

## Contact Sheet

| Name              | Character | Phone           |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Rebecca Mansfield | Mae       | (603) 852- 8617 |
| Jerome Torres     | Henry     | (603) 973 0172  |
| Mike Cataluna     | Lloyd     | (603) 318 1134  |

## Rehearsal Schedule

|                                 |                               |  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Wednesday 4/11 7:00-8:00</b> | Read through entirety of play | Everyone                                       |
| <b>Monday 4/16 7:00-9:00</b>    | Stage scene 6, 11, 12         | Everyone                                       |
| <b>Monday 4/23 5:00-6:00</b>    | Lloyd's monologue             | Mike   |
| <b>Sunday 4/29 6:00-8:00</b>    | Scene 14 +16                  | Everyone 6:00-8:00                             |
| <b>Monday 5/7 7:00-9:00</b>     | Scenes 15+17, possible run    | Becca and Jerome 6:00-7:00, Everyone 7:00-8:00 |
| <b>Monday 5/14 6:00-8:00</b>    | Work/ running through         | Everyone (off book)                            |
| <b>Wednesday 5/16 6:00-8:00</b> | Running                       | Everyone                                       |
| <b>Performance 5/18 7:30 AM</b> | <b>Go</b>                     | Everyone                                       |

## Rehearsal Log

### 4/11

We read through the entire play so I may hear voices in different scenes and decide which scenes I would like to perform for this process. It allowed me to see which could be cut and which are essential for an effective performance. I had the realization that due to the end of semester performances, time would be tight and the clear challenge would be the lack of rehearsal time.

### 4/16

Choosing a non-major to be a part of my scene was definitely a challenge. Working with Mike will prove difficult because he has never formally been a part of a production at PSU. He has been in productions in the past, but not to the caliber and professional state we are taught and experience here. It's difficult because he does not understand the same words and vocabulary that we forget is niche to the theater world. I sometimes have to stop and explain terms and it is hard to balance the time between him and the other actors, but in the cut I have made, he is the lead and it's very important for him to understand what is going on. I will have to spend extra time working with him on his physicality and character work.

### 4/23

Mike and I worked Lloyd's monologue in scene 12. The monologue was worked just with the actor and no other actors. This allowed us to work on the physicality of this monologue. The first time we blocked it, there was a challenge of Mike reading and trying to move it. It was also unclear what the intention of it was. We worked with playing a more childlike stance. It is more like a gloating child over his bully since Lloyd feels bullied by Henry. I've given him the

direction of “To annoy.” At the end of the hour he was progressing in getting off book and solidifying the flow of the monologue.

#### **4/29**

Actors were tired from a long weekend of Annelies shows. All four of us were involved. Things got silly in a good way. It loosened up the tension in the high stake situation. We figured out that, though the scenes are vignettes and have slight passages of time, we do not need to stop in between scenes 14-16 because they flow almost seamlessly. Jerome and I worked out more of his speech. When we began, Jerome’s take on Henry’s handicapped was similar to a stroke. He spoke with a slur, but it felt uncomfortable in the scene. I wanted him to be correcting Lloyd when he’s speaking, as if he is helping but also mocking. Since Henry taught Mae how to read I wanted Lloyd to have picked up some of the information from their lessons and be trying to impress Mae when she comes back. I had to work on the relationship between Lloyd and Henry and told each of them about how I imagine that Lloyd lives on the same spot on the floor.

I also had a realization that by the end of scene 16, I wanted Lloyd to be at the highest level to turn the tables. Then when Henry is on the floor, Lloyd is sitting in the chair stage right. It is a reversal of circumstance since Henry has had the alpha male status but at this moment, when Mae turns on Henry, Lloyd has taken the situation back.

We haven’t done a full run and I’m a bit concerned about the running time but the original time was about 10 minutes so it should be fine.

#### **5/7**

We began rehearsal with just Becca and Jerome to go over the intimate scene. It felt a little goofy because of the harshness of the scene. Jerome felt uncomfortable with the content but we worked slowly, movement by movement to figure out how to have the most controlled situation for the actors. We tried to make it dramatic but not horrifying.

When we finally did a run we, we decided to do it without having blocked the last scene to see how long it ran. After the run, I figured out that we would have to cut one of the scenes I selected. We decided on the first scene, and with a small alteration the whole thing makes sense. Actors are finally getting comfortable with the world they are in and our next rehearsal is our off book date.

