CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will review some books and theories discussed in the theoretical approach. The books and theories contain social condition between the 1910s to 1930s Chicago Black Belt, the life of Black immigrants in the Ghetto, Chicago White authorities and social relation between Black and White in the Ghetto and also theories of delinquency and Black delinquency in the 1930s Chicago. The literature review will be divided into five subchapters. They are The 1910s to 1930s Segregated Chicago, Delinquency Definition, Factors, Theories, and Law, The 1930s Chicago African-American Delinquency, African-American Literary Criticism, and a brief summary of Native Son.

A. The 1910s to 1930s Segregated Chicago

Based on two journals entitled The Black Metropolis-Bronzeville District (1984) and Chicago Black Renaissance Literary Movement (2009); it can be traced the social relation between Black and White Chicagoans in segregated Chicago during the 1910s to 1930s. Beginning in 1870, the settlement of African-Americans in Chicago became more concentrated with the largest was in the Near South Side, from the Van Buren Street (in the Loop) to 39th street which was often known as “Black Belt” (The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, 1984, p. 2). The more
concentrated community happened as the African-Americans successfully developed an independent commercial, social, and political base in the Black Belt during the year (ibid). In 1874, John Jones, a mixed free Black and White parentage won the election of the Cook County Board of Commissioners as he was supported by both African-Americans and Whites and he became the first African-American politician in the office of Illinois (ibid). In another hand, by 1908, the Chicago’s first African American-owned bank was founded by entrepreneur Jesse Binga that gave a great support to the economic development of the community (ibid). The success of Black Belt community in developing their own economic and political base in Chicago finally came to the ears of rural Southern Blacks and it invited many Southern Blacks to migrate to the North, especially Chicago.

There were three factors that invited them to leave their homes and families in the South and moved to Chicago. The first was they heard the success news of Chicago Black Belt community in developing their own economic and political base within the city. The second was the racial oppression of Jim Crow Law and Ku Klux Klan in the South. The last is the outbreak of World War I that made many industries in Chicago lost their White workers while their military production demand rose, so that it opened up wider the job opportunities for southern Blacks as never before. Thus, all those factors combined and led to the 1910s Southern Blacks Great Migration phenomenon (Quarles, 1969, p. 193). The Chicago Defender, the nation’s most influential black weekly newspaper recognized the phenomenon and encouraged more southern blacks to relocate to Chicago (ibid). Eventually, between the 1916 and 1918 there were at least 50,000 blacks migrated to Chicago (ibid, p. 8).
By the rapid growth of blacks in Chicago, especially in the Black Belt, the black community was able to develop “city-within-a-city” or known as “Black Metropolis” centered at State and 35th Streets (ibid).

Black Metropolis was a role model of success for both African-American and White of the time. It can be seen through their great achievement in the late 1920s, such as the establishment of several ambitious African-American owned building projects along the State Street, the development of Chicago’s Jazz Center, and also the existence of African American Alderman which increased Black Metropolis participation in city government during the year (The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, 1984, p. 3-7).

However, the success of economic and political development in the Black Metropolis threatened the political interest, housing sectors, and job opportunities of White people in the city and it triggered the racial tension between them. During the 1920s, the expansion of the Black Metropolis met with great resistance from White neighborhoods situated in all directions. Racial tension escalated to violence during the Chicago Race Riot of July 1919, when a Black youngster drowned at the 27th Street beach on the lake, after a White man threw rocks at him (The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, 2009, p. 8). The incident forced the Black males in Chicago to form Black gangs to confront hostile White gang members who terrorized the Black community (Howell and Moore, 2010, p. 7). The Five days of rioting between Chicago’s White and Black gangs left 38 African-American Chicagoans dead and over 300 wounded (The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, 2009, p. 8). Uniquely, there was a big political interest from the city Mayor hidden behind the incident, as...
John M. Hagedorn stated in his observation “A Genealogy of Gangs in Chicago” (2009):

The Race Relations Commission Report (1922) found that the riots (the 1919 Chicago race riot) were the result of systematic discrimination and maltreatment of blacks. The riot’s length and intensity was related to the organized “drive by” shootings of Social Athletic Clubs, and the Irish Hamburgs were among the principal culprits. A mainly Irish police force sided with the whites and nearly all of the arrests were of blacks (Hagedorn, 2009, p. 7).

