

Tribhuvan University

Racial and Cultural Conflict in Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*

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Letter of Approval

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Abstract

Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* is a novel about racial and cultural conflict when black people come into contact with the whites. Racism is the mistreatment of a group of people on the basis of race, colour, and religion; a blind and pointless hatred, envy, or prejudice obviously expressed in the form of graffiti; intimidation or abuse, discrimination on offering jobs. Racial discrimination is often based on the discrimination where the word 'discrimination' denotes the denial of equality based on personal characteristics such as race and colour.

The Bluest Eye bring the intra-racial conflict into foreground that is taking on different forms at different levels of the relationship between the light-skinned blacks and the dark skinned blacks. The novel focuses on the poignantly tragic story of a girl Pecola who is subjected to an eternal tragic longing for blue eyes, which results in her insanity. In this novel, there is a character named Pecola, who comes from the low dark skinned blacks scornfully called niggers. She is inferiorized. Her parents are swamped in the mire of terrible conflict and violent misunderstanding. Both of Pecola's parents are entirely ignorant, illiterate and querulously hostile. There is a terribly vacuous space in between her father and mother. She is brought on in such a sort of family that infested with confusion, degeneration indignity and violent terror and animosity. She grows aware of the intra-racial touch that is cancerously mushrooming in her own family. Her fluctuation in her life is due to the racial and cultural conflict inside and outside her family.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Toni Morrison and Her Literary Output

A premier contemporary American novelist and the first African -American woman to win the Nobel Prize in Literature – Toni Morrison was born Cole Ardellia Wofford in Lorain, Ohio, in 1931 during the Great Depression. After her B.A. from Howard University and M.A. in English from Cornell University, Morrison has been engaged herself in different academic areas especially contributing to the Afro American literature. She begins her carrier by lecturing at several Universities i.e. Howard University, Texas Southern University, The State University, YaleUniversity and PrincetonUniversity. Besides authoring six novels, Morrison has displayed a genius as a master writer in criticism of white American writer and Afro- Americans as well.

Morrison is recognized as the most distinguished African- American novelist since Richard Wrights, Ralph Ellison and James Baldwin. As an author, she continued to broaden the perspective of American literature by the stories; she felt were never told, stories about African- American girls, women and racial and social pressures the black people faced. She writes about the people with the sensibility of culture she grew up in. Morrison wants her work to focus on the joys and sorrows of their lives. She had been hailed by experts praising her ability to re- imagine the lost history of her people. Many of them, emotions and motivational elements in her works apply to all people, she works to insert and dispel many of the stereotypes present in writings by and about black people. Morrison herself claims that one of her motivations for writing as a black women writer is to allow her fellow black women to repossess and rename themselves. With the unique use of language and through which she evoke signs of racial superiority, cultural hegemony and peripheral existence of people in

the dominant conception of Americans which historically has posited itself as a transparent norms.

Morrison's novels continue the poetic and gothic branches of the Afro-American narrative tradition. Gothic in the sense that black poetic realistic like Morrison “strives more for truth of sensation and environment than truth of facts, focusing on the supernatural ties of the present to the past and on psychological and sociological concepts for their images of ethical conduct in world of mystery and in natural events,” and poetic in the sense of the metaphoric and metonymic qualities of the languages, the substitution of figurative for literal expression as well as “dreft blood strokes of color, distilled experience and fluting but sharp and frequently recurring images” (Bell 269). According to Barbara Christian, Morrison's works are “fantastic earthly realism which deeply rooted in history and mythology, resonate with mixture of pleasure and pain, wonder and horror” (59).

The racial discrimination is one of the characteristics in the history of Afro-American. Morrison, therefore, cannot remain deaf and dumb about dealing with racial issue taking race as a metaphor a means of referring to the forces, events and forms of degradation, economic prejudices and human panic. The nucleus features of American literature are individualism, masculinity the insistence upon innocence coupled to an obsession with figuration of the death and hell. Almost everywhere, one can find the reference of identity in American literature. At the same time, Anglo-American mainstream narrative has misrepresented, ignored and failed to acknowledge the contribution of the Afro- Americans to the making of American life and art. Morrison attempts to do away with this stereotypical consideration.

The tendency to compare Morrison with James Joyce and William Faulkner on certain linguistic and narrative premises is more often nevertheless; distinction

tests on one vital aspect of her work i.e. an exhaustive mythical exploration of place. Morrison's another feature is to search for the nexus of the past and present. By fusing history and art, past and present, Morrison, "assets, interrogates and critiques the social, political and cultural of the African Americans" (Michell 49).

Morrison's role in evolving the American literature and by means of (this) bringing forth the often ignored Afro- Americans' literary tradition is the result of her high ambition, artistic sophistication, strong mythical powers and epic sweep. She draws on: "Oral narrative Afro- Americans folk- tales, Bible songs, Sermons, music and ghost stories delays distinctive, effortless, suggestive and provocative language—the language which black people love to play with. She even treats old ideas and situation with the languages the readers can speak and hear" (Michell 373).

The theme in Morrison's novel springs out complex ones desiring highly mental exercise. She introduces the characters who, in Barbara Rigey's words, "are both subject of and subject to, history events in real time, the succession of antagonistic movement that includes slavery, reconstruction, depression, war" (Peach 2). Her major protagonist explains:

. . . resort to bizarre types of crisis, resolution including murder, incestuous rape, bestiality and self-mutilation, often with in the context of parents- child relationship. Cholly Breedlove rapes his eleven years old daughter in *The Bluest Eye*; Era Peace burns her adult daughter in *Sula*; in *Beloved* Set he murders her infant daughter Dorcas dies from Trace's bullet in *Jazz*. (170)

Emptying out the world sometimes gently, often with force and terror, these characters have amazing and terrible pasts- they must find them out, or be hunted by them.

Furthermore, these characters are eccentric and racial myths. She always denies

stating any truth in her novels because for her there is no final truth or completing man and woman. In spite of her creating disintegrated people to challenge traditional western identity and wholeness, her characters persevere in their effort to cope with or get victory over blockades in their way to self-esteem, freedom and completeness.

Different locations of Southern America provide a proper setting for Morrison's fiction. The Southern landscape is related to psyche of and an ancestral refugee or the homeless blacks. For blacks it is both past and future. When the blacks migrated from South, it remained in their memory as Morrison contends in interview with Carolyn Denard, everybody's pasts "and the good old days and ma and pa grand ma and so on" (15). Her character submerges into deep memory for but do not bother to go back to South.

