



## RESEARCH PAPER

### Psychoanalytical Study of the Gendered Eurocentric Sociosymbolic Dynamics in Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1970) and Whitehead's *The Nickel Boys* (2019)

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DOI

[http://doi.org/10.47205/plhr.2022\(6-II\)61](http://doi.org/10.47205/plhr.2022(6-II)61)

#### PAPER INFO

#### ABSTRACT

**Received:**

February 28, 2022

**Accepted:**

June 10, 2022

**Online:**

June 12, 2022

**Keywords:**

Identity Crisis

Multiple

Oppressions,

Psychoanalysis,

Racism,

White Hierarchal

Agency

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Racism is the stereotypical societal belief of individuals' categorization based on their ethnicity and colour (Kaur, 2018). Within this context, this paper is concerned with psychoanalytically probing the gendered dimensions of racial oppression and resistance to it in predominant postcolonial white America with reference to Morrison's "The Bluest Eye" (1970) and Whitehead's "The Nickel boys" (2019). For this purpose, this paper has utilized Fanon's (1952) canonical critical lense "Black Skin, White Mask," incorporated with the Lacanian registers to probe the impact of Eurocentric/white sociosymbolic order on the male and female protagonists in Morrison's and Whitehead's narratives. Through theoretical framework, the researchers psychoanalytically investigated the impact of racism on the (de)shaping of protagonists' desires. The analysis brought to light that racism impacts the lives of male and female protagonists differently. Whitehead's male protagonist endures severe persecution due to his race and color from white community, but not from his own community. On the other hand, Morrison's female protagonist endures tripartite objectification on the basis of color, race and sex from both the black and white communities. Hence, this paper highlights the gendered dimensions of racial hegemony through the psychoanalytic framework.

## Introduction

Struggle is the essence of life for us, yet the form of struggle makes a difference in the psychology of the individual. I have often wished that our struggle could somehow be less agonized, less emotionally complex.

(Forman as cited in Jordon, 2017, p.1).

Forman's (1972) words bemoan the grim fact that racial ideologies victimize the Afro-Americans. Racism enrages, hurts, traumatizes, humiliates and prevents the psychological wellbeing of Afro-Americans (Forman as cited in Jordon, 2017).

Segregation and racial ideologies lead to severe devastation, hopelessness, exhaustion and isolation. Morrison and Whitehead are black writers who won Pulitzer and Nobel Prizes due to adopting ingenious approaches in literature, history and cultural ethnicity. Within this context, this paper aims to probe the impact of white sociosymbolic order on the male and female protagonists in Morrison's and Whitehead's *The Bluest Eye* (1970) and *The Nickel Boys* (2019).

This paper demonstrates the psychological dynamics of the gendered Eurocentric sociosymbolic order by shedding light on desperate yearning and tragedy of desire fulfillment of Morrison's Pecola Breedlove and Whitehead's Elwood Curtis. Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1970) is a racial allegory about a black girl, Pecola Breedlove, who opened her eyes in the unwelcoming racist land of Lorain, Ohio, and unquestionably accepted the Western/white false standards of beauty. She perceived that white hierarchal beauty standards having blue eyes, white skin and blonde hair are the only way to get parental love and societal prestige, but these false West's consecration of prettiness served for her as an implacable and cruel ruler that drove her to the destiny of madness.

Whitehead's *The Nickel Boys* (2019) is the story of victimized black boy, Elwood Curtis, who had developed his self-image in a mirror of white/Eurocentric sociosymbolic order. He has a strong passion to support his strengths to earn desegregation. Therefore, he was determined to become an active member of Civil Rights Movement. He has a dream to see justice and equality in Eurocentric America. He hoped that a day will come when there will be no practice of segregation and discrimination, and colored people will call America as their own land, but racial spurs and white phallogocentric agency caught him in a secret grotesque graveyard near Nickel Reformatory. This paper deals with the embedded racism, marginalization and oppression crumbled on the protagonists' mind and self-image due to established sociosymbolic ideologies.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Psychoanalysis highlights the individual's psychological state and its consequences in the postcolonial territory. It ranges from Fanon's (1952) psychoanalytic theory to Freud's influential psychoanalysis that demonstrates the anxious postcolonial perspectives. In this context, this paper has employed Fanon's (1952) critical theory "*Black Skin, White Mask*" incorporated with Lacanian registers which are the imaginary, the socio symbolic and the real orders to probe the impact of racism on the shaping of desire in Morrison's and Whitehead's narratives.