#### **5/14**

I had asked actors to be off book, though Jerome is involved in a lot at the moment so he was still on book. Mike and Becca were fairly off book throughout. We worked getting over the bumps and hiccups of the scenes and developed the flow. It seems we will be pretty good to go once everyone is off book.

#### **5/16**

Actors are completely off book and working very hard. Today we finessed some of the moments between actors to make it more clear and to heighten the stakes of certain situations. Specifically we worked the last moment before Mae leaves so that Lloyd is more desperate for Mae to stay. We also worked in light, with transitions so that actors can get used to the feeling in the conditions

## Research Log

### Info on the Author – Maria Irene Fornes

- Born in Havana, Cuba, immigrated to the US by 15 after her father died in 1945.
- She prefers to be called Irene. She has two older sisters and three older brothers.
- relatively poor. It is important that she is an economic refugee, not a political refugee.
- in Cuba with her father, she was encouraged to read and think, when she got to the US she quickly dropped out of school due to the strain. She decided to become a painter. Upon the realization that she was a perfectionist, she dropped visual art.
- her friend and roommate thought she would be a good writer, even though she'd never written anything before this, except translated letters which would eventually lead to the idea of *Widows*. She began writing in 1960. By 1963 she came up with her first piece, *Tango Palaces*.
- Is a Latina writer, but does not allow her plays to be classified this way, as well as being a lesbian but never actually coming out. She is considered a feminist writer but does not believe to be one herself. She is one to hate labels.
- 1977 developed the New York Theatre Strategy, an organization thriving to make experimental work.
- Her Early Plays: 1963- 1968. "In these early plays, Fornés experiments with form and style and the relationship between spoken language and visual images, both as modes of communication."
- Her Later work: *Mud* is an absurdist-realist play that explores the beauty and ugliness of the human condition by paradoxically portraying it with its quasi-animalistic characteristics. In this play from 1983, Fornés simultaneously uses language that is visceral and poetic to deal with her main character's (Mae's) search for self-identification. Mae's search is carried out in the trenches of a sexual field of battle also occupied by the two other characters in the play, Lloyd and Henry. This metaphorical field is reinforced by Fornés's staging of the play on an actual dirt-stage. Her play writing from the 1980s, undoubtedly rich, coexists along with the rest of the work that she did during that same period, principally her playwriting workshops for younger Latina and Latino writers that she ran at INTAR.
- Directs her own works
- "The greatest and least acknowledged female playwright."
- 80's play: focus on the individual, mostly women stuck in a relationship she does not control. Focus on poverty, torture and AIDS
- Never read reviews
- Joined forces with the New York experimental theatre group. She strived to make experimental theatre. Judson Church (Judson)
- Is known as a writer activist
- Most of her works have political undertones
- led the off-off Broadway movement in the 60's
- None of her plays have a set style, except for the heavy examination of human nature, she specifically examines intimacy in relationships and how it is affected by economic conditions.
- Won 9 Obie Awards: *The Successful Life of 3*, *Promenade*,

-She has also been honored with National Endowment for the Arts grants (1974, 1984, 1985), Rockefeller Foundation grants (1971, 1984), a Guggenheim fellowship (1982), and Yale University fellowships (1967, 1968). Fornés has also been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

- Fornés conducted annual workshops at the International Arts Relation Hispanic Playwrights-in-Residence Laboratory (INTAR) between 1980 and 1994. In this process of “replenishing” through the training of others, Fornés has indirectly had a profound impact in the racialization or, better yet, latinization of theater in the United States.

#### Other works:

*The Danube* (1983)

*Sarita* (1984)

*The Conduct of Life* (1985)

*Abingdon Square* (1987)

Night Plays (1989, 1993)

#### Time Period of Writing

Poverty: Poverty from the 1950's-70's was at a slow decline through these three decades. *Mud* was first performed in 1983, shortly after the 1970's oil crisis. It is possibly that Fornes was writing as a commentary on that. The face of poverty, at least in urban areas, was changing to be more primarily Latino communities, primarily immigrants, a group which Fornes is a part of.

