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**A STUDY OF REFLECTION OF EXISTENTIALISM IN  
TENNESSEE WILLIAMS'S WORKS**

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**ABSTRACT**

Williams' plays often explore existential themes like free will, moral ambiguity, fear, anxiety, and the unpredictability of the human condition. His protagonists eventually come to terms with the fact that they cannot hide their burning need to proclaim their complete autonomy to everyone around them. Tom, the protagonist, is a great illustration of Sartre's claim. Any person who, out of seriousness or deterministic justifications, keeps their true degree of freedom hidden from themselves will be referred to by me as a coward. When Williams and his family moved from the South to St. Louis, he and his sister "were teased and rejected for their southern manners and speech" by the neighbourhood youngsters. Williams was motivated to seek refuge in the works of great authors like Poe, Chekhov, and Faulkner after he was turned down. Williams' plays deal extensively with the existential theme of self-assertion, as the characters battle to be themselves in the face of desires for independence, confrontation with others, and a sense of alienation. The battle of Williams' characters will take on certain shapes and vary from one to the next depending on their desire and capacity to carry on their conflict with others. Some people are more powerful than others. The courageous will try to make themselves known by resisting and revolting against their society, based on the belief that they have the right to act boldly and freely to satisfy their physiological and spiritual desires. Self-affirming characters who prefer to withdraw from the world do so because they are either too weak or uninterested in interacting with others. Williams' characters have a number of characteristics, and these are explored. These include sensitivity, a desire to escape their pasts, and a strong need for a saviour. In terms of the existential movement, the significance of these three characteristics to self-assertion lies in the fact that they illustrate, on the one hand, the kinds of characters who are preoccupied with proving their existence, and, on the other, the kinds of situations and influences that may have an impact on those people as a result of their struggle for survival and self-assertion.



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On the other hand, in order to overcome the previous events that stand as a major barrier between them and satisfying their existential needs, these characters must engage in a tough confrontation not only with others but also with themselves. According to the proverb, the source of a person's true existence is within, rather than in what the intellect can comprehend (Sartre:1965,6). Williams' plays place heavy emphasis on the hero because of the characters' desperate need for salvation, which the hero has the potential to accentuate.