The core elements in structuring the psyche of an individual, according to Lacanian psychoanalysis, are the imaginary, the symbolic and the real registers. The imaginary order refers to imagined or cognitive images in conscious and unconscious thought, manifest through dreams, picture thinking that may be in sensible or in incomprehensible form (Lacan as cited in Hendrix, 2019, p.1). The sense of unified selfhood is one of the most significant defining movements in the development of subjectivity. Before the sense of self emerges, the young child exists in a realm which Lacan calls the 'imaginary', in which there is no distinction between self and other, and there is a kind of idealized identification with the mother. Then, between six and eighteen months, there is a stage known as 'mirror stage', in which the child sees its

reflection in the mirror and begins to conceive himself as a unified being, separate from the rest of the world. At this stage, the child enters into the language system, essentially a system which is concerned with lack and separation. The 'real' emerges as outside the language which is "inaccessible to psychoanalysis" (Lacan as cited in Hendrix, 2019, p.1). The real is an 'impossible' phase, because it is impossible to imagine, impossible to integrate into the symbolic order, and impossible to attain anyway.

This paper has also utilized Frantz Fanon's "*Black Skin, White Mask*" (1952) to demonstrate existential crisis on the basis of color apartheid. Black marginalized bodies are subjected to "historical racial schema" (Fanon, 1952, p.84) on the basis of skin color. Fanon states a term "black problem" which means belittling one's self due to phallogocentric white agency (Fanon, 1952, p.83). He persuades that "colored ones encountered severe consequences due to corporal schema. Bodily consciousness is a negating activity. It is the third person consciousness" (Fanon, 1952, p.83). He was very depressed about "black problem" (Fanon, 1952, p.83), until he had gone through manipulative white man's gaze during traveling on a train. "*Mama, See the Negro! I'm frightened!*" (p.84, Emphasis Original). This racial marginalizing incident happened while he was questing for self-consciousness which shocked him badly. White masters consciously strive to inculcate the horrible image of blackness in the minds of white innocent kids.

### **Psychoanalytical Perspective of Racism**

White/ Eurocentric sociosymbolic order deeply affects the lives of protagonists in Morrison's and Whitehead's narratives. With reference to Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1970), Pecola Breedloves became mad due to severe yearning to get blue eyes, blonde hair and white skin so that she may get parental love and social prestige. Her mother disgraced and hated her due to her ugly appearance. Her father assaulted her twice, because she could not fulfill the white racist standards of prettiness. Her teachers and friends disgraced her badly, because she belonged to black community. Lacan (1960) states that the imaginary experience is emblazoned in the symbolic notions which is in accordance to individual's psyche. In the strong passion to get blue eyes, Pecola madly drank three quarts of milk in a Shirley Temple cup from Mrs. MacTeers' kitchen and received worst treatment for this outrageous action. Eurocentric sociosymbolic orders eventually pushes her in a fantasy world where she loses her psychological wellbeing.

Similarly, with reference to Whitehead's narrative, he demonstrates white/Eurocentric sociosymbolic notions of racial segregation and psychological cataclysm endured by colored people in the postcolonial America by depicting the miserable fate of Elwood Curtis in a haunted bloody graveyard near Nickel Reformatory. Racist Florida establishes hierarchal power structure to keep black community on the margins; that segregation is witnessed from private to public domain. Elwood Curtis always desires to enter in a segregated theater to see a Marlon Brando movie but colored people are forbidden there. He gets his inspiration from the speeches of Martin Luther King to remain firm and determined to get freedom and equality. Martin Luther King, in his recorded speeches, persuades his daughter that she should not feel bad due to racial segregation because she desperately desires to see Fun Town but white sociosymbolic psychologically closed the doors for colored folks.

Since Elwood's birth, Elwood was severely disturbed to see racial biasness but he has courageous nature to think while assisting his grandmother Harriet in a segregated Richmond Hotel that a day will come when colored people will enjoy and be entertained in Richmond Hotel. He clung to the notions of King that a day will come when there will be no practice of segregation and discrimination and African-Americans will call America as their own land. According to Lacanian imaginary register, subject's psyche is controlled by perceived images in the society, so Elwood Curtis made his identificatory bond with Luther King. He becomes very happy after the approval of laws of desegregation. His mother always convinced him that reality is very different from the laws passed. As Fanon claims that reality is very bitter for a black man (Fanon, 1952), because, the white sociosymbolic notions snatch Elwood's freedom to move forward and put him in a horrible cell of Nickel Reformatory where he suffered physical, mental and psychological tortures. Sociosymbolic order badly deteriorates Elwood's life. Nickel Reformatory changed his aims and ambitions into hopelessness and helplessness. Fanon (1952) also claims that racial discrimination has made black people's existence on the margins.

