
The story is set in the 1950s and revolves around Troy Maxson, a former Negro League baseball player turned sanitation worker, and his family. Troy is a complex character who grapples with issues of race, identity, responsibility, and the American Dream. He is a flawed man, grappling with the consequences of his past decisions and his relationships with his family, particularly his son Cory.

The title "Fences" serves as a metaphor throughout the play. Troy, in building a fence around his yard, seeks to protect what he has, but also inadvertently builds barriers between himself and his loved ones. The fence symbolizes the walls Troy constructs in his own life, separating him from his family emotionally and socially.

The play explores themes of fatherhood, duty, dreams deferred, and the weight of history. It delves into the complexities of relationships, particularly between fathers and sons, and the impact of societal constraints on individual aspirations. Wilson’s rich dialogue and vivid characters make "Fences" a compelling exploration of the African-American experience and the universal struggles of humanity.