Morrison's fiction always has been concerned with the deconstruction of structures of reference within which the African Americans identity has been, and is constructed. Cultural hybridity is pertinent for Morrison's writing and to 20th century America as well. Each of Morrison's novels is "anchored in an everlasting social complexity and embraces new cultural and ethnic pluralism" (Peach 189). This assertion of plurality is symbolically manifested in the setting of *Jazz* in the city; a place full of cultural complexity and ever changing possibilities. Her novel can be seen as the root of collective and obsessive desire to find a complete identity. These fragmented identities are themselves the outcome of the racial, gender and geographical differences rather than absolute binaries.

To show up coming days, and to indicate that the future generation will be in safe hands, Morrison finally presents the ability of her characters negotiation with the environment where they had been. Therefore, it is her special privilege to depict southern ethics and manners because blacks are so familiar with South that they know

each particles of it. As Carolyn M. Jones asserts:

Black Americans shaped the landscape of the American South. The houses that were built, the human beings that were nurtured in them, the forest that were cleared and the crops that were planted and harvested were all tended by blacks hands and formed by African cultural practices, technologies and sensibilities The landscape of the South in the beginning so alias to African slaves ... [was] neither legally nor economically their own, but spiritually their own, through their own labor and under most difficult circumstances. (37)

History has a lot to do with her craft and mastery of writing about the buried and neglected history of black people. She examines the pain, wound and cries of slavery repeatedly. The devastating psychological, cultural, economic and racial effects of the periods on black people are the subject matter of study of her. The history that Morrison represents does not appear merely as something to be read nor does it appear to be a reference to the past events. On the contrary, history for her is a great force, which comes, as Baldwin says: “From the fact we carry it with on many ways” (275).

Morrison's novels are characterized as the perfectly crafted prose, in which the simple ordinary words are placed so as to produce lyrical quality and to elicit sharp emotional responses from her readers. Her extraordinary mythic characters are driven by their own moral visions to struggle in order to understand truths that are larger than those held by the individual self. Her subjects are large: good and evil, love and hate, friendship, beauty and death, and racism. In *Contemporary Literary Criticism* Toni Morrison has been “Using unconventional narrative structures, poetic language, myth, and folklore, Morrison addresses such issues as black victimization, the emotional and

social effects of racial and sexual oppression, and the difficulties African Americans face in trying to achieve a sense of identity in a society dominated by white cultural values” (215).

She is best known for her intricately woven novels, which focus on intimate relationships, especially between men and women, set against the backdrop of African American culture. Her prose laced with soft traces of feminism can proudly compete with the highest praised novels in literature. Her use of the issue of racism is presented in terms of psychological uplift from white racism taking myth as a source of their culture. Cynthia A. Davis discusses Morrison's “use of myth in relation to the psychic violence of racism and the possibility of freedom; the use of symbolism to respond to alienating white value system.” (217).

Morrison is regarded as mythmaker, folkloric in her technique and poetic in her language. Morrison seems to be in love with mesmerizing lyricism that conveys love of a community and offers hope in a chaotic world, a world drenched with not only the evil of thinking but also the evil of sexism. Her world of fiction is mythic, legendary - full of complicated stories about ordinary people who have survived and prospered in an extraordinary and almost miraculous way inside the maelstrom of American racism and sexism. Her work is difficult which evokes a past suffused in the subjectivity of memory; she breathes artistic life onto the past to make a world coherent, on infinite canvas for storytelling in which history has meaning and purpose as assimilated myth, not so much used to understand the past but to convey black culture into the present. As honorific literature, her work has the tint of reality with the real world, and still above that mythic. Her work represents the cultural revolution associated with the flowering of Black literature in which especially feminine voice is cultivated and elevated to “explore a world with the Black American women's writing

to the forefront being tradition within tradition” (217-19).

Dorothea D. Mbalia views that Morrison's novels document her increasing understanding of the role of historical materialism in discovering the source of, and the solution to, the oppression of the African people. Both racial and gender oppression are seen to be the consequences of class exploitation, the weakness of this approach lies in the tendency to interpret the novels selectively and to focus on the extent to which they exemplify an extrinsic political position; the strength of such an approach is that it “provides a valuable context for any consideration of Morrison's representation of black consciousness, culture and history” (Peach 90).

Morrison's work heightens the sense of individualism and the continued primacy of elitist aesthetic formalism. Her novels struggle for personal transcendence, a search for self-discovery too; they combine a communal center with a focus on individual consciousness and awareness.

She invites her readers to participate on a soaring affirmation: life can be understood, it is beautiful, and even glorious; each of her novels gives the individual knowledge, meaning, and faith in a clearly duplicitous world. Morrison writes:

What I am determined to do is to take what is articulated as an elusive race free paradise and domesticate it. I am determined to concretize a literary discourse that (outside of science fiction) resonates exclusively in the register of permanently unrealizable dream. It is a discourse that (unwittingly) always allows racism on intellectual weight to which it has absolutely no claim. (5)

Morrison simply takes for granted the evil of white racism, and tries to provide access to Black life without feeling compelled to explain it, without sparing feelings, and certainly without concern about white pessimism. Her language tries to capture

the essence of the Black world in all its guises, and a readership, both black and white, follows her, in part, because there is the lifting of the 'veil'. She taps into the power of narrative to show the complexity inherent in the lives of ordinary Black people. Like jazz music Morrison works her novels to be complex, beautiful, and challenging, but they are widely popular. Her aim is to explore complicated ideas but only in a literary way, with no intrusions from the polemical. Morrison makes this comparison in "Paris Review":

I thought of myself as like the jazz musician: someone who practices and practices and practices on order to be able to invent and to make his art look effortless and graceful. I was always conscious of the constructed aspect of the writing process, and that art appears natural and elegant only as a result of constant practice and awareness of its formal structures. (128)

Critics on Morrison

Toni Morrison's childhood experiences were filled with African American myth, folklore. She was disappointed with her confrontation of the overwhelming lack of middle class morals in her Howard days (after 1949). As she was from working class family, she deeply understood the ethics of Black peoples' African Americanness. This mentality became a form of encompassing the current turmoil in literary production: the Black writers were not only emerging but also developing a sense of recognition in the literary markets. As a single working mother for two sons, she found little time for socializing and making friends. But her experience as an editor at Random House and timelessness at home gave her a little time but she would stay up late and write for relaxation.