Based on the excerpt, it is clear that the harsh political condition against Black in the city was closely related to the interest of the city authorities, since the Social Athletic Clubs and Irish Hamburgs street gang were owned by Chicago’s politicians, including the city Mayor, Richard J. Daley (Hagedorn, 2009, p. 3-4). Furthermore, Hagedorn explains that Chicago’s politicians used those street gangs to support their political power in the polling booth (ibid, p. 4). Mayor Richard J. Daley who was supported by politicians and police used his armed groups violently forced African-Americans Black Belt to stay in their place in the 1924 HAA president election (ibid, p. 7).

After the 1919 Chicago race riot, racial tensions hardened as whites were increasingly determined to exclude blacks from their neighborhoods (The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, 2009, p. 8). According to the Chicago Tribune, nearly 1,200 white protester unified by the slogan, “They Shall Not Pass,” gathered to demonstrate African-Americans who relocated to their area (ibid). Many housing organizations such as the Hyde Park-Kenwood Property Association and the Washington Park Court Improvement Association refused to sell or rent property to
African-Americans (ibid, p. 8-10). The frequency of violent outbreaks rose throughout the early 1920s as African-American homeowners who sold or rented property to Blacks were targets of bombing (ibid, p. 10). Jesse Binga, a prominent African-American banker and real estate dealer in Black Metropolis, was the target of numerous acts of violence (ibid). Between March 1919 and November 1920, Binga’s home at 5922 S. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive was bombed ten times. Black homeowners in the 4500 block of Vincennes Avenue and the 4400 block of Grand Boulevard were also victims of unidentified bombers (ibid). Nevertheless, African-Americans continued to expand the boundaries of the Black Belt by moving further south into the Grand Boulevard and Washington Park neighborhoods during the 1920s. Also between 1925 and 1929, Black Chicagoans gained unprecedented access to civil service jobs and won offices in state and local government (ibid).

Unfortunately, the success of the Black Metropolis totally changed during the Great Depression of 1929. It was caused by White businessmen, who previously ignored the economic potential of the African-American community, began to develop an alternate business area on 47th Street that weakened the independent African-Americans business (The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, 1984, p. 8). As the result, most of African-American-owned banks, insurance companies and other businesses in the Black Metropolis were forced to close (ibid). By the early 1930s, the majority of Chicago’s African-American population finally ended up in the Grand Boulevard and Washington Park neighborhoods of Bronzeville (The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, 2009, p. 10). The place was characterized by rat-infested houses, poor health and sanitation facilities, high incidence of crime and
Based on socio ecologist perspective, the Grand Boulevard and Washington Park neighborhoods of Bronzeville’s social structures including overcrowding, poor sanitation, inadequate transportation, unemployment, poverty, poor schools, births out of wedlock, and low employment contribute to high delinquency and crime rates of the place because of resulting widespread social instability (ibid, p. 84). Thus, the researchers concluded that the social structures of those areas affected the quality of life for inhabitants.

B. Delinquency Definition, Factors, Theories, and Law

In this subchapter, there are review of books and journals about delinquency definition; including kinds, examples, progression, and the outcome of delinquency, and then the review of basic factors of delinquency, and it goes to the theories of delinquency, and the last part is the punishment for offender based on the U.S. criminal justice system.

1. Delinquency Definition

A book of Gus Martin entitled *Juvenile Justice: Process and System* gives an important account on the definition, kinds, and outcome of delinquency. Basically, “Delinquency / Deviance / Antisocial Behavior” is behavior that is contrary to the standards of conduct or social expectations of a given group or society (Martin, 2005, p. 67). However, Humphrey & Schmalleger’s *Deviant Behavior* gives an additional
explanation that deviant behavior can also be defined in situational perspective. Through this perspective, deviant behaviors are essentially neutral and take on meaning only when defined by some social entity (2012, p. 8).