### **Gendered Eurocentric Dynamics**

Discussing about psychological grief due to racism, there seems a difference in oppression faced by male and female protagonists. Whitehead's male protagonist was honored for his extra-ordinary intellect in his own black community. He enjoys the love of his grandmother Harriet, who devoutly loves and cares for him. Elwood's teachers praise him due to his hardworking nature. He gets lots of opportunities as he becomes an active member of Civil Rights Movement. He fought against racism and prejudice but was caught in chains of Nickel Reformatory as he was illegally charged with the crime of car robbery. In the Reformatory, he was shot by white master because he took a stand against bruises of racism rampant in the Nickel Reformatory. But the problem becomes worst when the center of concern is a black female. Pecola, in *The Bluest Eye* (1970), endured tripartite objectification by the stereotypical shackles of race, sex and color. The poor girl received worst treatment from both the black and white communities. Elwood received welcoming attitude from his family but Pecola was an objectified puppet in the hands of both the black and white masters.

Here, the hypocritical double standard of the cruel white masters is quite astounding that they acknowledge the unusual intellectual power of Elwood, but they entangle him in an emotional disequilibrium. The racialized land is a giant obstacle for Elwood to prove his skills. Journey of hard struggle made Harriet wipe her tears, to metamorphose her thinking that gloomy night alters into a dazzling day. But the tyrannical sociosymbolic ideologies caught the innocent boy on a false assumption based on his physical appearance that he is a robber. The White police officers charged him with the crime of stealing car. The young activist Elwood cheerfully woke up in a motivational manner to attend a college class. She thinks that her grandson will be the hero of black race. He will be a leading charismatic dazzling figure of the future. Lacan comments, "the imaginary ego is the product of bodily specular image, but the imaginary is incorporated by the sociosymbolic notions, by the reformulation of an individual through insertion of the experience of mirror stage and symbolic order" (Lacan as cited in Hendrix, 2019, p. 7). Harriet madly kissed Elwood on his dark cheeks and lovingly hugged him. She changed her mind that

days of racial persecution had gone. Elwood has earned good reputation due to his honesty and extraordinary intellect. Harriet becomes so emotional when Elwood waves at her when he goes to attend college. She emotionally thinks that her hero will color her agonies and pains with happiness and joys. But dreams cannot cope with realities. Eurocentric White America again proves that desire accomplishment path contains the stances of racism and color discrimination.

This paper sheds light on the complex racial targets which are based on gender discrimination. Both narratives seem to be written with heartfelt soul, Pecola Breedlove and Elwood Curtis both meet up with heartbreaking fate. *The Bluest Eye* (1970) mentions that racialized notions severely tortured black females through the character portrayal of poor black girl Pecola Breedloves. Toni Morrison shakes the hearts of the readers by demonstrating the cruel facts that white sociosymbolic order is too haunting that it does not spare the compassionate devout relation between mother and innocent baby. Morrison painfully discussed the psychological madness of Pecola's parents. Her mother Pauline dissociates herself from her daughter Pecola due to her ugly black physical appearance. She ignores her, because she lacks white skin, brown hair and charming eyes. The very look of Pecola fills her heart with agony and pain. Lacan states, "the ideal imaginary ego is the form that situates the ego's agency, before its societal determination, in a fictional manner, that always remains intricate for the subject alone" (Lacan as cited in Hendrix, 2019, p. 12). Sadly speaking, nobody is there to pacify Pecola's psychological sorrows, even her intimate friends Claudia and Freida do not know her inner thunderstorms and her parents do not show any concern about her worth because they both lack prestige and worth. Poor family relations disturb her psyche. She is reluctant to share her inner psychological conflicts with anyone. Thus, she innocently poses a question that had always irritated her: "How do you do that? I mean, how do get somebody to love you?" (Morrison, 1970, p.33). Pecola is a puppet to be victimized in the hands of her family, friends and community. She suffers from chronic psychological dilemmas in a racist, sexist and discriminated society, where her mother Pauline is entangled by the bondages of color, race and poverty.