She published her first novel, *The Bluest Eye*, in 1970 expanding a short story

deciding one day to pick the piece back up, polish it and work it into a complete novel, though the story was turned down by several publishing companies. After the publication, she immediately won the attention as a promising writer from several critics and authors as well. The novel was regarded as well crafted, and, along with works by Alice Walker, Maya Angelo, Nikki Giovanni, Bambara, and Paule Marshall, signaled a renaissance in Black Woman's cultural production. Morrison often compares writing in this era to writing while a war is taking place. Her refusal and fearlessness to sugarcoat the truth on the page is what makes her prose some of the best around. For her writing is a safe haven where her real self emerges. It is a free place where all her little vulnerabilities, and cowardice, cannot come to the surface.

As the first black woman to receive the Nobel Prize for literature, she had broken down the barriers of communication between the critical reading public and those competing to communicate to them. She takes the issues of the blacks and presents them to the public so that they can understand the blacks' problem in the present multicultural world.

The Bluest Eye depicts the tragic life of a young black girl, Pecola Breedlove, an eleven-year-old black girl, who believes that she is ugly and longs for blue eyes. Her fixation turns to insanity. She is raped by her father and subsequently gives birth to a premature baby who later dies. Pecola eventually withdraws into a world of fantasy, believing that no one has ever as blue as hers. She wants nothing more than to have her family love her and to be liked by school friends. These rather ordinary ambitions, however, are beyond Pecola's reach. She surmises that the reason she is abused at home and ridiculed at school is her black skin, which is equated with ugliness. She imagines that everything would be all right if she had blue eyes and blond hair; in short, if she were cute like Shirley Temple, an American child star of

1930s in Hollywood. Unable to withstand the assaults on her frail self-image, Pecola goes quietly insane and withdraws into a fantasy world in which she is a beloved little girl because she has the bluest eyes of all.

Against the backdrop of Pecola's story was that of Claudia and Frieda MacTeer, who managed to grow up whole despite the social forces, which pressured African-Americans and females. For them, childhood was much like it was for Morrison herself in Lorain; their egos were comforted and nurtured by family members, whose love did not fail them. In her first work Morrison addresses the conflicts between black identity and white cultural values, the social repercussions of marginalizing impoverished members of American society, and the psychological and emotional effects of victimization. At the end of the novel, the narrator observes that Pecola was “All the waste and beauty of the world... . All of our waste, which we dumped on her and which she, absorbed. And all of our beauty, which was hers first and which she gave to us- all who knew her-felt so wholesome after we cleaned ourselves on her” (205).

Sula (1974) traces the lives of two black women from childhood to maturity. It is about a marvelously unconventional woman, Sula Pease, who becomes a pariah in her hometown of Medallion, Ohio, which is much like Lorain. Although considered as a symbol of freedom by some members of the community, she is also perceived as evil because her actions suggest that she can be violent, malicious, and heartless. During the course of the story, for example, she drops a young boy to his death, watches with interest as her mother dies by the fire, and seduces Jude, Nel's husband. With the discovery at the age of twelve that she and her friend Nel Wright “were neither white nor male, and that all freedom and triumph was forbidden to them, they set about creating something else to her” (216). Nel married and her life follows

convention, while Sula's life evolved into an unlimited experiment. Not bound by any social codes, Sula was first thought to be unusual, then outrageous, and eventually evil. In becoming a pariah in her community, she was the measure for evil and, ironically, inspired goodness in those around her. At her death both the community and Nel learned that Sula was their life force; she was the other half of the equation. Without Sula, Nel felt incomplete. Sula and Nel represent the both good and evil sides of human beings but the relationship between the characters can be viewed as Morrison's attempt to represent the intrinsic conflict experienced by a black woman. Sula and Nel represent the desire to rebel and urge to conform.

The female vantage point shifted to an African-American male perspective in *Song of Solomon* (1977), which traced the process of self-discovery for Macon Dead III. Macon, or "Milkman" as he was called by his friends, set out on a series of journeys to recover a lost treasure in his family's past, but instead of discovering economic wealth, he uncovered something more valuable. His spiritual transformation from the material-based family's guidance to 'own things' is because of his richness of the Afro-American heritage, the importance of community, and the nature of love and faith. In *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, Dorothy H. Lee, describing Milkman's spiritual transformation, has stated: "Figuratively, [Milkman] travels from innocence to awareness, i.e., from ignorance of origin, heritage, identity, and communal responsibility to knowledge and acceptance. He moves from selfish and materialistic dilettantism to an understanding of brotherhood" (216).

He gathered together the details of his ancestry, which he thought had been lost to him forever. In a larger context Milkman's odyssey became a kind of cultural epic for all African-American people; it mapped in symbolic fashion the heritage of a people, from a mythic African past, through a heritage obscured by slavery, to a

present built upon questioned values.

Tar Baby (1981), Morrison's fourth novel, moves beyond the small Midwestern town setting to an island in the Caribbean. As the title suggests, the story employs a folktale about how a farmer used a tar baby to catch a troublesome rabbit. When the tar baby doesn't return the rabbit's greeting, he hits the tar baby and gets stuck. He begs the farmer to skin him alive, to do anything but throw him into the briar patch. The farmer throws him in the briar patch, where the rabbit escapes.

Beloved (1987), Morrison's fifth novel, has been called her most technically sophisticated work to date. Using flashbacks, fragmented narration and shifting viewpoints, Morrison explores the story of the events that have led to the protagonist Sethe's crime. Sethe lives with her surviving daughter, Denver, on the outskirts of Cincinnati in a farmhouse haunted by the tyrannical ghost of her murdered baby daughter. Paul D., a fellow slave from Kentucky comes to live with them. He violently casts out the baby spirit or so they think, until one day a beautiful young stranger with no memory arrives, calling herself 'Beloved'. The stranger is the embodiment of Sethe's murdered daughter and the collective anguish and rage of sixty million and more who have suffered the tortures of slavery. She eventually takes over the household, feeding on Sethe's memories and explanations to gain strength. Beloved nearly destroys her mother until the community of former slave women who have ostracized Sethe and Denver since the murder joins together to exorcise Beloved at last.

Jazz (1992) is a tale of post-slavery life and shows how it affects and sometimes encourages rage, lust, and hatred. In this book, a man, Joe Trace, cheats on his wife with an eighteen year-old girl. After their short-lived affair, he shoots the girl, and his furious wife, Violet (called Violent by the neighbors and narrator) crashes

funeral and attempts to disfigure the young girl's face with a knife. Serving as a backdrop, this passionate and powerful story is New York City (referred to only as the City in the book) and the colorful supporting characters in it who unknowingly shape an era. Jazz and blues are the forces that draw people away from a reality of struggle and disappointment. Through *Jazz*, Morrison is addressing the themes like jealousy and forgiveness. It also symbolizes its setting of 1920s Harlem for freedom and excitement for many African Americans. Michael Dorris has stated that *Jazz* is “a novel about change and continuity, about immigration: the belongingness you leave behind and the tied-together suitcase you carry under your arm. It's about coping with arrival in a destination that doesn't let you stay the same person” (217).