#### Time Period of the Play

There is not much evidence out there to know 100% what time period we are in. But it seems safe to say (due to the discussion about disposable cups and plates) that this is in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It's not clear where in the world they are, but their language and assumed dress seems to be past the invention of house hold electricity. Their house has electricity, due to Mae's profession, but they do not have much else. According to Rachel Desoto (Desoto), they believe that it is taking place in the 1930's. It would make sense if it was this time period was during the great depression era. The dialogue also suggests that the setting is in the deep rural south.

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Mary Jo Pearson and John O'Keefe in "Mud" at Theater for the New City in 1983. (Photo by Anne Militello)



Maria Irene Fornes

### Works Cited

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### **Given Circumstances**

Mae, Lloyd and Henry live in small house on a ranch like farm. Lloyd and Mae have lived in this house since they were small. Mae's father owned the house. Lloyd has come to this house by pity. He was found, and Mae's father took pity on him. He works in the field. Lloyd and Mae never learned how to read. Their relationship is not quite clear, but they are not quite lovers and not quite siblings. The only setting we see is their kitchen/dining area which consists of two chairs, an ironing board, a kitchen table, and a fireplace. It is assumed that there is one other room in the house, due to the few conversations about Henry taking Lloyds room, and Henry sharing a bed with Mae. When Henry appears, Mae quickly kicks Lloyd out of his bedroom. Henry takes over Lloyds position, which leads Lloyd into a hateful spite towards Henry.

### **Background Story**

Mae was raised in this farm house with her father. It is unclear what happened to either of her parents. She exists with Lloyd in this small house throughout childhood. She is unhappy, and on an outing, she finds Henry and invites him to live with them.

Lloyd is an adopted child that Mae's father found on the farm. Through pity for Mae, he was taken in to their house as a working field boy. Growing up, Lloyd and Mae were raised as siblings, but they also discovered their sexual awakening through each other. Lloyd cannot read. Lloyd is also sick, his main symptom and the one that is discussed is his erectile disfunction,

which might have something to do with why Mae has looked for Henry. Lloyd can no longer give her what she wants.

Henry is the most ambiguous character of the three. He is the last to appear. All we know about him is that Mae brought him here, and he can read. We assume he is educated, but we only see his intelligence in reference to Lloyd, who is made by the land and cannot read. Henry is older, he perhaps has more of a life experience than Mae. We learn that he is picky and private, and dislikes Lloyd.

### **Character Analysis**

Mae:

- In her early 20's
- Mae is not dirty, but she is unkempt.
- She does laundry for her profession
- Does not know how to read, but she is in school now.
- Lives with Lloyd
- Uses Lloyd as a sexual partner but does not love him
- Love Henry, almost like the lost father figure, he teaches her to read.
- The relationships between Lloyd and Mae is like siblings, but they make love together. Perhaps the relationship between Mae and Henry started as a fatherly one but progressed further.
- Mae is emotionally and physically abused by both Henry and Lloyd, though abuses them back.
- She feels trapped in the house they live in. She has always had a man to take of her and protect her and she is terrified of what would happen to her if she lost either of them.

Lloyd:

- In his mid 20's
- He is unwashed and unshaven.
- Lloyd is an orphan that was picked up by Mae's father. Whether this was pity or selfishness is unclear. It does not seem that Mae's father liked Lloyd, just that he needed the extra farmhand. Lloyds actual mother died when he was seven and his father ran away.
- Lloyd cannot read, and has no education. His only learned ideas are what he has learn in the farm.
- Lloyd loves Mae, but does not know how to show it. The only relationships he's ever had were abusive. He thinks his behavior is normal. This is why when Henry comes into the house he is jealous but allows it to happen because Mae is happy. When Mae decides she is leaving, he panics, knowing that, like her, he cannot survive without her. His character is very similar to Lenny from *Of Mice and Men*. Lloyd loves so much that he kills her.

Henry:

- In his mid 50's
- Henry is a lonely old man.
- Henry manipulates Mae just for a free place to stay.
- He is greedy.
- He is looking for sex and impresses Mae with his skill in reading, whether it is actually advanced or not.