Next, Martin separates deviance into two; the first is “Juvenile Deviance” means antisocial behavior done by youths, which includes status offenses (violations of laws exclusively governing juvenile behavior) and delinquent acts (behavior that would be criminal if juveniles were tried as adults). The second is “Criminal Deviance” means antisocial behavior by persons who violate laws prohibiting acts defined as criminals by city, county, and state law makers or the U.S. Congress. Both adults and juveniles (those waived into criminal courts) can be convicted of crimes (Martin, 2005, p. 67).

Further, Martin also gives clear explanations related to the relationship between juvenile delinquency and adult criminality. The first is the inception of juvenile deviance; researchers have identified that the likelihood of a person’s chronic wrongdoing decreases as one’s age of inceptions increases. In other words, the older one is when a person commences to break the law, the less likely he or she is to continue committing offenses. Long-term delinquency tends to be found among those who begin their career earlier (ibid, p. 67-68).

The second is juvenile deviance possibly progresses into habitual deviance. Habitual (chronic) juvenile delinquency is characteristically associated with age of inception, and yet it is not necessarily associated with increased incidence or with expertise (specialization) in certain offenses (ibid, p. 68). In other words, the age of inception can be a factor for habitual continuation of deviant behavior as youths
mature, but not necessarily for acceleration in numbers of all offenses, nor for the development of expertise (ibid).

The last is Martin explains that juvenile deviance is an antisocial behavior that has to be overcome soon, because the young deviants who finally engage to what so called as *chronically deviant behavior* which means the individuals have essentially accepted deviant lifestyles that last well into adulthood, they often end up with long periods of incarceration (ibid, p. 68). Martin states that many adult criminals were juvenile delinquents. Those who become criminals tend to be people who never overcome the environmental and idiosyncratic (uniquely personal) factors that kept them engage in chronically deviant behavior (ibid). Humphrey & Schmalleger’s *Deviant Behavior* strengthens the previous statement that chronic deviant is person who transcends any situational boundaries. He/she persistently engages in aberrant behavior across a wide range of social situations (2012, p. 15-16).

2. **Delinquency Factors**

Martin’s *Juvenile Justice: Process and System* states that fundamentally, deviant behavior is influenced by three factors; family, socioeconomic class, and educational experiences (Martin, 2005, p. 65). However, Elrod and Ryder’s *Juvenile Justice: A Social, Historical and Legal Perspective* gives additional explanation that community, media, and political economy also share significant contribution to deviant behavior.

Family background is one of the most significant influences on early phase of deviant behavior development. Norms, values, models of behavior, and other
influences from the family unit create an internalized “blueprint” for the child’s personality, beliefs, and attitudes in his/her early life (Martin, 2005, p. 65). For example is the association which exists between marital instability and delinquency. The situation of an instable marital environment, such as stress, estrangement, coldness, and unhealthy boundaries produce a high incidence of delinquent behavior in children who grow up in these environments (ibid). On the other hand, there is a fact that family structure can be a significant factor in the delinquency of children, especially those who live in single-parent households, typically their mother (Elrod and Ryder, 2011, p. 57). Some researchers have indicated that statistically there is significant relationship between single-parent homes and delinquency. However, it is associated not with serious delinquency, but with status offenses (ibid, p. 58).

Regarding to the socioeconomic class, past intellectuals held that children who were born in poor and working-class backgrounds were much more likely to engage in delinquent behavior (Martin, 2005, p. 66). The reasons include parental pressure, fellow friend’s pressure, uncertainty for the future, experimenting alcoholic material, and alternative lifestyles, and strong youth subcultures (ibid). Moreover, research on the inner-city underclass had found that large numbers of the urban poor are caught in a chronic generational cycle of poverty, low educational achievement, teenage parenthood, unemployment, and welfare dependence. The research also found that antisocial behaviors have entered those chronic environments (ibid).

