economic struggles faced by its characters during Nottage's play. The study has an interaction between the hypocognition as a concept and social privilege. So, hypocognition as a lack of necessary awareness is a concept to fully understand or articulate experiences. It permeates every aspect of the lives of the characters in Nottage's *Sweat*, influencing their

interactions, perspectives, and reactions to the socioeconomic obstacles they encounter. Throughout the play, hypocognition as the lack of how to explain certain phenomena appears in a variety of ways, impacting the characters' capacity to identify and confront the intricate relationships between economic decline, race, and class. In Nottage's *Sweat*, hypocognition is woven intricately into the lives of the characters. It shapes their perceptions, interactions, and responses to their socioeconomic challenges. Hypocognition, the absence of a framework to understand certain phenomena, is manifested in various ways throughout the play, influencing the characters' ability to recognize and address the complex dynamics of race, class, and economic decline. The majority of the play is set at a local bar where friends, including middle-aged women named Tracey, Cynthia, and Jessie, who have all worked for decades at Olstead's Steel Tubing business, congregate to mingle with one another and the adored bartender.

There is a sense of social privilege and hypocognition between Tracey and Cynthia which is due to racial tension and economic despair which is explored during the characters' dialogues and their interactions. In particular, Tracey and Cynthia are described as "close friends who've shared many adventures" (*Sweat* 2017, Act1, scene 1). They support, comfort, and urge one another to enjoy life to the fullest rather than focus on the pressures of the workplace. In Reading, it appears that close friendships of this nature are more common than uncommon. Additionally, Tracey's perception emphasizes her incapacity to look beyond her immediate surroundings and expose a deep-seated hatred and misunderstanding of both her own and other people's situations, as Tracy reveals "You think you're better than me? You're not. You're not better than any of us" (Act 1, scene 6). Tracey and Cynthia's friendship deteriorates as economic pressures mount, largely due to hypocognition around racial privilege and systemic inequality. Tracey as a white factory worker, struggles to understand the systemic nature of racial privilege. Her hypocognition reveals her ability to see how her race affords her benefits, even on the side of economic hardship. Lakoff (1987) investigates how hypocognition results from cultural differences in how people classify the world. He contends that when people from a particular culture come across notions that are absent from their own, it might cause misconceptions and cognitive gaps. Hypocognition has another significant effect when individuals are unable to explain trends or phenomena they observe with notions they do not possess (Levy, 1973). Workaround knowledge may combine in these situations to create fictitious narratives for what happened. These fictitious explanations may be false, but they produce reasonable predictions and acts. White people, regardless of their own self-consideration and to claim otherwise, would be to deny the white privilege afforded to them by means of their appearances. It is necessary to "mark" whiteness as a "position" that is "privileged and empowered" (Peggy 1990. 51). To dismiss their identities as irrelevant or argue that their shared ability to pass as white is immaterialist to maintain a post-racial color blindness, which perpetuates racial dehistoricization or the erroneous claim that institutionalized racism and racial subjugation no longer exist.

Tracey finds it difficult to comprehend how racial privilege is a systemic phenomenon. Her incapacity to recognize how, despite financial difficulties, her race grants her certain benefits is a sign of her. When Cynthia gets a promotion, this ignorance fuels anger toward her hypocognition. It also presents Tracy's sense of social privilege and the conflict Cynthia senses with race even with her best friend:

CYNTHIA. I took this promotion cuz I thought it would be good for all of us.

TRACEY. Yeah, right?

CYNTHIA. And I don't deserve the things you've been saying. You've always been cool. Be angry, but don't make it about this...

Cynthia points to the skin on the back of her hand. (Act 1. Scene 6)

Cynthia feels that her black skin is the reason behind Tracey's anger at her promotion. She has a lack of awareness and is shocked by her friend's reaction. It's hard for Tracey to sympathize with Cynthia or keep their friendship going because of her hypocognition, which prevents her from seeing the difficulties Black women experience in the job. So as a reaction to her sense of privilege, Tracey doesn't know how to answer or speak with Cynthia as the following quote reveals:

I just feel like, um...I...I see you getting pretty chummy with "them"... And... The other

day on the floor I called out to you, but you brushed me off. (Act1, scene 6).

