

## **Refusal of Blackness in the background of Double-Consciousness in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye***

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In *The Bluest Eye*, Morrison introduces Lorain, Ohio's black community. The admiration of white beauty requirements prevails over their initial black values among most community members. Morrison also demonstrates the contrast between the white beauty criteria obsessed individuals and the kids who do their utmost to withstand these requirements and retain their black values. The research work of the study compares these two character groups. There is, on the one side, a group represented by Pecola and Pauline Breedlove, defeated by the belief that whiteness is beauty. The white view affects their life and they see themselves through highly critical white eyes despite being black and think that being black is hideous. Claudia and Frieda MacTeer, on the other side, are not yielding to the omnipresent white impact and the mainstream culture has a distinct impact on their thinking than on the Breedloves. Claudia and Frieda MacTeer can't help contradicting the white perfect of excellence that is propagandized around them all over the place. Both of these organizations recognize that white people are distinct. While the Breedloves can just observe their grotesqueness, their divergence is realized by the MacTeer sisters, but they do not find themselves hideous in comparison with white people.

This article begins with the context of Pecola's family because assuming that her family, especially her mother, is the most important factor in her comprehension of what her general surroundings think about her. Pauline Breedlove, a rustic dark lady not used to living in the city, not long after subsequent to moving to the city, is affected by the white ideal of beauty. Pauline goes to movie theatres and sees in movies with white actresses perfect romantic love and physical beauty. After a while, adopting the manufactured beauty scales, she applies these scales in real life to real people. "Following her schooling in the films, Pauline was never allowed to take a gander at a face and not allocate it a category of complete beauty ..." (BE, p. 95). White actresses become her beauty ideal and she wants to look similar to them, never realizing that a black woman can't do that. Not because black females are hideous, but because they are affected by a distinct scale of beauty. Pauline, however, is so immersed in the false reality that she has formed in her head that she cannot differentiate distinct beauty types.

Once she goes with Jean Harlow to see a movie and dresses like her. But things don't go the way she sees them. She understands that her effort is meaningless when a candy knocks a tooth out of her mouth. "I fixed my hair on a magazine like I saw her... I looked just like her. Well, nearly like... There I was attempting to look like Jean Harlow, five months pregnant, and a front tooth was gone. Then all came... I left my hair, plated it, and settled down to be just hideous" (BE, p. 96). This is the last severe effort by Pauline to be lovely. Ironically, she is not admiring, but humiliated by her attempt to look like Jean Harlow, her beauty ideal. I completely agree with Walther's statement that Pauline denied her body's basic physical truth in attempting to conform to the "look" of a white movie star. She is black and pregnant and does not have any physical properties to identify her with Jean Harlow

"(Walther, p. 778). Pauline follows her search for self-determination in various fields after this last blow.

Soon, Pauline discovers a different way to be near to her ideal. She's working in a white family as a servant. Kuenz argues that "at the Fishers, she can use the creative and sensitivity that otherwise can not find expression... and they have offered her nicknames that she never had as a kid and have told her little anecdotes" (Kuenz, p. 423). Pauline likes to disregard what's more, call attention to her subjection to the truth that both the name and the tales are scornful. She notices only the beneficial elements of the behavior of the family. Especially how they treat her, praising her excellent job, which is totally new to her. She believes "affectionate, appreciative, and generous" to all family members (BE, p. 98). She finds it more and more hard to return to her own lives after some moment and begins to neglect her family and house. These contrast with the Fishers' ideal life, "the one she became a component of. "Her house, her kids, her husband was like... The dark limits that made the Fishers' daily lives lighter, more sensitive, more beautiful "(BE, p. 99). In the business of "lovely" white individuals, she feels much better than staying with her "hideous" family. And Pauline doesn't conceal her emotions, so it's a little wonder that she gives her daughter, Pecola, her admiration for the white ideal of beauty.

All efforts by Pauline were geared, whether deliberately or not, towards one objective: to be respected and loved by Pauline Breedlove. While there are times in her lives when she feels loved (e.g. when she meets Cholly for the first time and when she finds out she is pregnant and Cholly is happy), the opposite emotions prevail. She eventually adopts white beauty ideals in the hope that her community will accept her if she can approximate them.