- He dislikes Lloyd because he sees Lloyd as a pest. Lloyd is something in his way, but knows that Mae comes with Lloyd so he makes frequent attempts to push Mae away from Lloyd
- Once he falls, he puts on an act about him being paralyzed for pity. This pushing Mae closer to him and more caring to him, leading Mae to ignore Lloyd and force Lloyd to take care of him. Mae feels guilty about it.
- Once his crippled act is up, he begs for forgiveness because he knows that no one else will take him in.

### **Progression of the Play**

1. Lloyd and Mae argue about Lloyds illness. Mae tries to get him to the doctor.
2. Mae brings Henry back to the house to read a pamphlet on Lloyds symptoms. He stays for dinner.
3. After Dinner Mae asks Henry to stay with them.
4. Lloyd is angry that Henry will stay with them.
5. Mae is ecstatic with Henry at the house. She talks to him about religion and education. Lloyd tries to relate.
6. Mae learns how to read with Henry's help, and Lloyd soon realizes that Henry is pushing Mae away from him.
7. Henry demands more of a description of Lloyd from Mae. He feels he is offending Lloyd. He wonders what their relationship is, and Mae provides backstory.
8. Henry knows that after asking about Lloyd, Mae would be uncomfortable with everyone staying in the same house, so to make it up to her he buys her lipstick to allow her to feel pretty.
9. Mae reads about the hermit crab. Lloyd realizes that this is what Henry is. He has only come into their house to push Lloyd out.
10. Lloyd finally goes to the clinic and gets a prescription for his ailment. Henry tells him to do it but offers no solution. While Lloyds continues to say "I have to buy this" he is quietly asking Henry to buy it for him, but cannot come out and say it.
11. Lloyd steals money from Henry to get his medicine. Henry is furious and demands it back.
12. Lloyd gloats over Henry's ability and hopes for his demise. Mae reminds him that they need to take care of Henry more.
13. Lloyd feeds Henry. Henry purposely makes his life difficult
14. Lloyd is learning how to read and Mae's money is stolen. A mirror effect of Scene 11.
15. Mae sees that Lloyd is right and Henry is faking his injury.
16. Mae is sick of Henry taking advantage of her and kicks him out but he does not leave.
17. Mae decides to leave but Henry does not go.

My scene lies at number 11, right at the middle of the plot. We start just about at the pickup of act 2, not allowing us to build on the relationships, but just diving in.

### **Theme**

Mud is a piece of feminist literature. The play is about Mae, who is stuck in between two abusive men and must overcome it. The end of Lloyd killing her a literal extreme of how she felt

the entire time she was with them. There is no escape for women from the violence and manipulative control that men have over them.