This lack of awareness leads to resentment towards Cynthia when she receives a promotion. Tracey struggles to understand that racial privilege is a systemic issue. She believes that she is the one who deserves the promotion that Cynthia has believing that her social privilege gives her some advantages. Tracey finds it difficult to empathize with Cynthia and maintain their relationship since she is unable to see the challenges Black women face in the workplace. Slovic (2000), who specializes in the psychology of risk perception, contends that people frequently develop a hypocognition with respect to hazards they are unfamiliar with. He clarifies that people rely on biases and heuristics, which might cause misconceptions and an underestimating of some hazards.

Since every floor worker at Olstead's worries about their job security and feels replaceable, Cynthia's increase in compensation and perks comes across as a slight to her coworkers, especially Tracey. The following quotation explains the social privilege that Cynthia feels in this play:

Cynthia: "You don't understand, Tracey. You never had to deal with the looks, the whispers, the assumptions. I've been working twice as hard just to stand where you stand."

Tracey: "That's bullshit, Cynthia. We've all been working hard, don't make this about race." (Act 1, Scene 3)

In this conversation, Cynthia draws attention to the additional responsibilities she bears as a result of her ethnicity and the societal privilege Tracey enjoys as a white woman. Tracey's disdain for Cynthia's experiences highlights how little she knows about and acknowledges her own privilege. Tracy in the play's world, striving to improve one's standing and get out of one's existing circumstance leads to animosity. Similarly, even though Tracey applied for the position, she turns resentful and even hard when Cynthia gets promoted from floor worker to warehouse supervisor at Olstead's. Tracy draws on her cigarette and angrily informs Oscar, the bartender:

You know how long I been working at the plant? Forget it Never mind, it's not important

But, .. I know the floor as good as Cynthia. I do." (Act I, Scene 5)

This quotation highlights the characters' difficulties in comprehending and communicating their experiences, which frequently results in misunderstandings and confrontations. Tracy bitterly informs Oscar, the bartender, that she "know[s] the floor as well as Cynthia" does. Tracy's sense of privilege becomes even more clearer when Cynthia gets a promotion because she thinks that she is the one who deserves such a promotion because she is white. Tracey claims that Cynthia was only chosen because she's black. Oyserman (2017) argues the seeing other culture from the eyes of one's own perspectives is the way of falling from hypocognitive trap of chauvinism. So, they explain the concepts from their own culture failing to recognize the other culture's concepts that fill in any cultural gaps. This leads people to think of their own culture as higher, more sophisticated and advanced and other cultures as crude and simplistic. Levy described such reaction "is related to a considerable amount of theorizing," there are a number of other affective states that are not so clearly delineated or culturally elaborated. These Levy terms "hypocognized emotions" (1973:287). This quote shows how the concept of privilege can be able to reveal the evil side on human identity. Tracey's words reveal her struggle to cognitively process the loss of stability and identity associated with her job, indicative of hypocognition as she grapples to find the right words to express this seismic shift.

Accordingly, privilege is characteristically invisible to people who have it. In fact, privileges are unearned and they are granted to people in the dominant groups whether they want those privileges or not. The fear from losing the jobs and the seeking for economic stability are the main impacts beyond the characters' sense of identity and self-worth. So, Tracey has internal struggles within and feels betrayal and displacement, this leads (to a lack of the) to lack the psychological vocabulary to process her emotions constructively. This state of hypocognition obstructs personal growth and the ability to find constructive solutions or coping mechanisms. Cynthia emphasis on respect over money which indicates a deeper, more nuanced understanding that others in the play might miss, thereby pointing out the hypocognition of those who see the issue purely in economic terms. While Cynthia is more aware of racial dynamics due to her lived experience, she also grapples with hypocognition concerning the broader systemic forces at play. Her promotion, initially seen as a personal triumph, becomes a source of tension. Cynthia's hypocognition is evident in her initial belief that hard work and personal merit alone could overcome systemic barriers, a belief that is challenged as the play progresses.