Although the work was considered Morrison's masterpiece, she failed to win either the National Book Award or the National Book Critics Award. Forty-eight prominent African-American writers and critics, who were outraged and appalled at the lack of recognition for the novel, signed a tribute to her achievement that was published in the *New York Times* in January 1988. Later that year Morrison won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for *Beloved*. She won the Nobel Prize for literature based upon the quality of her work in 1993. In 1996, the National Book Award was presented her with its NBF Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters.

Novelist Toni Morrison, who had received the Nobel and Pulitzer Prizes, came with her new novel *Paradise* (1998). It is set in an all-black Oklahoma town called Ruby, with a population of 360. It's a place with a complicated history, going back to slavery, and haunted by incidents of prejudice among ex-slaves themselves. It's also the story of a former convent just outside Ruby, where a group of women gather to heal their broken lives, and in the process seems to threaten Ruby's very existence.

The convent women in Morrison's novel, *Paradise*, are presented without racial markers. The threat they pose to the men of Ruby is an 'unraced' danger, a threat because they are women. Morrison, like Faulkner, seeks to tell these stories from the inside, without apology or explanation. She explores the Black community alone as if it were isolated from the white world. In her terms, consciousness means personal understanding first, and survival of the clan/tribe/community second. This form of consciousness is a way to attack the invisibility that whites prefer for Blacks and the voicelessness men have forced upon women.

In *Paradise*, Morrison extends Faulkner's racist obsessions to include sexism and to judge it just as damaging: The founding families, blue black 'eight rocks,' have been shut out, disallowed, and are forced to wander in the wilderness searching for a place in which to establish a world and avenge an insult. They create a utopia, but one that has ossified and doomed in its patriarchal religious fundamentalism, racism, and need for control. There is pride of self, a Black solipsism, without reservation or obeisance, but there is no inter-racial unity in resistance to oppression and no organizing of group resistance in the name of antiracism or anti-sexism (Swartz 7). Her central characters become self-aware cognizant of ancestry and mythology -- and somewhat more in control over their world, but the sensibility is not historical or social understanding that leads to a changing of their world, but rather a violent outrage against women.

Chapter II: Racial and Cultural Conflict

Racism

Racism is the mistreatment of a group of people on the basis of race, colour, and religion; a blind and pointless hatred, envy, or prejudice obviously expressed in the form of graffiti; intimidation or abuse, discrimination on offering jobs. Racial discrimination is often based on the discrimination where the word 'discrimination' denotes the denial of equality based on personal characteristics such as race and colour. Discrimination is based on prejudice and stereotype where the stereotype refers to forming an instant fixed idea of a group, usually based on false or incomplete information, and prejudice refers to the idea that is formed without any knowledge about others. Gretchen Gerzina defines racism as:

An active or passive response to the specious belief that genetically transmitted traits are linked to social characteristics. . . . Racism at individual level involves a misguided personal belief that an entire racial group is deficient or superior because of a set of moral, intellectual, or a cultural trait that are thought to be indicated by the group's biological origins. (126)

Racism is the product of racial prejudice, and it works with 'biological and sociological definitions. Queen and Greener define, "From the biological standpoint, a race is a large body of people, relatively homogenous as to inheritable, non-adaptive features There are various criteria of race-head, hair, skin colour , stature blood group, and so on"(21).

Around the centuries, the basic concept of racism is dominated by the 'genetic determinism' or 'biological determinism', the theory that evinces the behavior of people and especially general behavioral characteristics of races. Racism, largely

controlled by heritage, attributes the differences between the races to innate traits rather than social factors. This contemporary form of racism links itself to discourses such as patriotism, nationalism, xenophobia, gender differences, etc. This is an attempt to produce old racist wine in a somewhat new scientific bottle, although with certain novel twists: the barbaric determinism to swastika type. But the use of new jargon has not diminished the gap between the meanings used in the past centuries to the present century. Still each 'historical circumstances' is shaping a distinct form of racism, "Racist ideologies and practice have distinct meanings bounded by historical circumstances and determined in struggle" (248).

Racism is founded on the belief in one's racial superiority over other. It encompasses the beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and practices that define people on racial classifications. It involves a generalized lack of knowledge or experience as it applies to negative beliefs and attitudes. It uses the inflexible assumptions that differences are biologically determined and ' therefore inherently unchangeable. It doesn't take place in a vacuum, but rather is enacted and reinforced through social, cultural, and institutional practices that endorse the hierarchical power of one group over another.

Racism always emerges from race, a concept confused with ethnicity and culture. Race, in particular, is the classification of human beings into distinguishable groups that are based on innate and immutable physical characteristics, e.g. skin colour, hair texture, eye shape, etc. Ethnicity is a classification of individuals who share the common ancestry comprised of customs and traditions that are passed or between generations, e.g. religion, dress, and nationality; whereas culture on the other hand is a broader category that extends beyond race and ethnicity to include any group of people who share common lifestyles, which are passed on to members of the

particular group, e.g. socio-economic status, sexual orientation, geographic location.

A child is not born a racist, but rather racism is a learned social phenomenon, via family, education, religion, the law, and the media. It is difficult to grow up in a society without adopting the world-views and biases of the society. He becomes a 'made' racist and subsequently perpetuate in the same society. It is based on the tendency toward adhering to and preferring the values and personal beliefs of one's own group; tendency towards associating with individuals or groups that have similar values and beliefs and therefore limiting the access of inter group contact and experience from which to draw; tendency toward categorizing information and using generalized assumptions, which often lead to stereotypes and negative biases; and judging the values and standards of minority group cultures by the values and standards of the majority group culture and labeling the former inferior.

The concept of 'Negro race' as inferior and European civilizations as superior is based on the belief that 'Negroes' lack certain qualities, such as lack of good "social organization and social actions, lack of fellow-feeling, lack of originality of thought, and lack of artistic qualities especially 'deficient on the side of mechanical arts', and in general, show (ing) no tendency toward higher development'. These characteristics are made the basis for justifying slavery and slave trade. Paul S. Reinsh in his *The Negro Race and European Civilization* justifies for blacks' "low social organization, and consequent lack of efficient social action, form the most striking characteristics of the Negro race" (3). Paul S. Reinsh believes that the extant of the black race is the result of 'race mixing' i.e. black race coming into contact with white race. "The mixed races produced by Europeans and Negroes exhibit some very fine qualities" (1). He believes that ". . .the twentieth century world will witness the formation of new mixed races and the attempt to adjust the mutual relations of all the various people that

inhabit the globe” (2).