Besides, educational experiences or academic achievement is considered to be one of the most important steps toward success in American society. In an ideal or healthy environment, opportunities for education, mentoring, and effort of the
government to prevent the problem should be equally available for all children.

Unfortunately, educational opportunities are not equally available to all persons for a number of reasons (ibid, p. 67).

In addition to family, socioeconomic class, and educational experiences, community also contributes as one of significant factors in the development of deviant behavior. Since the development of cities in the United States, researchers observed that there were negative influences found within some areas of the urban environment and they believed the influences related to delinquency, adult crime, and a host of other social problems, such as poverty and drunkenness (Elrod and Ryder, 2011, p. 67). Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay started their pioneering work designed to understand the influence of the community on delinquency. They mapped areas of Chicago where many delinquents lived. The maps indicated that the highest rates of delinquency were located in deteriorating inner-city areas characterized by decreasing population, a high percentage of foreign-born persons and African-American households, low levels of home ownership, low rental values, close proximity to industrial and commercial establishments, and an absence of agencies designed to promote community well-being (ibid). They also discovered that despite changes in the ethnic composition of these high delinquency areas overtime, the delinquency rates remained relatively constant (ibid). This convinced Shaw and McKay that the high delinquency rates in certain areas could not be attributed to residents’ individual pathologies (mental illness), but resulted from a set of conditions that added up to, in their terminology, “social disorganization” (the state of a neighborhood in which it is unable to control over its members, and it results from inner-city areas that
characterized by things have been mentioned above) (ibid).

Next is media factor; media give a very significant contribution to the development of deviant behavior because it has an ability to assign deviant label. Through its ability, media often play an important role in framing public perception of delinquency and the operation of the court. Court administrators, middle management personnel, and other court personnel are often sensitive to public perception and demands. In the other hands, much of what public knows about the court practices is a reflection of media-controlled perceptions. Media-controlled perceptions here mean people’s perceptions of some phenomenon (or area of interest) that are substantially shaped by the media’s coverage of that phenomenon. The public’s perceptions of the justice are determined largely by the media because of the public lacks information from other sources about the daily operation of the court agencies (ibid, p. 74).

The last but not least is political economy; the political economy is significant to its relation with delinquency since political economy determines the ways in which economic and political resources are developed, managed, and distributed, so it directly affects the ability of the previous fundamental factors; family, education, and socioeconomic to be well or unwell fulfilled. Furthermore, the development, management, and distribution of economic resources do not occur in a social vacuum, rather they are product of a political process in which different groups with conflicting concerns and varying level of power try to protect and extend their interest (ibid, p. 51).
3. Delinquency Theories

Shepard and Greene’s *Sociology and You* elaborates theories of deviance into three perspectives; Symbolic Interactionism (differential association theory and labeling theory), Functionalism (strain theory), and Conflict Theory.

Firstly, symbolic interactionism; from this perspective deviance exists based on two things, the first is learned behavior (differential association theory) and the second is deviance results from social labeling created by those with the power to assign deviant labels (labeling theory).

Differential association theory explains deviant behavior is learned through interaction with others (Shepard and Greene, 2002, p. 214). The more individuals are exposed to people who break the law, the more apt they are to become criminals (ibid). Next, through labeling theory, it can be understood why deviance is relative. According to labeling theory, deviant behaviors are always a matter of social definition. In this view, deviance exists when some members of a group or society label others as deviants (ibid, p. 214). Howard Becker, a pioneer of labeling theory says:

“Social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying these rules to particular people and labeling them as outsiders. From this point of view, deviance is not a quality of the act the person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an “offender.” The deviant is one to whom that label has successfully been applied; deviant behavior is behavior that people so label” (ibid, p. 215).

Labeling theory also explains why a middle-class youth who steals a car may
go unpunished for “borrowing” the vehicle whereas a lower-class youth goes to court for stealing. Too often, lower-class youths are “expected” to be criminals while middle-class youth are not (ibid). Erving Goffman examined some of the negative effects of labeling when he wrote about stigma – an undesirable characteristic or label used by others to deny the deviant full social acceptance. Stigma is an undesirable trait or label that is used to characterize an individual. One stigma, a prison record, is used to discredit the individual’s entire worth (ibid, p. 216).