In this conversation, Cynthia draws attention to the additional responsibilities she bears because of the societal privilege Tracey has as a white woman. Tracey's disrespect for Cynthia's experiences highlights the lack of awareness about acknowledging her own privilege. Just before the lockout, Tracey also turns on her best friend, Cynthia, who was promoted from the floor to Warehouse Supervisor at Olstead's. Tracey says that "they wanted a minority "even though Cynthia really earned the job. Levy (1973) believes that cultures possess unique cognitive categories, concepts, and vocabulary that enable people to reflect, recognize, express, and think about their experiences, feelings, and social interactions. According to Levy, these cognitive categories are present to differing degrees in other cultures. Hypocognition is the condition in which cultures with fewer cognitive categories are unable to adequately articulate particular feelings or experiences through language and thought processes. Baca Zinn and Dill (1996) warrant attention to the unstable character of power relations and the ways in which positions of privilege and disadvantage are reproduced through forms of social interaction. He argues that while you cannot get rid of your privilege, you can

acknowledge it. When people force their privilege into view and discuss it openly, they will not engage in solidarity with those who do not share certain privileges with them.

Gradually, the characters struggle with understanding and articulating their experiences, often leading to miscommunication and conflict. They continue their discussion when Cynthia announces that: "You think it's just about money? It's not just about money. It's about respect." (Sweat, 2017, Act 1, scene 3). Cynthia here illustrates the value of respect over money by highlighting a deeper, more complex understanding that the other characters in the play might overlook. This highlights the hypocognition of those who only view the problem from an economic perspective. The play emphasizes the social and racial conflicts brought on by economic difficulties. McCauley (2011) emphasizes how cognitive skills that are not innate to humans are frequently needed to understand scientific topics. He contends that people suffer from hypocognition when it comes to scientific concepts, which are frequently intricate and counterintuitive, unless they receive specialized schooling.

Characters who rise to executive positions, such as Cynthia, are enmeshed in the crossfire of class and racial tensions. The actors' incapacity to communicate and resolve these tensions within a well-developed framework exacerbates miscommunications and conflicts, illuminating hypocognition in the social realm. Jessie asserts this fact when she says that despite Cynthia's justification for the promotion:

JESSIE. Sure, but I know for a fact that it pissed off a lot of people.

STAN. Gimme a break. People don't like change. (Act 1 scene 6)

Jessie affirms that despite Cynthia's deserved promotion, it leads to the feeling of angry for the other workers. Since every floor worker at Olstead's worries about their job security and feels replaceable, Cynthia's increase in compensation and advantages comes across as a slight to her coworkers, especially Tracey. In the play's context, trying to improve one's standing and get out of one's current circumstance leads to resentment among close friends who initially sympathized with that circumstance. Levy (1989) believes that cross-cultural communication is one of the most important elements in adopting hypocognition. It can lead to significant challenges in cross-cultural communication. Misunderstandings and misinterpretations are more common when one culture lacks the cognitive categories found in another. Stan's reaction suggests that the community may not completely understand the longer-term effects and wider ramifications of the economic collapse. Peng and Nisbett (1999) talk about the ways in which Eastern and Western cultures handle paradoxes in different ways. They argue that while trying to understand holistic and dialectical thinking, common in Eastern philosophies and differs from Western analytical thinking, Westerners may experience hypocognition.