Since her early adolescence, Pecola has been affected by white beauty models. There are not only "many templates like Shirley Temple, Dick and Jane, Christmas blonde dolls, ... The templates that society is setting up to judge Pecola "(Powell, p. 752), but Pecola is constantly reminded of her ugliness by her mom and her community. "Pecola is strongly embedded in her hideous environment" (Pal, p. 440). Indeed, only the white kid is the concern of Pauline after the accident, not her only daughter.

Pecola develops to feel inferior due to her absence of self-esteem, which is strengthened by the white beauty models mentioned above. The Dick-and-Jane tale depicting a model family that presents the novel of Morrison is a particularly excellent illustration. The reader's text is reiterated three times and the third repetition is missing not only from punctuation and capitalization, but also from the spaces between phrases, indicating the confusion black kids may feel while reading it. In addition to family, primary school is a place where children's thinking is most formed from an early era. The reader obviously portrays a model white family, which can readily lead to confusion of black children, as most of them are unfamiliar with this notion. Neither is Pecola: she lives in a family "filled with alcoholism and rage" living in a rented flat, and it seems to her that there can never be any happiness in this location (Powell, p. 750). The reader is one of the sources of the willingness of Pecola to transform her looks. She would be happy and loved by her family if she were white and beautiful like Jane, the reader's character.

However, in the eyes of other people, Pecola still does not know why she is so hideous. "She sat in the mirror for many hours attempting to find the secret of the ugliness, the ugliness that made her ignored or despised by educators and colleagues alike at college"

(BE, p. 34). Even though she doesn't know why everybody believes she's so hideous, Pecola surrenders to the perspective of her mother and instead of looking for her natural beauty, she begins to pray for blue eyes, the symbol of white beauty. She notices that white people don't look at her, and she believes it's because she's black that she says is hideous. DuBois presents a straightforward question in his article: "How does it feel like it's an issue" (BE, p. 1)? Pecola has a feeling of being a problem, a problem that is overlooked and overlooked all over she goes, not only at college, but also in the home, which was much bitterer. This is an illustrative case of dual awareness.

Pecola believes she understands why individuals avoid looking at her, primarily because of her mom, being conscious of her ugliness. She gets the feeling that being black means never being lovely and admires the photos of blonde white females with blue eyes she sees as lovely. Another instance is eating candy from Pecola simply because on the wrapper is a image of a white model, Mary Jane. "The white face is smiling. Blonde hair in a soft disarray, blue eyes from a globe of clean convenience staring at her ... Eating the candy is eating the eyes somehow, eat Mary Jane. Love Jane Mary. Be Jane of Mary" (BE, p. 38). This is the primary premise of her double-consciousness and why she begins to pray for her eyes to change color from brown to blue. "It happened some time ago to Pecola that if her eyes, those eyes that kept the photos and knew the sights, were her eyes distinct, that is, lovely, she would be different" (BE, p. 46). And being still a kid, Pecola thinks the color of her eyes can be changed. Before her dream comes true it may take some time, but she doesn't give up readily. When it looks like God doesn't want to assist her, she goes to see Soaphead Church pitying her, and after pretending to talk to God, Pecola thinks that the next day her eyes will be blue.

The desire for blue eyes of Pecola is greater than her sense of goodness. She thinks and becomes obsessed with the illusion. But "the cost she pays for them is her own health: she wanders through the dump of the city, babbling about how blue the eyes are that nobody else can see" (Rosenberg). *The Bluest Eye* shows the crippling impacts of female beauty white norms on a young black woman in this context. She eventually discovers her only sanctuary-foolly. Bakerman bitterly claims that "Pecola escapes to the deepest confinement of all by her false belief that she has indeed gained blue eyes, beauty" (Bakerman, p. 547). She rejects her black identity in pursuit of love and happiness by gaining blue eyes and adopts the white beauty ideal depicted by blue eyes at the cost of her health.

Compared to Pecola, from a totally distinct perspective, Claudia and Frieda MacTeer see the white ideals of beauty. The white models are not yielded and proud to be black. Although the white models are known to them, they have no regard for them and show their anger at actions.