Morrison and Whitehead, in their narratives, give glimpses of a natural phenomenon, that days always follow dark nights, sparkling sun does not shine forever, dazzling bright day is followed with gloomy darkness. Pauline's bright dazzling dreams shatter at her first glance on Pecola. Pauline controls her emotional strength to kiss her daughter, but the fact remained for her that she had given birth to an ugly baby. Toni Morrison, in *The Bluest Eye* (1970), blames Breedloves who confirm their daughter's physical unattractiveness, by physical, mental and emotional tortures. Yes, it is true that they are responsible for Pecola's insanity. Black community caught in such circumstances where they may not find any exit from stereotypical hierarchal bondages, and ultimately become too submissive and fragile before rigid brutal racial ideologies. Lacan asserts that "the individual has an organic catastrophe in his individual's reality" (Lacan as cited in Sadler, 2006, p.14). Pauline strives hard to become loyal with her family but, sadly, she always meets disgusted response due to her honest dealings. Black females surrender before their fate, their circumstances metamorphose their cheerfulness into gloominess, their love and affection into harshness and brutality. Eurocentric/white notions alter Pauline's motherhood compassion into tyranny. Lacan states, "the recognition of the subject has greater autonomy than animal's recognition with relation to his desire" (Lacan as cited in Sadler, 2006, p.14). Pauline feels sympathy towards her daughter's

victimization and objectification by her husband Cholly, teachers and peers. Actually, she adopts a false strategy to cope with this complicated situation. She should pamper her young girl in the stormy thorny days. As Morrison depicts the description of three families to persuade black folks to buckle the strengths of their families through the character portrayal of Mrs. MacTeers.

### **Sociosymbolic Desire Dynamics**

*The Bluest Eye* (1970) encapsulates the theme of unfulfilled desires of Pauline, the mother of protagonist Pecola, who dreams to gain respectable social status, but is severely rebuked by her savage husband, who is irresponsible in providing bread and butter for his family. Existence in these horrible circumstances freezes Pecola's body. She scorns her ugly physical appearance to be the root cause of family's quarrel. Throughout the novel, Breedloves suffer due to blind adoration of Western false canonization of beauty standards that finally leads Pecola to embrace her madness, the ultimate destiny where she seeks refuge from racial persecution.

The colored ones are the marginalized commodities with no place to live, no house to own. In fact, they are the strength of their tyrant masters who dehumanize their mental, physical and intellectual power. Morrison and Whitehead demonstrate the miseries, sorrows and agonies of African-American community through the shattered dreams of protagonists of the narratives that strive and struggle to deviate from the stereotypical racial slurs which have restricted their lives in the Eurocentric America. Whitehead's protagonist Elwood Curtis opened his eyes in the racialized land, where belonging to black race is a major drawback which narrows the chances of victory and successful future. Lacan (1960) states that desire is not an internal arousal but societal lack experienced in the context of otherness which cannot be accomplished. But the individual never leaves it as normal human being has many desires to fulfill. Symbolic order gives rise to many desires created through fantasy imagination.

Tallahassee, a racialized land, snatches the dreams and desires of the young activist, Elwood Curtis, whose honest manners are renowned among both the white and black communities. But prejudiced Eurocentric American white officers charged him with the crime of car robbery and passed a verdict to send him to Nickel Reformatory. Fanon says: "this dehumanization, shackled and entangled my existence in the nose of shame and disappointment" (Fanon, 1952, p. 76). He has only three nights to spend with his grandma Harriet before being sent to the Reformatory. She had spent her hard-earned labor in upbringing her little grandson, never ever thought to separate him for a while, becomes anxious that how dreams change into hopelessness, bright days into dark nights and joys into sorrows. Fanon comments that white masters are governed by authority complex, superiority complex and leadership complex, whereas African-Americans are governed by inferiority and dependency complex (Fanon, 1952, p. 79). The day comes which separates Elwood from his grandma Harriet forever. All the neighboring black folks were in deep agony over the fate of hard working, disciplined and honest Elwood. They all witnessed the chained Elwood entering a Police car. The officer "handcuffed Elwood to a metal bar" (Whitehead, 2019, p. 35) and degraded him with harsh words and actions. They told other white boys that they are travelling with a robber. Fanon painfully sheds light on the brutalized racism in these words: "Blacks are parasite in the world or like a

brute animal, as a creeping manure, hideous forerunner of tender cane and silky fabric, that do not have right to live" (Fanon, 1952, p. 78).