Moreover, there is an interaction between the concept of hypocognition and nostalgia for the past for the characters like Stan. He is the bartender and former factory worker who represents a type of nostalgia-based hypocognition. Stan's idealistic recollections of a time when manufacturing employment offered security and social cohesiveness are linked to his hypocognition. He finds it difficult to see how systemic changes have undermined these underpinnings and frequently blames personal shortcomings rather than systemic changes for the difficulties that exist today. He is unable to completely comprehend the new economic realities and how they affect the younger generation due to his hypocognition.

Working at Olstead's, closest friends Tracey's son Jason and Cynthia's son Chris rely on one another for support and companionship. Jason and Chris describe themselves as a "team," which is only one of several expressions that highlight the value of intimate bonds for struggle of the working-class laborers. However, these relationships gradually break down when the characters start to reject the existing quo and seek out new opportunities. Jason is shocked to learn that Chris is leaving Olstead's to go Albright College to study teaching. He had anticipated working with his best buddy for the foreseeable future, then retiring and starting a business together. Jason denigrates Chris and tells him he'll never make it in such a low-paying field in order to hide his hurt feelings. Then, he asks, "*But seriously, man, why didn't you tell me?*" (Act 1, scene 4). Also, Jason's frustration and the inability of other characters to understand his struggles, illustrating a form of hypocognition, as the following quotation illustrates, "You don't know shit about me. You don't know what I been through. What I'm going through. So, fuck you." (Act 1, scene 7). This comment demonstrates a type of hypocognition by expressing Jason's dissatisfaction with people's incapacity to comprehend his challenges. Jason and Chris reflect the economic despair and generational ignorance. The younger generation is embodied by Jason and Chris, who each respond differently to the social and economic reality imposed by hypocognition. Jason's shift toward white supremacist is a glaring example of his hypocrisy. Jason directs his ire against ethnic minorities because he lacks a mental framework for comprehending the systemic causes of economic collapse. His incapacity to acknowledge institutional disparities and his own racial privilege fuels this hypocognition, which makes him take on a scapegoating attitude. Cameron (1995) explores how language forms cognitive categories and how a lack of specific terminology can result in hypocognition. She contends that language's reformation and the introduction of new terminology can aid in closing cognitive gaps and advancing comprehension. Bruner (1990) claims that our cognitive frameworks are shaped by cultural contexts and narratives. He believes that hypocognition happens when people don't have the narrative frameworks to make sense of their experiences, which leaves gaps in comprehension and interpretation.

The social privilege of the first generation transfers to the second generation. Also, Jason and Chris relation portrays the generational Hypocognition and economic despair. They represent the younger generation, each dealing with the economic and social realities shaped by hypocognition in different ways. Jason's hypocognition is starkly apparent in his turn towards white supremacy. Lacking a conceptual framework to understand the structural causes of economic decline, Jason misdirects his anger towards racial minorities. Henrich (2020) investigates the distinct cognitive processes that have emerged in WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, Democratic) civilizations. He proposes that when members of these civilizations come into contact with customs and ideas from non-WEIRD cultures, they may undergo hypocognition. Jason is one of the characters who adopted the concept of hypocognition and lack of awareness by his confusion about the changes in the town. This comment captures Jason's confusion and his incapacity to fully comprehend, understand or explain the significant changes in his town:

JASON: Eleven dollars an hour? No thank you. They'll work us down to nothing if we let 'em. "Jacking ain't for softies!" But they know they can always find somebody willing to get their hands sweaty.. There will always be someone who'll step in, unless we say NO!

STAN: Look. Olstead is a prick..., but Oscar...he's another story.

JASON: [...] All I'm saying is that he needs to understand the price of that dinner he's putting on his table.

STAN (Shouts): What the fuck do you want him to do? Huh? It ain't his fault. Oscar ain't getting rich off your misery. (Sweat, 2017, Act 2, scene 6).