### Internal and External Actions

| External Action                                      | Internal Action  |
|--|--|
| Lloyd is taking Pills                                | Lloyd is doing what he thinks Mae wants him to do because he loves her.                    |
| Mae storms in  | Mae expects that Lloyd is doing something wrong  |
| Lloyd spits out the pill                             | Due to past situations, Lloyd fears he has done something wrong                            |
| Mae picks up the pills and forces Lloyd to take them | Mae wants Lloyd to get better  |
| Mae holds the pills                                  | Mae knows that Lloyd has no money and does not understand how he got the pills.            |
| Mae moves to the ironing board                       | Mae is angry that Lloyd stole the money from Henry   |
| Henry enters   | Henry wants to know who took his money   |
| Henry moves towards Mae                              | Henry does not want to speak to Lloyd  |
| Henry stares Lloyd down                              | Henry is asserting his dominance over Lloyd  |
| Henry dumps his wallet out                           | Henry wants to know exactly how much money Lloyd took                                      |
| Lloyd takes money out of his pocket                  | Lloyd wants Henry to stop yelling at him   |
| Henry collects the money                             | Henry is sick of Lloyd   |
| Lloyd stands on table                                | Lloyd is happy the Henry got hurt  |
| Lloyd jumps off table                                | Lloyd is showing off his physical ability over Henry                                       |
| Lloyd runs around                                    | Lloyd is insulting Henry   |
| Lloyd jumps on table again                           | Lloyd wants to show Mae that he is better than Henry                                       |
| Lloyd lays on his belly on the table                 | Lloyd wants to pester Mae  |
| Lloyd picks up a chair                               | Lloyd wants to show Mae his strength   |
| Lloyd slams the chair on the ground                  | Lloyd is making noise to get Mae's attention   |
| Lloyd runs around                                    | Lloyd is showing Mae that he can still move and drives in the fact that Henry is paralyzed |
| Lloyd sits on the floor                              | Lloyd is tired from running around the whole room.   |
| Lloyd reads Mae's book                               | Lloyd wants to impress Mae   |
| Henry mocks Lloyd                                    | Henry wants to make Lloyd feel stupid  |
| Mae enters   | Mae wants to know who took her money   |
| Lloyd stands up                                      | Lloyd knows he did not take the money but is afraid of Mae                                 |
| Lloyd pushes Henry in the rocking chair              | Lloyd is trying to get Henry to stand up to prove that he can walk                         |
| Mae steps on the book                                | Mae is walking away from the situation   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Mae picks up the book                  | Mae wants to know why Lloyd had her book                  |
| Mae reads her book                     | Mae wants to get better at reading                        |
| Henry gets up out of his rocking chair | Henry wants to have sex with Mae                          |
| Henry grabs Mae                        | Henry wants Mae to give in                                |
| Mae pushes Henry                       | Mae becomes furious because she knows that Henry can walk |
| Mae walks away                         | Mae hates Henry for lying to her                          |
| Mae throws things at Henry             | Mae wants Henry to leave                                  |
| Lloyd enters                           | Lloyd is curious about the yelling                        |
| Lloyd jumps on table                   | Lloyd is excited because Mae might kill Henry             |
| Lloyds jumps down from the table       | Lloyd is excited because Henry is bleeding                |
| Mae starts packing                     | Mae wants to leave  |
| Lloyd grabs Mae                        | Lloyd does not want Mae to leave                          |
| Mae exits                              | Mae ignores Lloyd and Henry and leaves                    |
| Lloyd exits                            | Lloyd wants to chase after Mae                            |
| Lloyd comes back to grab the gun       | Lloyd does not want Mae to leave                          |
| Lloyd shoots Mae                       | Lloyd decides that if he cannot have Mae, no one can      |
| Lloyd brings Mae into the house        | Lloyd wants to keep Mae                                   |

### **Discussion of Tempo/ Rhythm**

The tempo of Mud is quick throughout. The pace of each scene, due to vignette nature, each scene comes to a climax. Each episode of the play has a clear beginning, middle and end. Throughout, it builds the climax and heightens the stakes in each one, causing more and more pain for at least one of the characters, which is usually Mae. Finally, the climax of the play falls in the last scene. When Mae decides to leave, Lloyd and Henry begin to panic. This quicken the pace of the dialogue for Mae but makes the movement of all three characters more stagnant to give a more powerful and dramatic

### **Discussion of Mood**

The mood of the scenes over all is desperate. Lloyd is desperate for Mae to pay attention to him. Ever since Henry appeared, Lloyd has been ignored by Mae. The only time she ever give him any time of day is when she is telling him to accommodate Henry. Henry is desperate to push Lloyd out. Lloyd, in Henry's eyes, is useless. He does not understand education and does not deserve to live in the same house as the two of them. Most of Henry's existence is belittling Lloyd in front of Mae and convincing Mae that Lloyd is the bad guy. Mae is desperate for a decent life. She has suffered in poverty her entire life and sees Henry as a way out. When Henry becomes cripple, she tries her best to make the situation work, but realizes that through this she has actually torn her house apart and created a worse environment.

### **Style of the Play**

The style of *Mud* is an absurd realist play. The speech is visceral, and reactions are true. The way the dialogue moves and the events around it are like peeking into the lives of these three people. We only see the snapshot image of the one room, suggesting that things may happen outside of the room that we do not know about. To the greater population, the society that these three people have built is not usual. It is clearly abusive and filled with mistreatment. That is what makes it absurdist and realist. The society is unfamiliar to us, but we can accept it as true due to the execution of us only seeing this one room in the play.

### **Concept**

My concept of the play is to keep it fairly true to the script. Had I not already had the space chosen for me, I would have kept it in a small and intimate space. I enjoy that the space of a small blackbox or thrust allows us to feel as though we are looking in the window of the lives of these people. Had I had a bigger budget, the floor would be dirt, in reference to the title of the play being *Mud*. This is how it was originally staged and I would like to keep it that way.