Elwood enters the Nickel Academy as a criminal. He is very hopeless and helpless before this racial stereotypical white supremacy. How life changes, how dream falls a prey in the hands of white masters, how aims of young activist crumble on the basis of skin difference, how fortune moves him from extreme heights to lowest status as a robber, how zeal and zest change to lasting silence! Dreams shattered, loved ones separate and academic loss puts him from top of heavens to depths of pains. Lacan points out that "real register is the re-unification of perceiver and perceived, the gap in discursive cause" (Lacan as cited in Hendrix, 2019, p.2). There is difference between individual's thoughts and his circumstances.

This section employs flashforward and flashback technique to discuss Elwood's life in New York, "Welcome to New York" (Whitehead, 2019, p. 109) where he becomes a successful business man earning a lot a profit. Fanon opines it, "there is constant strive in a life of black man. He is in fact, a desire of a white man. White man cannot get along without black mask, He has a worth but unfortunately, they are on seasonal demand, the white man's demand" (Fanon, 1952, p. 151). As a young boy, Elwood Curtis has a strong desire to watch the Marathon races of New York. Marathon races show the white hierarchal agency that creates disequilibrium by forbidding Afro-Americans to enjoy pleasures and joys of life. Elwood's love (renamed Turner) for Marathon races is an attempt to change the harsh painful memories with the joyful moments of Marathon race. Everyone is happy, but Elwood (renamed Turner), an intimate Elwood Curtis' friend, sits silently among the cheerful mob, muted and quiet. Elwood (renamed Turner) tries to speak, to enjoy, to get pleasure of New York Marathon but surrounded by memories of Nickel academy – the roaring sound, whippings and whoosh at night, isolation and alienation, worst labor, the iron rings – the painful nostalgic memories of Nickel reformatory horrify him badly and make him anxious. According to Lacan, "mirror stage is individual's phase of fantasies which originates from distorted image of a body to orthopedical unity, whose rigid structure will mark the individual's mental development through an alienating identity" (Lacan as cited in Hendrix, 2019, p.3). Elwood (renamed Turner) is confused to hear the sound of players, "Go!" and "You can do it!" and "You got it" (Whitehead, 2019, p.148).

The deprived life of Elwood Curtis, deprived from the dear ones, deprived from getting education and being put in a prison of Nickel Reformatory for worst labor, deprived to maintain good economic benefits from early childhood days in the form of getting empty encyclopedias on winning competition, the deprivation which lasts till grotesque chambers and secret graveyard near Nickel Reformatory. The words "Go" and "You can do it" (Whitehead, 2019, p.148) remind him of the speeches addressed by Martin Luther King at Zion Hill, "We must believe in our souls that we are some bodies, that we are significant, that we are worthwhile, and we must walk the streets of every day with this sense of dignity and this sense of somebody-ness" (Whitehead, 2019, p. 20, Emphasis Original). Dr. King's speeches trigger the spirits and strengths of African-Americans to stand firm in the walks of darkness and to fight for equal rights. Elwood (renamed Turner) remembers the boxing match between the white and black boys in Nickel Reformatory and Spencer's brutality with the black boxer Griff, who met his eternal destiny in a rusty old horse stable. Elwood (renamed Turner) becomes confused on the words of mob who are encouraging players, "Go!" and "You can do

it!" (Whitehead, 2019, p.148), as it is hard for Elwood to believe that African-Americans can do it as they have always been the embodiment of cruel fate, so how they can enjoy the joys of life.

As Lacan asserts that "the individual's development during the mirror stage is based on identification of objects, which are regulated by unconscious logic to the subject's insertion into the symbolic order and its words, which is reconciled with the conceptual structures" (Lacan as cited in Hendrix, 2019, p. 3). Elwood was illegally sent to segregated Nickel academy because he takes a ride in car. Eurocentric American society puts black skin boy to an alienating racist reformatory. Lacan proclaims the notion of Plotinus as sociosymbolic order establishes a clear differentiation between perceiver and perceived objects" (Lacan as cited in Hendrix, 2019, p. 3).