Because he lost his job, Jason felt completely disoriented and filled with intense anger. When Latin workers, including Oscar, are recruited into Olstead's, Jason's hatred becomes motivated by social privilege. He thought that he deserves such job rather than those Latin workers. Even after completing his prison term for this offense, Jason's rage and animosity haven't lessened; he continues to lash out at his African American parole officer, Evan, using racial language. Brantley (2005) illustrates that in American idol jobs are more important than friendship because jobs are under siege and workers' identity are fraying because the economic despair. Moreover, Jason reflects the misguided of privilege's perception when he reveals that:

"Why should I feel guilty? I didn't do anything. I'm just trying to get by like everyone else. We're all in the same boat."

In spite of his belief that all people are equally affected by economic hardship, Jason's word reflects his misunderstanding of social privilege, especially racial privilege. He fails to be aware how systemic inequalities provide him with unearned or undeserved advantages. His hypocognition (lack of awareness) also stems from his failure to acknowledge his own racial advantages and the functioning of systemic disparities, causing him to embrace a mentality of blaming others. Jason's statement demonstrates his lack of understanding of societal privilege. He ignores the larger context of economic and racial disparities because he perceives any acknowledgement of privilege as a personal attack.

Chris, on the other hand, believes that education can pull him out of his financial bind. But his miscalculation is in not appreciating how ubiquitous systemic impediments are. Chris does not completely understand how deeply ingrained racial and economic inequality can limit opportunities regardless of individual effort, leading him to first believe that education alone can help people overcome poverty. Chris and Jason, show hypocognition in their perception of their future possibilities. They show the generational perspectives towards the future. Their goals are influenced by a fast-evolving socioeconomic environment and labor market that they are ill prepared to traverse since their education and predecessors did not provide them with the essential knowledge and insight. Jessie portrays the hypocognition relating to gender and Workplace dynamics. She does not see how her sense of frustration and stagnation is a result of gendered labor dynamics. Her acceptance of the restricted roles that women can play in her socioeconomic setting, which prevents her from seeing or pursuing other options, is a clear example of her hypocognition. Jessie's struggle explained by the following quote:

We're just here to make the numbers look good. No matter how hard we work, it's never enough. They don't see us as equals. (Act2, scene 3)

Jessie's speech shows the gender dynamics in and Nottage's play. It represents the lack of social privilege which women experience in her workplace. It explains how gender bias efforts recognition and respect, although there is an equal or greater effort. This passage exemplifies

numerous ways in which socioeconomic privilege affects the characters' perspectives, relationships, and conflicts. By revealing the layers of privilege and marginalization through these talks, Nottage encourages a greater comprehension of the systemic dynamics at work. Additionally, Oscar a Latino barback, who has a struggle with recognition. He is marginalized in the mostly white working-class community, which causes him to suffer from hypocognition, He expresses this idea in the following quotation:

Oscar. "I've been working here for years, but it's like I'm invisible. Just because I'm not from here originally, I don't get the same respect." (Act I, Scene 3)

Oscar's statement highlights the social privilege that the other characters hold due to their status as long-term residents, which he lacks. His feeling of invisibility underscores the marginalization faced by immigrants and ethnic minorities. Oscar's marginalized status in the community has an impact on his hypocognition. Although he is aware of the financial struggles, he lacks the conceptual knowledge necessary to explain or refute the racial and ethnic stereotypes that further isolate him. His ultimate choice to cross the picket line is a practical reaction to his marginalization, but it also shows that he wasn't more deeply involved in the other characters' group struggle. It is difficult to determine who is privileged or disadvantaged because the changes in cultural, social, and historical elements which affect which groups are privileged and which groups are not. Some may pass as members of an advantaged group. For example, some people may change their names to protect themselves from discrimination. Some may be given privileged because they are assumed to be members of an advantaged group. The characters' in "Sweat" presents a varying level of awareness and misunderstanding about privilege. Nottage uses their experiences to present the complexities of social privilege, showing that privilege influence on their lives and relationships. The characters in Nottage's *Sweat* find it difficult to explain the complicated nature of their labor rights concerns and economic situations. They feel the downfall of the industrial sector and the ensuing job losses acutely, but they frequently lack the awareness and conceptual understanding to completely understand the systemic dynamics at work. They run the risk of misinterpreting both the wider economic changes and their own circumstances. In this play, hypocognition is a major factor in determining how the characters see the world and behave. Misdirected rage, broken relationships, and the persistence of prejudices are the results of not being aware of the systemic factors at work and not being able to fully comprehend and describe them. Nottage employs these depictions to show how racial, class, and economic decline-related hypocrisies can sabotage unity and heighten societal unrest.