Secondly, functionalist perspective; functionalist argues that deviance results from structural strains in society. Merton’s strain theory traces the origins of deviance to the tension caused by the gap (strain) between cultural goals and the means people have to achieve these goals (ibid, p. 210). The imbalance between cultural goals and structural available means can compel individuals into deviant behavior (ibid). It happens when those who do not have access to the legal means use the illegal ones to achieve their goals. In other words, those without resources and access may become delinquents or criminals to achieve comfort, leisure, status, and wealth (Martin, 2005, p. 83).

The last is conflict theory perspective; conflict theory hypothesizes that conflict within political economy of a society arises between dominant groups and “subordinate” classes, races, genders, political groups, ethnic, groups, and other defined outsiders in society (ibid, p. 85-86). Based on the theory, laws and rules are simply instruments of control used by ruling elites or the dominant groups to maintain control of key institutions; family, education, and socioeconomic, thus it excludes others who might challenge their interest (ibid, p. 86). The exclusion of
minor race from the key institutions of society by law and legal system, all in the name of crime control, like what happened to African-American in the 1930s Chicago is called as racialization of crime (Brewer and Heitzeg, 2008, p. 626). The racialization of crime that was done by Chicago White social actors and authorities were in form of discrimination in community development (including residential segregation and housing reform), policing, and courts (Ward, 2012, p. 250). The racialization of crime was purposed to fulfill the interest of White social actors and authorities as well as to protect White neighborhoods (ibid).

4. The Law

The criminal justice system (system comprising institutions and processes responsible for enforcing criminal statutes) is made up of the institutions and processes responsible for enforcing criminal statutes. It includes the police, courts, and correctional system. A criminal justice system may draw on four approaches to control and punish lawbreakers; deterrence, capital punishment, retribution, incarceration, and rehabilitation (Shepard and Greene, 2002, p. 227).

The deterrence approach uses the threat of punishment to discourage criminal actions. A basic idea of this approach is that punishment of convicted criminals will serve as an example to keep other people from committing crime. In the U.S., however, the punishment for crime is usually not certain, swift, or severe. Consequently, punishment does not have deterrent effect that it could have (ibid).

Capital punishment (the death penalty) is a special case. Over four thousand
people have been executed in the United States since 1930, the year the federal government began gathering statistics on capital punishment (ibid, p. 227). Unless, it is premeditated, a murder is an extremely emotional and irrational act (ibid, p. 227-229). Under such circumstances, you would not expect the threat of capital punishment to be a deterrent to murder, a decline in its use should be followed by an increase in the murder rate. Research indicates, however, that the murder rate remains constant, or even drops, following a decline in the use of the death penalty (ibid, p. 229).

Retribution is a type of punishment intended to make criminals pay compensation for their acts. It comes from the idea of “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” The law allows designated officials to exact retribution. However, it does not allow individuals to take personal vengeance. If a mother “takes the law into her own hands” by shooting her son’s killer, she must also answer to society for her action (ibid).

Incarceration; it is a method of protecting society from criminals by keeping them in prisons. The basic idea behind incarceration is keeping criminals in prisons so that criminals who are not on the street cannot commit crimes (ibid).

Rehabilitation; it is an approach to crime control that attempts to resocialize criminals. Most prisons have programs aimed at giving prisoners both social and work skills that will help them adjust to normal society after their release. Unfortunately, 30 to 60 percent of those released from penal institutions are sent back to prison in two to five years (ibid, p. 230-231).
C. The 1930s Chicago African-American Delinquency

In this subchapter, there are two sections journals and books reviews which give important account for the first is on records of delinquency and crime committed by African-Americans during the 1930s in Chicago’s Black Belt and the second is records of unbalance capital punishment (death penalty) sentenced toward African-American in the United States and also Chicago during the 1930s.