Racism is the belief of distinguishing human characteristics, often dealt with prejudice, that one group of human beings is inherently superior to another group of human beings. It is the matter of discussion that 'Racism' springs from the term 'race', but the use of race for the biological, psychological, sociological, and economic differences among the human characteristics are taken into considerations that these qualities of one group make it either inferior or superior to each other. European supremacy over the globe for the last few centuries has given conducive milieu to purport that 'the white-skinned' beings are superior to the 'the black-skinned' or the brown-skinned' individuals. These facets of definitions are brought into practices that Negroes are inherently to set up a system of social, economic, and political benefits for whites at the expense of blacks. So the twentieth century racism faces the use of science to justify the whites' superiority to blacks. The interracial prejudice takes its form from physical slavery of 1860s to a more modified form of slavery.

The physical slavery with the use of forces helps develop psychological domination upon blacks' mentality. Science is there to support the existing superiority for it functions at the level of 'mind' and 'soul'. George W. Ellis writes about the psychological implications for justifying racism, “. . . we accept psychology as the science of the phenomena and functions of the mind and soul. Race is used as the mere convenience to designate the different branches of the human family” (11).

The psychology of race prejudice then involves the erroneous mental attitudes which one race entertains for or against another, formed in advance without its foundation on either mason or fact. Racial domination has permeated the society with the position of superiority and inferiority. This domination has created a state of double consciousness in the mind of Negroes. W.E.B. Du Bois writes movingly of the

resulting sense of duality for black people:

Why did God make me an outcast and a stranger in mine own house? . . . the Negro of a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world, a world which yields him no true self-consciousness but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. (5)

This problem of 'colour line' as Du Bois writes is not only the main problem of the twentieth century but this twenty first century is also facing the same problem.

The emergence of 'new-racism' has been possible due to a few recent political and social transformations- liberal hegemony, postmodern multiculturalism- forming their background. New-racism could be defined as racism without race: a racism whose dominant theme is not biological heredity but the insurmountability of cultural differences, a racism which, at first sight, does not postulate the superiority of certain groups or peoples in relation to others but 'only' the harmfulness of abolishing frontiers, the incompatibility of life-styles and traditions..

The concept of coloured race prejudice has worked with the production of natural inferiority of black to white, physically, intellectually, religiously, socially, and morally. So, the whites take the advantages of superiority economically, politically, and socially. For the whites, the justification works as the relation with human and less human. The Negro is less human because he has “ an oval skull, flat forehead, snout-like jaws, swollen lips, broad, flat nose, short crimped hair, calfless legs, highly elongated heels, and flat feet” (13). But still many views spring regarding the single human race that nature has endowed us. All the human beings have the same cephalic angle, texture of hair, shape of the head, color of the skin, size and shape, and size and height of brain, which have nothing to do with the capacity of the

mind or the moral quality of the soul. A Negro is no-more naturally inferior for he is the product of the complex and subtle forces of his milieu.

There is no question that the world is replete with distinct races. They have different physical characteristics, ancestry, and destiny. From the sociological point of view, if a race defines its distinct form and builds up its mythology of racial separateness, superiority, and destiny, like the 'Aryan' mythology in Germany, then the concept of superiority and inferiority evolves and that is how the white is the victim of biasedness.

Neither the ancient civilization nor the middle world civilization (before the fifteenth or sixteenth century) regarded and recognized human individuals in the name of race. For example, Greco-Roman people and Germanic barbarians never thought about the racial difference; they fought for mere bravery and regime. They distinguished themselves from 'others' in terms of appearance, customs, and language or theocentricism, but not in the form of skin color. In the earliest human writing:

We can find more or less well-articulated views about the differences between “our own kind” and the people of other cultures. These doctrines, like modern theories of race, have often placed a central emphasis on physical appearance in defining the “Other,” and on common ancestry in explaining why groups of people display differences in their attitudes and aptitudes. (Appiah 274)

The rise of national status towards the end of medieval era and the beginning of the modern era provided conducive environment for the germination of racism. To say even in more cow terms the discovery of America by the European whites was the central determining factor of human differences in the name of skin colour, and the rest of the myths are made on the basis of the same criteria. In the Victorian era many

racialists believed that: “We could divide human beings into a small number of groups, called “races”, in such a way that all the members of these races shared certain fundamental, biologically heritable, moral and intellectual characteristics with each other that they did not share with members of any other race” (276). Christian theology based on Bible clearly states that God created the world and first mortal human Adam and Eve. Christianity also believes that the human generations of the present world are the descendants of the original mortals. The European or the American white racists have no answer to the very simple question, if Jesus be white, then how come he makes his own people have black and white skinned individuals? Does He intend to, deliberately, discriminate his own children? But the question makes them speechless. But they are not there! Since the theology could not work science was waiting for them to make another justification that the blacks are still inferior to the whites.

Racism and Science

Racism is the belief that race is the primary factor of human traits and capacities, and do racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race. Scientific racism refers to the belief that the human species can be categorized into the inferior and superior groups on the basis of psychological data so that social policies can be implemented to promote the breeding of the superior groups and discourage the breeding of the inferior groups.

The middle nineteenth century racial investigation was concerned with establishing the issue of racism as the belief that racial difference was not merely based on the difference of the color of blacks and whites, but it was deemed scientifically valid issue and could be proved with biological and scientific means. The concept of race was defined on the certain criteria that were given scientific

slogans. Stephen Jay Gould writes, “the language, concepts, methods and authority of science were used to support the belief that certain human groups were intrinsically inferior to others as measured by some socially defined criterion, such as intelligence or civilized behavior” (39).