Conclusion:

The intersection between the themes of hypocognition and social privilege is a focal point in the current study, especially in analyzing the characters concerning themes of identity, power, and marginalization. In this study, the dynamic connection between hypocognition and social privilege is a central aspect that sheds light on the complexities of race, class, and gender in contemporary society. In this dramatic text, the social privilege is explored through the lens of blue-collar workers in a small American town. Through the characters' struggles, the study delves into issues of race, class, and gender, highlighting how privilege can shape individuals' lives and relationship. Moreover, it reveals the manifestations of the privilege between the characters, which creates a vast horizon for conflict and controversy among the narrative voices describing them as a narrative necessity, practically in the American drama. In her *Sweat*, Nottage highlights how hypocognition around issues of race, class, and economic

decline can hinder solidarity and exacerbate social tensions. By exposing these blind spots, Nottage encourages a deeper examination of the structural inequalities that underpin the characters' struggles, urging the audience to develop a more nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between individual experiences and systemic forces. The study finds that the characters' of Nottage's *Sweat* have a lack of awareness about the broader socio-economic forces that lead to their failure to recognize their own privileges. It highlights the complex as well as the invisible barriers that perpetuate their social inequities that come from their misunderstandings, conflicts, and a sense of helplessness.

نقص الإدراك المعرفي والامتياز الاجتماعي في مسرحية "العرق" لألين نوتاج

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الكلمات المفتاحية

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المستخلص:

ركزت معظم الدراسات الدرامية السابقة على القضايا الاجتماعية والثقافية المتعلقة بالامتياز والعرق والجنس، إلا أنها نادراً ما تناولت تمثيلها اللغوي في الإطار الذهني للفرد في بعض الثقافات. يُطلق على هذا النص في التعبير اللغوي عن هذه الممارسات والتجارب الاجتماعية والثقافية اسم "قصور الإدراك"، وهو محور الاهتمام الرئيسي لهذه الورقة البحثية. لذا، يدرس هذا البحث مفهوم "قصور الإدراك" في مجتمع الطبقة العاملة في ريدينغ، بنسلفانيا، وعلاقته بالامتياز الاجتماعي في مسرحية "عرق" لنوتاج. ويبحث في كيفية تأثير هذا الامتياز على حياة الأفراد وعلاقاتهم. علاوة على ذلك، يبحث في الظروف التي تعجز فيها الشخصيات عن إيجاد تعبير لغوي مناسب لمشاكلها الاجتماعية والثقافية والاقتصادية. يعتمد البحث على منظور روبرت ليفي لمفهوم نقص الإدراك (1989) بوصفه إطاراً نظرياً يكشف عن دور الثقافة في صياغة أنماط التصور ضمن البنية العابرة للثقافات للتجربة الإنسانية. وتُجري الدراسة تحليلاً نصياً للشخصيات والأفكار والسرديات التي تعززها افتراضات هذا الإطار. لذلك، خلصت الدراسة إلى أن من يعانون من نقص إدراك الامتيازات يعانون من سوء فهم وصراعات وتفاوتات منهجية. ووجدت الدراسة أن نقص الإدراك يُظهر عجز أو عدم رغبة الشخصيات المتميزة في فهم التحديات التي تواجهها شخصيات الطبقة العاملة. لذا، تُصبح تجارب شخصيات الطبقة العاملة غير مرئية بسبب تجاهل أصواتهم وهومهم.