One example is how Claudia treats the doll she receives as a present for Christmas. "I only had one wish: to break it down. Seeing what it was created, finding the love, finding the beauty, the desirability that fled me, but obviously only me... The whole world had decided that what every girl kid treasured was a blue-eyed, yellow-haired, pink-skinned doll "(BE, p. 14). She chooses to examine the doll carefully in order to find out what makes it lovely. And, although it horrifies Claudia, it quickly transfers the impulse to dismember the doll to white women. "The apathy I could have axed them with was only shaken by my willingness to do so... To find out what eluded me: the secret of the magic that they were weaving on others.

What produced them look at individuals and say, "Awwwww, but not for me" (BE, p. 15)? Claudia doesn't understand why she should take care of the white doll because she doesn't see any beauty in it, making her jealous of it. She tries to discover a rational explanation, however. The view of Jane Kuenz that Claudia ultimately realizes why she resents white dolls and white women: they all constitute the white beauty stereotype she and Frieda did not adopt (Kuenz, p. 428).

The sisters must find out for themselves about it. Being kids, Pecola and the sisters of MacTeer should obtain most of their parents' understanding, but this is not happening. In *The Bluest Eye*, parents keep a distance between themselves and their children. They have discussions of one-way only. Claudia claims, "They give us instructions for adults not to speak to us. Without giving data, they issue instructions" (BE, p. 5). Ms. MacTeer is a rigid and rough mother, but when they need her, she's there for her kids. Rosenberg says, "The recognition of Claudia should reach by her other emotions as she is don't ever told. *The Bluest Eye* rarely expresses maternal concern" (Rosenberg, p. 438).

Claudia is fortunately delicate and bright enough to acknowledge the expression of the love of her mother, especially when she's sick. "And in the night, when my coughing was dry and hard, feet paddled into the room, hands repelled the flannel, rearranged the quilt, and rested on my forehead for a moment" (BE, p. 7). This feeling of being loved is crucial in a racially prejudiced society for a black girl and her survival. While the MacTeer sisters are fortunate to have a loving family that is supportive, Pecola does not comprehend what it means to be loved.

Another proof of Claudia and Frieda's dissatisfaction with white faces is their observation of Maureen, a new schoolmate who is "rich, at least as rich as the richest of white females, swaddled in comfort and care" (BE, p. 47). In spite of the emotions of envy that are new to them, Claudia and Frieda are still pleased with themselves as they are: "We felt agreeable in our skins, preferred the news that our faculties were discharged to us, appreciated our mud, developed our scars, and couldn't comprehend this outrage" (BE, p. 57). The sisters can see the distinction between them and Maureen and demonstrate a certain desire to have the same clothes and be able to afford to buy ice cream as she is, but after all they are still proud black women to be what they are.

When everyone condemns the unborn baby of Pecola, the sisters try to create and save a miracle. Rosenberg sees it as "their blackness ceremony that no one shares in their" unyielding "society" (Rosenberg, p. 442). While no one expects the child to live, assuming that the unborn baby is "bound to be the ugliest thing to walk" (BE, p. 149), as it is produced by two hideous Breedloves, Claudia and Frieda demonstrate their protective impulses. They don't care who the father is or what other people think, Pecola's and the well-being of her baby are their only concern. Claudia and Frieda, despite all their efforts, neglect to spare the life of the child and feel subject for his passing. "For the sake of Pecola's youngster, the marigold seeds they plant neglect to grow..." (Rosenberg, p. 441). It is also an outstanding illustration of their capacity to withstand racial prejudice and stand up for their black values, however naive their effort to save the child is.

Claudia and Frieda have the capacity to stay alive whole and retain their black identity as opposed to the surrender of Pauline and Pecola to Western values. According to Powell, "Pecola Breedlove fails to find a true self exactly because she enables white mythology to

dictate her values as Claudia and Frieda revolt against it" (Powell, p. 752). This rebellion allows them to choose their own life route as Pecola goes crazy and is likely to spend the remainder of her life obsessed with her non-existent blue eyes. Pal highlights the significance of the two sisters' union and the loneliness of Pauline and Pecola. "While in *The Bluest Eye* the sisterly tie between Claudia and Frieda empowers them to battle ethnic denigration, the alienation of Pecola from family and society leads to her psychological fragmentation" (Pal, p. 2442). Despite the chance of fighting together against the stereotype of white female beauty is too immersed in their self-hatred to try to discover their true identity. It results in their isolation of inaccessible white beauty ideals in their own worlds.

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