Though Natural Science started its investigation on racism by the middle of the nineteenth century, 'scientific racism' has come into existence only after the Second World War. The use of race in natural science radically changed the existing racial themes. Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* gave the landmark development in the field of natural science which supposes that the existence of species is possible because of the inter-breeding to fit in the changing environment. Darwinian evolution theory and Mendelian science of heredity challenged the existing belief that physically, anthropologically the black-skinned individuals are inferior to the white-skinned individuals. 'Survival of the fittest' propounded by the English philosopher Herbert Spencer suggested that the weakest, the most useless members of society should be allowed to die. And later in 1883, English anthropologist Francis Galton; cousin of Charles Darwin, coined 'Eugenics', Greek word for 'to be well born'. Galton characterized eugenics as a civic religion based on science. The theological expression of eugenics is called Beyondism, a term coined by Raymond B. Cattell, professor emeritus at the University of Illinois. Based on evolutionary theory, Beyondism teaches that the brightest and wealthiest should inherit the earth; anything less leads to the survival of the unfit and the demise of civilization.

The rise of Nazism in 1930s and its consequent 'Aryan science' gave impetus to Nazi scientific racism; but scientists dismissed the so-called Nazi scientific racism. The scientists who approached racism couldn't analyze it objectively, but within the

political, social, and intellectual affinities, racism was faced indirectly; the efforts to counter racism through institutionalized scientific channels were frustrated and anti-racist publications by individual became popular. The fear of Nazi led most scientists, who were hesitant to join the political frontier in the intellectual battle, to discredit racism. Only towards the end of the decade the scientific community declared its grudge against racism. To fight racism was almost equal to the subject to fight Nazism. England failed to reach a consensus to condemn racism, and America never reached to formulate an official position. But the beginning impatience of Nazi in the beginning of 1940s materialized the campaigns for a number of anti-racist declarations. In America a group of distinguished geneticists at the International Congress of Genetics in Edinburgh, also known as the 'Geneticists Manifesto', and many other institutions asserted the principle of opposing Nazi racial theories; but the definition of racism in egalitarian cultural terms came in 1950 when UNESCO initiated its first statement on race in 1950. The campaign against anti-Semitism and racism was begun in the initiative of Franz Boas by May 1933. In the same year, Boas tried to get the council of the National Academy of scientists to pass a resolution against "the tendency to control scientific work from non-scientific viewpoints that are particularly among the nations of Europe" (328). Boas's effort to undertake a systematic effort to counteract the vicious pseudo-scientific activity of so-called scientists who try to prove the close relation between racial descent and mental character, was aimed at providing data to attack the racial craze by undermining its alleged scientific basis and creating opportunities to combat racist fallacies in an educational campaign.

In Britain, her intellectual minds, though later than Americans, established a committee to study the racial factor in cultural development only in 1934. But its

work began only after two years to deliberate on the question of “a simple definition of race to serve as a guide to the general public in the discussions of the problems of to-day”(330), and later conceded that these definitions were far from being generalizations from concrete realities and empirical; these were no more than logical concepts, postulated for the recognition that “racial disharmony have emerged from the sphere of intellectual inquiry and have been made the practical basis of discrimination”(330). The visibility of the racial question turned anthropology into a popular topic and coupled a belief in objectivity and rationality.

Anthropologists and biologists were presumed objective in their scientific analysis of the questions of race; and racial prejudice was the source of scientific justification and scientists ' were trapped by the same blindness as the public at large. There were attacks in the 'The Aryan Doctrine' and Americans (Franz Boas and others) for resorting to the easier alternative egalitarianism as the “voice of the facile theorist. . . while the scientific investigator of the race, who refrains from dogmatism pending fuller inquiry, is still crying in the wilderness”(331).The committee's publication Nature's editorial emphasized the widespread ignorance among the public concerning the race issue and particularly blamed the divided anthropologists for being unable to communicate a clear message to the public. It studied the Aryan theories and Nordic, and the editorial concluded:

Such dogmatic assumptions, unfortunately, have their attraction for the political doctrine and the agitator; and it is perhaps to be regarded, therefore, that the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological sciences did not see its aim to promote investigation into such racial problems on broad lines. The machinery may seem overweighty, but at least the truth would have been made available in

authoritative form to all. (331)

On the other hand, there were Anti-racist scientists who opposed political racism, classified themselves as such and objected to the use of scientific theories to justify racial discrimination.

The evolutionary theorists also made an identical conclusion of the scientists about black inferiority that the blacks were the evolutionary predecessors of whites and that 'Negroid Stocks', having evolved long before whites, are both physically and mentally closer to its anthropoid ancestors. So, "blacks were intellectually inferior to whites because they had evolved earlier" (382). And another theorist said that blacks were intellectually inferior because they had evolved later for they have crossed the evolutionary threshold into homo sapiens long after other races and thus had had less time to develop" (382). These absurd arguments were made for the so-called superior whites and thus enacted for them. Thus what can be inferred is the scientists and their scientific experimentations are not to discover anything new or to disprove anything but only to consolidate the existing belief that blacks are innately inferior to whites.

The racism defined in the name of religion also proved that Jesus Christ is white in color and only the whites are rightful heir to place themselves in the upper ladder of social strata. This theological racism interpreted from Biblical reference took a different dimension in the fifteenth and sixteenth century. In colonial era whites thought the impossibility of converting blacks into Christianity and postulated a new racism which can be called colonial racism. At this stage racism of belief transformed into racism of color. In the context of science, the discovery of modern science and many laboratorial experiences were carried out, but still racism was more theological than scientific. The argument of racism had not only confined to academic

journals and scientific conferences but also had become a topic of debate in barrooms and cocktail parties; with scientific slogans, it received unprecedented coverage on the popular press. Despite the length and intensity of the debate, Tucker writes” there has been no significant advance in scientific knowledge” (382).

Though waged with scientific experimentations, racism, in the twentieth century, has become more political. The extension of colonial racism to political racism is either used to keep up the political status or political authority, for the genetic differences between blacks and whites is replete with scientific propaganda. William H. Tucker writes: “The question of genetic differences between races has arisen not out of purely scientific curiosity or the desire to find some important scientific truth or to solve some significant scientific problem but only because of the belief, explicit or unstated that the answer has political consequences” (382).

Hitler's demarcation of the 'pure race' for Nazi is not merely the modern form of inequality though not biblically based on color distinction. Aristotle, a classical biologist, and his observation made it clear that” there are species in which the distinction is already marked, immediately at birth, between those of its members who are intended for being ruled and those who are intended to rule (383)”. This Aristotelian inequality among human generations is no different than the famous English scientist Sir Francis Galton, though he observed the same even twenty two hundred years later: “it is thus clear that, just as some are by nature free, so others are by nature slaves, and for these latter the condition of slavery is both just and beneficial” (383). The tradition of inequality can not only be found in classical and modern observations but even in Thomas Hobbes's words for his quasi-scientific justification for slavery “as if master and servant were not introduced by consent of men but by difference of wit”(383).