1. African-American Delinquency Record

In the book *Cops and Kids: Policing Juvenile Delinquency in Urban America, 1890-1940*, David B. Wolcott explains specifically about the records of delinquency and crime committed by African-American Chicagoans during 1928 to 1930. He states that between 1928 and 1930, police in the Wabash Avenue police district found a large number of juveniles to court: 19.8 percent of all juveniles to court in Chicago (Wolcott, 2005, p. 118). The Wabash Avenue district was in the heart of Chicago’s “Black Belt”. In 1920 to 1930, the African-American population had grown explosively in Black Belt due to the Great Migration; they increased from 32 percent of the district’s population in 1920 to 94 percent in 1930 (ibid). High rates of delinquency (80 complaints per 1,000 juveniles between 1928 and 1930) accompanied this transition (ibid). 33 percent were suspected to have committed offenses against property and 4 percent were investigated for offenses against persons (ibid).
Wabash Avenue district recorded a larger number of delinquency cases to court than did any other district in Chicago and particularly African-Americans committed a huge amount of boys in juvenile court. In 1903, when African-Americans constituted 1.8 percent of Chicago’s population, black males represented 2.6 percent of total delinquents; by 1930, when Chicago’s population was 6.9 percent African American, they involved in 21.3 percent of boys in juvenile court (ibid).

The large number of Black delinquency cases to court from the 1900s to 1930s in Chicago was also supported by the emerging of Black Street Gangs in the early 1900s. Black gangs were formed to counter aggressive White youth, but they relatively unorganized groups and they were no match for the well-organized White gangs (Howell and Moore, 2010, p. 6-7). Furthermore, the race riot of 1919 also increased the number Black gangs as Black males united to confront White gangs who terrorized the Black’s neighborhood (ibid, p. 7).

Black gangs kept growing along with the decision of Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) to build low-income family apartments known as Robert Taylor Homes lived by approximately 30,000 poor people in the Black Belt (ibid). During the 1950s to 1960s, the apartments provided a strong base for several gangs including Black gangs, so that they were able to grow stronger inside the buildings, until the Chicago Black gang problem exploded in the 1960s (ibid).
2. The Capital Punishment

Cheatwood’s *Capital Punishment for the Crime of Homicide in Chicago: 1870-1930* states that in the criminal justice system of the United States, the ultimate and final act in any homicide case is the application of the death penalty (Cheatwood, 2003, p. 843). There have been more than 13,000 executions recorded in the United States during 1790 to 1985 (ibid, p. 845-846). Unfortunately, African-Americans were more likely to be charged, sentenced, and executed than were others. For example, in rape cases; during the period, 98 percent of all the offenders executed were black (ibid, p. 846).

Still based on the Cheatwood’s journal, there was an interesting analysis of Jeffey Adler on Chicago Homicide data prior to 1920 that African-Americans were never more than 4.2% of the city’s population, but they comprised 12.1% of homicide offenders and 27.5% of those executed for homicide. Further, when African-American killed a white victim, 6.8% were executed, but when they killed another African-American only 1.5% were executed. Unfortunately, in keeping with the data, there were no executions of a white offender for killing an African-American (ibid, p. 846).

During the 1930s Chicago, the number of executions for Black offenders decreased from 42% of total in the 1920s to 33% of total in 1930. However, based on *U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistic* (1981) the average number of Blacks executed in all states of America kept high during 1930 to 1979 as Blacks comprised 54% of total execution during the year (1981, p. 8).
D. African-American Literary Criticism

In this subchapter, there are explanations of two literary approaches that will be used to reveal the hidden message of Richard Wright’s *Native Son* regarding the 1930s Chicago’s Black Belt environment and its relation to Bigger Thomas’s delinquency. The first is the explanation about African-American literary criticism which becomes the main literary approach in analyzing the research topic. Secondly, there is naturalism that supports the main approach in revealing Richard Wright’s hidden message and critics about the significance of the 1930s Chicago’s Black Belt environment toward Bigger Thomas’s delinquency and crime.