Sadly, the Nickel Reformatory is the embodiment of white sociosymbolic as it symbolizes the grotesque cells of pain and sorrows—the reformatory which reforms the pleasures into eternal silences, valor into cowardliness, hopefulness into helplessness, aims into fallen dreams. Lacan puts that "the individual's unconscious is dwell into by the 'symbolic constellation' which is always perceived as structured, organized and systematized in accord with a complex order" (Lacan as cited in Sadler, 2006, p.18). Elwood, the young activist, clings to Dr. Martin King's ideology while doing worst labor in Nickel Reformatory. He remembers Dr. Martin King's advice to African-Americans to surpass in the Eurocentric America by serving others humbly and selflessly. Sometimes, he thinks why he is entangled in such crucial circumstances where there is no window to get rid of. He anxiously thinks about a moment when he will graduate to go back to his home. He is reminded of his grandma Harriet's words that his whole family, his parents and his grandfather, all are the victims of white sociosymbolic racialized bondages. The harsh crucial circumstances at Nickel Reformatory are not new for him and his family. So, he naively believes that he has to perform his assigned duties in a perfect way to set a good example of African-Americans as they are always perceived as nonsense niggers, "I am stuck here, but I'll make the best of it" (Whitehead, 2019, p.50). Dr. King's speeches in Washington, DC, motivate his strength during worst days at Nickel Reformatory. "Make a career of humanity. Make it a central part of your life" (Whitehead, 2019, p.50. Emphasis original).

Hence, in this study, researchers have demonstrated that racial bondages psychologically traumatize black people due to hierarchal racial and gendered constructions which serve as phallogocentric hegemony in Eurocentric society. Through the Lacanian sociosymbolic contextual consideration, the researchers have discussed that Eurocentric American racial persecution has psychologically deteriorated the aims and ambitions of Morrison's and Whitehead's protagonists. Notably, Elwood and Pecola differently encounter their identity crisis due to gendered constructions. Pecola fails due to her overwhelmed desire to gain a couple of blue eyes that leads her to meet horrible consequences of blind western adoration. Contrary to Pecola Breedlove, Elwood Curtis has determination and strength to resist racial persecution. But Elwood is overpowered by his sense of worth and honor for belonging to black race. Pecola Breedlove lacks self-confidence and pride that Elwood has, that is why passivity is her sole response to any harsh situation she faces. It is very true to say that her parents and white hierarchal institutions, white



sociosymbolic norms are blameworthy of Pecola's insanity. She encounters tortures and persecution from both white and black folks.

Contrary to Pecola, black community recognizes Elwood Curtis' extraordinary intellectual power and appreciates him in the stormy days of racial discrimination, which includes his friend Turner, his school teachers and later on his grandma Harriet. Colson Whitehead's *The Nickel Boys* (2019) and Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1970) show that vision without act is not transformative for those fighting against oppression. In a nutshell, the protagonist Pecola Breedlove and Elwood Curtis lack the courage to recognize their desires of self-contemplation because its land is too infertile for certain seeds to blossom. Similarly, the Eurocentric/white American society fails to nurture black folks under racial bondages.

### Conclusion

This paper has psychoanalytically scrutinized racial bondage as discussed in Colson Whitehead's *The Nickel Boys* (2019) and Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1970) in a postcolonial context by utilizing Fanon's (1952) critical theory "*Black Skin, White Mask*" incorporated with Lacanian (1960) the imaginary, the sociosymbolic and real registers to probe the impact of racism on the shaping of desire in these narratives. This paper demonstrates the sorrows and oppression faced by the Black people living in Eurocentric white America by shedding light on the impact of existing racism on protagonists' psychology. Morrison's protagonist Pecola Breedlove has a desperate unconscious desire to have blue eyes, white skin and blonde hair to get remarkable social prestige among black and white people. She presumes that blue eyes will fill the gaps of ugliness, hindrances and sorrows with love, affection and social acceptance. She suffers tripartite marginalization and victimization due to her color, sex and race. Within the interracial space of skin difference, she finally entered the fantasy world to enjoy the luxuries of western false myth of prettiness. Whitehead touches the sensitive issue of racial discrimination by discussing the soul-felling death of Elwood Curtis in the secret graveyard near Nickel Reformatory. But, on the other hand, Whitehead has also shown the fruitful results of Elwood's sacrifices by showing Turner sitting and having lunch in Richmond Hotel, where Elwood had always wished a black man to be seated as a guest. This study also brings to light that racism impacts the male and female protagonists in Morrison's and Whitehead's narratives differently. Hence, it brings to the fore the gendered dimensions of racial Eurocentric sociosymbolic order prevalent in America.

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