So, this political exploitation of scientific results is a misuse of science; these are the efforts to prove the innate intellectual inferiority of some groups (blacks) which has led only to oppressive and antisocial proposals. Tucker writes “The judicious use of our scientific resources would seem inconsistent with the pursuit of a goal that is probably scientifically chimerical and certainly leads itself to socially pernicious ends” (384).

The revival of eugenics in America had more to do with ideology and money than with science. The scientist also believed that genetics could be used to prove the inferiority of blacks and the superiority of the white with Anglo-Saxon stock. The 'Pioneer Fund' was working in America to support the Eugenics Movement; and its original charter outlined a commitment to work for 'racial betterment' through studies in heredity and eugenics and to improve the character of the American people by encouraging the procreation of descendants of the original white colonial stock. This was another example to prove the same existing belief of black inferiority. It was no better than the Hitler's Nazi ideology of race. The similarities between Nazi ideology of pure race and White ideology of white superior race were the results propounded in the support of scientific authority. The Pioneer Fund supported the December 11, 1977 New York Times' article, and characterized as having “supported highly controversial research by a dozen of scientists who believe that blacks are generally less intelligent than whites” (5). Pioneer Fund also contributed to the theory of Thomas Bouchard Jr., a psychologist at the University of Minnesota, and his conclusions that shyness, political conservatism, dedication to hard work, orderliness, intimacy, extroversion, conformity, and a host of other social traits are largely heritable; but the problem is that his scientific data and methods of analysis upon which his conclusions are based have never been released for objective scrutiny.

The people hate 'other' because of the color of their skin, and think that intelligence' is determined by race. Some of the people are scientists. The scientists carried out IQ test and other examinations to prove the inferiority of non-white races. Scientists obtained ideas on race from society; they then proved these ideas using pseudo-scientific facts; the scientists then presented their proofs to society, thus reinforcing the racist beliefs of that society.

Science became a purveyor of race and racism because scientists were not totally objective and they were influenced by the beliefs of society. The racist views of society were reflected in the scientists' works. Scientists were, day after day, working on a project that benefits the society and its existing belief rather than that befitted the science. Even a scientist who goes to a laboratory to develop a cure for cancer, and so and so, is still affected by personal beliefs and greed (money for an example). These stereotyped scientists have a hypothesis, so they design an experiment to prove it; they cannot help but influence the experiment with their own expectations. They analyzed their data incorrectly and proved their hypothesis that blacks have smaller volumes of their skulls than the whites.

If a scientist is set in his beliefs that one race is inferior to another, and he sets out to prove that idea, he will probably obtain data from his experiment proving that there is a superior race. Even if the actual data does not prove the hypothesis, the manipulation of the data will. The scientist can eliminate 'unsuitable data', adjust for certain conditions that he has perceived, and put data in a graph in a way that will make small differences seem larger.

Even the phrenologists teach that the size of the brain determines the degree of the function and that since the brain is closely encased by the cranium, the size of the various parts can be determined by the contour of the skull. The phrenologist, by

'reading' the surface of the head, describes the individual's personality. The phrenologists never doubt that the size of parts of a person's head does not determine the amount of certain qualities a person has, like intelligence. The scientists have since proven that the size of a person's head has nothing to do with how intelligent they are. The size of head is determined by other factors, such as sex, age, and general physical size. However, these scientists base their whole field of science on a false assumption. Though most members of the society believe that scientists have objective overview and intelligence, they often do not realize just how human scientists are, as pointed out by Ashley Montagu: "All but a few persons take it completely for granted that scientists have established the 'facts' about 'race' and that they long ago recognized and classified the 'races' of mankind. Scientists do little to discourage this view, and, indeed, many of them are quite as deluded as most laymen are concerning the subject" (100). Ashley Montagu wrote the 1950's UNESCO statement on race. He took the lead in arguing that biologists should abandon the race concept in dealing with human variation because the assumptions embedded in common social usage made it unsuitable for scientific discourse. Charles Leslie takes the example of Joseph Birdsell, a new-Darwinist, who writes "A race is an interbreeding population whose gene pool is different from all other populations" (260) but in support to Ashley Montagu he redefined "The use of the term race has been discontinued because it is scientifically indefinable and carries social implications that are harmful and disruptive" (260).

When scientists tell the general public that blacks are less intelligent than whites, the people believe it. The society has already believed blacks to be inferior, and the scientists attempt to strengthen, while they themselves know the secret. According to Ashley Montagu society wants races to be defined and so the scientists

set out to define them:

For more than century anthropologists have been directing their attention principally towards the task of establishing criteria by means of which 'races' of mankind might be defined- a diverting parlor game in which by arbitrarily selecting the criteria one could nearly always make the 'races' come out exactly as one thought they should. (66)

Scientists have tried to locate different comparisons between races, such as skull size and skull shape for intelligent part of the brain and longer arm for indicating a resemblance to lower primates, such as apes. If a society is racist, the scientist will also be racist, and they will provide 'evidence' of their racist views because it reinforces the society's belief.

In the past, hatred of the other was justified by rationality, religion, customs, and appearance. Using science as a justification is relatively novel, a product of the past few centuries as the world is guided by science. Racism results into the classification of human. Scientific justification of racism has become the demand of motion to inculcate in the mind of the people as science is an authority of anthropology as a scientific discipline; and further the authority of science can be utilized for the legitimization of slavery.

In the novel, the main character, Pecola is suffering from the racial and cultural conflict. She is hated by her superior friends. Her delicate psyche was contaminated completely due its influence in her life. She feels harassed, inferiorized, uglified, demonized and madden by the slightly superior mulatto people. Her dark eyes gives her pain and wishes for the blue. She moves heaven and earth to have the bluest eyes. She leaves no stone unturned to have the bluest eyes. This high-flown obsessive hankering after the bluest eyes renders her mentally insane. Her morally

bankrupt father ruins her sexually. He impregnated her. Her teenage pregnancy invited unendurable shame and degeneration. Eventually, she is brought to the state of insanity and social alienation and she falls prey to the treacherous violence of intra-racial conflict. How she suffers from the intra-racial conflict, the forthcoming chapter will elaborate in detail.