In this research, a critical approach of literature that is used here is African-American literary criticism. The African-American literary criticism is a literature approach that is used to see African American’s sociological, political, ideological, and cultural expression embedded in their literary works that are formed through the experience of slavery, oppression, marginalization, violence and negotiation with white culture (“Black (African-American) Literary Criticism.” n.d.). In the history of African-American literature, there are developments of understanding regarding the critical thinking toward African-American literature, since the era of Frederick Douglas’s *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* (1845) to the appearance of Richard Wright’s *Native Son* (1940).

Frederick Douglass, a slave narrative author, through *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* (1845), he gives his perspective related to African-American literary works. He argues that by writing literary works,
he and other black slaves are able to speak up and to tell the outside world of the horrors happened to them (Campbell and Kean, 2005, p. 75-76). Couple years later, in 1903, W.E.B. Du Bois through his *The Souls of Black Folk*, expresses his perspective of Blacks as part of White’s world which oppressed them, so that they had no self-consciousness, unless looking at the world by the eyes of others which was known as “doubleconsciousness” (ibid, p. 77). By the “doubleconsciousness” Black’s consciousness were kept under the control of White’s culture. In addition, there was also a slave narrative entitled *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), written by a female author, Harriet Jacobs who wrote that black slaves were obligated to speak and move in certain language that were appropriate for their master (ibid, p. 77).

The *Native Son* novel itself was released in 1940 and it was the time when Chicago’s Black literary movement achieved its renaissance. Renaissance means that there was a big wave of artistic expression, community organizing, and social activity in Chicago African-American community during the 1930s to 1950s (The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, 2009, p. 3). The moment of the Chicago Black Renaissance literary movement was coming along with the 1929 Great Depression that struck down the political, social, economic, and cultural life of Black Metropolis community in Chicago. As the social condition of African-American Chicagoans got worse, Chicago Black Renaissance literary movement became their response to improve their conditions and future generation.

During the 1930s to 1940s, African-American literary works were produced by the basic idea of New Black. The idea of New Black emerged in particular
economic status and lived in certain urban region like Uptown Manhattan and South Side Chicago (Jarrett, 2010, p. 151). It happened since there was a violent territorial contest between Whites and Blacks in those urban places and the Blacks fought for racial uplift and also equal right in politic, economic, and social life in those cities (ibid, p. 152-153). The term New Black itself refers to the various efforts to overcome White supremacy and its bad effect to African-American and all the efforts can be seen in many slave narratives and other African-American literary works during 1865 to 1940 (ibid, p. 153). In conclusion, African-American literary criticism is a form of critical thinking through African-American’s literary author’s sociological, political, ideological, and cultural expression in criticizing and overcoming bad effects of White domination over African-American race that happened in certain time and space embedded in every detail of their works, for example dialog, expression, setting, and, characterization.

Based on the explanation above, this research needs a theoretical approach which is suitable to support the African-American literary criticism in revealing Richard Wright’s sociological, political, ideological, and cultural expression in criticizing and overcoming bad effects of the 1930s Chicago Black Belt’s socio-cultures toward the delinquency behavior of African-Americans lived in that place as it is portrayed in the *Native Son* novel.

In order to reveal Richard Wright message about socio-cultural conditions of the 1930s Chicago Black Belt and its effect to Bigger Thomas delinquency, naturalism is the most suitable theory, as it emphasizes specifically on a belief that people’s character who belong to middle to lower class society are governed by
natural laws, such as environment or socio-cultural conditions. During the end of 19th century to the early 20th century, many American writers were inspired by the European notions of Naturalism (Binford, 2006, p. 171). Naturalism had been circulating in U.S. literary markets since the 1880s when the French author Emile Zola’s novels began appearing in English (ibid, p. 171-172). Naturalism gained currency as there was a wake of rapid social changes, such as industrialization and urbanization, and the rise of new scientific and philosophical ideas (most notably Darwin’s theory of evolution) (Noble, 2011, p. 59).