I like to play on the idea of feminism, though the cut I have chosen out of this for the purposes of my directing scene does not seem that way. On the whole, while the play is about Mae and it is her play, it seems that my focus is Lloyd. Picking up in the middle, we are not allowed to see Lloyd abuse of Mae. If I was able to direct the entire thing, I believe we would see more of that.

### **Action Analysis**

*Mud* by Maria Irene Fornes is a complicated absurd-realist play written in the 1980's. It follows Mae, Lloyd and Henry, three people who live in a small house with nowhere to go. Lloyd is a farm boy, who was left at this house as a child when his mother died and his father abandoned him. Mae's father found him and picked him up to take him home to keep Mae company. Mae is a young woman, who works by doing laundry for other people. She spends most of her time behind her ironing board. She wants to be independent, but it seemingly stuck to Lloyd. The two of them are not quite siblings, but not quite lovers.

When Henry arrives, Lloyd becomes banished. He never leaves, but he is kicked out of the bedroom and forced to sleep on the floor in the kitchen. Henry takes over his room. This is the major conflict between Lloyd and Henry. In the cut I have made, I have unfortunately had to cut some of the poetry in it. There is many references to sea life, specifically hermit crabs and starfish. These moments represent how the ocean is free and things can come and go as they please, following the eb and flow of the tide. That is just the opposite of this house. Things come but they do not go. It starts with Lloyd, who was brought into the house at least 15 years prior and has not left. Then Henry is brought there, he cannot leave once he is there. He becomes cripple and is a burden on Mae, just as taking care of Lloyd is. Finally, when Mae wants to leave she cannot. When she makes the decision and leaves the house, Lloyd follows her and kills her. This alludes to the sea, nothing can actually leave.

The concept of being unable to leave is also eminent in the lack of education the original people of the house have. Lloyd is entirely uneducated. He goes out in the field, picks the corn, feeds the pigs, then comes back in for supper. This is a rinse and repeat for him. He has no reason to leave because he is content in the lifestyle he is living. Since he was seven years old he has lived this way. Ploughing the land and waiting for Mae to make

dinner. Mae is trying to better herself. She goes to school and learns child level things like arithmetic and how to read. When she comes home from the clinic with the pamphlet about Lloyd's condition, she cannot read it because it is above reading level. That's why she brings Henry home in the first place. Henry is introduced as a minor character, one to come in and leave, but Mae traps him there. Once he is trapped there, Henry becomes a trap for Mae as the play progresses.

The play shows a lot of imagery of violence. In the first scene alone, Lloyd and Mae discuss having sex with a pig. There are a lot of expletives exchanged as well. Lloyd and Mae go back and forth throughout insulting each other and emotionally abusing one another. This is the society they have formed in their house and existence. They know nothing other than this. Perhaps this environment was how Mae's father treated them. It is unclear what happened before, but since Mae falls in love with Henry and he is about 30 years older than her, perhaps she sees him as a father figure. I suspect that Mae's father sexually abused Mae, which is why she is unfazed by the speech that Lloyd throws at her. She only realizes the cruelty of Lloyd and her father when Henry comes in. He is kind to her and sweet and he brings her conversations about the world that she has never heard before. When she finds comfort in him, she realizes that Lloyd is actually a terrible partner and she cannot be with him anymore.

Though once she commits to Henry, he gets hurt and house bound. He is no longer an exotic window to the outside world. He stays in his rocking chair, needing to be fed and taken care of and she soon finds him useless when it comes to love. Henry is no longer mysterious. He spends all of his time complaining and abusing Lloyd and she finds that she must defend Lloyd more than she used to. She previously thought that Lloyd was the most useless man in the world but now that Henry has no job or life she is seeing that Lloyd is not the worst thing.

The thing that pushes Mae over the edge is when Henry steals Mae's money. Henry says that the money he took rightly belonged to him, but Mae is disgusted by this phrase. She is furious that Henry cannot see that Lloyd has been taking care of Henry since he got sick, even after Lloyd learned that Henry's injury was not real. Once Mae finds out that Lloyd was right in Henry's injury is when she realizes that the men in her life have been taking advantage of her and always have. Though she cannot leave. No matter how she tries to move up the social ladder and better herself by getting an education, she cannot actually move. Her social class keeps her down which is represented by her murder by Lloyd.