This notion is a product of post-Darwinian biology in the mid-nineteenth century which holds that a human being belongs entirely in the order of nature and does not have a soul or any other mode of participation in a religious or spiritual world beyond nature (Abrams, 1988, p. 154). Therefore, the naturalist writers believed that individuals’ lives and characters are governed and determined by impersonal natural laws and forces, such as social conditions, the environment, and heredity (Noble, 2011, p. 59). A person inherits personal traits and a compulsive instinct, especially hunger, the accumulative drive, and sex, and is then subject to the social and economic forces in the family, the class, and the milieu into which that person is born (Abrams, 1988, p. 154). In Donald Pizer's Realism and Naturalism in Nineteenth-Century American Fiction, Revised Edition (1984) (as cited in Cambell, 2010), the naturalist novel writers populate their novels primarily from the lower middle class or the lower class. Their fictional world is that of the commonplace and unheroic in which life would seem to be chiefly the dull round of daily existence as we ourselves usually conceive our lives. But the naturalist discovers in this world
those qualities of man are usually associated with the heroic or adventurous, such as acts of violence and passion which involve sexual adventure or bodily strength which culminate in desperate moment and violent death.

E. Native Son

*Native Son* was published in 1940 written by Richard Nathaniel Wright. Wright was one of the most important African-American writers in the United States. He had produced many books in order to express his feeling about African American life in his era and also criticized the way of American major people treating them, for example is *Black Boy* (1937), Wright’s autobiography that gave insights of how blacks were set against one another. Then, there is a short story collection *Uncle Tom’s Children* (1938) which contains five short stories, *The Ethics of Living Jim Crow*, *Big Boy Leaves Home*, *Down by the Riverside*, *Fire and Cloud*, and *Bright and Morning Star* that each of them told stories about the inferiority of Blacks under modern civilization.

The *Native Son* is one of his best masterpieces, as it becomes the first African-American best seller novel and it receives many good appreciations from critics. *Native Son* is a story of a 20-year-old black boy lived in the 1930s poor neighborhood of Chicago Black Belt, named Bigger Thomas.

The story is divided into three parts; “Fear”, “Flight”, and “Fate”. Besides, in the beginning of the novel, there is an introduction entitled “How Bigger was born” about the backgrounds and process behind the creation of Bigger Thomas character.
In “How Bigger was born”, Richard Wright tells that the birth of Bigger was based on his own childhood and teenage experiences, either when he lived in rural Mississippi or in urban Chicago. He explains Bigger is the combination of several characters of black kids who are temperament, like to act tough to other black kids, rebel to the different reality between White and Black, having delinquent behavior in his teenage age, and rebel to the White’s discrimination happened to him.

Next, the novel begins its first chapter by “Fear”. In Fear, Bigger shows how he hates to live and gather with his family in his poor house, so then he prefers to go outside and hang around with his fellows. He realizes that he has very little money and he decides to take a job as a chauffeur for a prominent white family, the Daltons. During his work in Dalton’s family, he is often covered by fear toward white people and white’s environment. One night, after he drives Mary (Mr. Dalton’s daughter) home, Bigger helps Mary who is drunk to reach for her bedroom. Unfortunately, in the bedroom, Bigger accidentally kills Mary, after he covers Mary’s head with pillow to keep her silent, as her blind mother by all of sudden enters the room and calls for her daughter. Bigger who is afraid that the crime would be noticed by Dalton’s family and also police, decides to burn Mary’s body in the furnace.

In “Flight”, Bigger tries to make alibi by directing the opinion of Dalton’s family and police that Jan (Mary’s boyfriend) is the one responsible. Nevertheless, all his efforts to avoid the murder come to an end as the police find Mary’s body in the furnace. Bigger who gets panic hides in the Black Belt neighborhood and commits his second murder by killing Bessie (Bigger’s girl friend) as he considers her as a hindrance.

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In “Fate”, eventually, police catch Bigger and put him to court. During the moment in court and jail, Bigger meets two important persons with contradictory characters. The first is Buckley, a white racist state’s attorney who uses Bigger’s case to succeed his political interest. The second is Max, a lawyer who defense Bigger and tries to convince the judges and also all the whites who hate Bigger that the circumstances of racial hatred, discrimination, and segregation to people of Black Belt are the main causes which create a boy like Bigger.