Chapter III: Textual Analysis

Racial Conflict

Toni Morrison struggles to capture in her writing not only what has been happening within African-American minority but also the politics behind these sorts of happenings. What kinds of changes and upheavals occur in African-American community is not the sole and whole concern of her writing. She is more concerned with why something is occurring rather than what is occurring. Shock and aftermath wreaked upon African-American people tend to be the focal point in her writing. In the case of this novel, she has also confessed the same view that pushed her to dramatize this sort of literary goal. In the section "afterword" added in the end of 'The Bluest Eyes', she says, "Until that moment I had seen the pretty, the lovely, the nice, the ugly and although I had certainly used the word 'beautiful', I had never experienced its shock - the force of which was equaled by the knowledge that no one else recognized it, not even, or especially, the one who possessed it" (167). Thus it has been realized proverbially that Toni Morrison is that rare and matchless African-American writer who brings into light the under-currents and cross-currents of the black lives in worryingly expanding African-American community with a great deal of hindsight and foresight. Toni Morrison diagnoses the cancerous evil that is endemic in an African-American community whether it is self-incurred or superimposed from outside.

Toni Morrison begins to write the novel when African-American community was afflicted with the problem of 'othering' within African-American minority. Within African-American minority hierarchy developed. Just like the white race established a conflictual and discriminatory relationship with the blacks, in much the same way light skinned Mulatto established a course of discriminatory relationship with the dark

skinned nigger. The same pace and intensity of the white-black racial conflict entered into the growing African-American minority. During late sixties two polar opposites appeared distinctly in African-American minority. These two African-American classes are the light-skinned Mulatto and the dark skinned blacks disdainfully called 'niggers' (148). The light-skinned Mulatto class was unnecessarily proud of its inherited Anglophobia. This class was always conscious of the fact that it has retained some remnants of white-colour. This class arrogantly and haughtily believed in its superior privilege. The Mulatto light-skinned class presumed arrogantly that it has occupied a top space in the hierarchy of African-American tribe. In sharp contrast to the dark skinned blacks called niggers, the Mulatto class is economically more prosperous. Several light-skinned blacks had descended from the nice upbringing. Almost all light-skinned blacks had access to qualitative education. In almost all aspect, the light-skinned blacks found themselves above in and superior to the dark colored blacks.

On the other hand, the dark skinned blacks were very black. There was no atom of whiteness in their color. Academically, economically, culturally and socially this nigger class was backward, incompetent, less adopt and more ignoble. It became clearly evident that by late sixties African-American minorities was faced with the differently renewed problem of intra-racial conflict. Within the African-American race conflict developed. the light skinned Mulatto class began to treat the dark skinned black people in much the same way the white had treated the blacks. On the strength of slightly greater economic, academic and physical skill, the light-skinned class began to inferiorize the dark skinned blacks. In the course of time, this intra-racial process of exferiorization, dehumanization, demonization of the dark skinned blacks by the light-skinned Mulatto took different manifestations and produced many

psychologically harmful consequences. It is at the backdrop of this intra-racial development that Morrison wrote her novel *The Bluest Eyes*.

Toni Morrison's novel *The Bluest Eye* brings into foreground the intra-racial conflict that was taking on different forms at different levels of the relationship between the light-skinned blacks and the dark skinned blacks. The novel *The Bluest Eye* brings into focus the poignantly tragic story of a girl Pecola who was subjected to an eternal tragic longing for blue eyes, which resulted in her insanity. In this novel there is a character named Pecola, who comes from the low dark skinned blacks scornfully called niggers. She was inferiorized. Her parents were swamped in the mire of terrible conflict and violent misunderstanding. Both of Pecola's parents were utterly ignorant, illiterate and querulously hostile. There was a terribly vacuous space in between her father and mother. She was brought up in such a sort of family that was infested with confusion, degeneration indignity and violent terror and animosity. She at first grew aware of the intra-racial touch that was cancerously mushrooming in her own family.

Racial Conflict within Pecola's Family

The racial conflict can be defined as a conflict amidst people who have a sense of belonging to the same race. In *The Bluest Eyes* Pecola's family itself is represented as that sort of family which has been disintegrating under the millstone of intra-racial conflict. Pecola's father Cholly Breedlove was brought up in the atmosphere of parentlessness. His mother had left him in a dumping site four days after he was born. He was brought from this loveless and motherless state by his Great Aunt Cholly. Aunt Cholly brought him up. She named him after her name Cholly. Thus he came to be known as Cholly Breedlove. Cholly Breedlove received four years of schooling. As he entered into adolescent state he left school and began to seek the where about of

his father. In the course of his search for father, knowledge came to him that Samson Fuller is the name of his father. Samson Fuller scolded Cholly Breedlove for coming closer to him. Samson Fuller, Cholly Breedlove's father, denied parental recognition to Cholly Breedlove. Samson Fuller said that he had already paid for having sex with Cholly's mother. Cholly's mother had already charged money from S. Fuller for having sex with her. On the ground of sexual trade Cholly's father denied to offer parental identification to Cholly Breedlove. This act of denying parental acceptance created a profound sense of humiliation and an excruciating wound of psychological shock and alienation. Frustrated by the painful consequence of his search for parental recognition, he returned to his great Aunt's house. His aunt died a natural death. He performed funeral obsequies of her as his relationship with her entailed him to do. After that Cholly Breedlove loved a girl from similar background, status and class. Her name was Pauline Williams. She was in the same atmosphere of parentlessness, lovelessness ignorance and helplessness as he was. Whenever the love between them deepened, both Pauline and Cholly married. After marriage they went to a certain specific place where Cholly Breedlove was supposed to get a job in either factory. Cholly used to work in factory and Pauline used to manage household work. When the early hallucination of their love marriage faded in time, the warmth and understanding began to migrate from their early conjugal relationship. Cholly gradually started neglecting her. He began to disregard her negligently. Slowly she began to fall prey to his affront and unrevealed atrocity. He downplayed her dignity. He wounded her feelings. He stripped her of her freedom. She was confined within the atmosphere of loneliness. Consequently she felt troubled and torture. She desired to spend a little time in the company of her friends. But Cholly disliked and vehemently opposed this desire of her for freedom and companionship. She wanted to

buy some personal things for her individual satisfaction. So, she was in a sharp need of money. But Cholly became cruelly insensitive to her aspiration.

Over time Cholly Breedlove came to know that Pauline has become pregnant. At his knowledge about her pregnancy Cholly Breedlove began to display his friendly and understandable attitude to her. At that turn of change over her husband's behaviour and mentality Pauline felt somewhat relieved. But after delivering her daughter Pauline was condemned to take the brunt of the same insensitive and cruelly atrocious behaviour and acts of her husband. She looked forward to see some optimistic change in Cholly Breedlove. But Cholly Breedlove showed no sign of altering this sort of cruel colour in his conjugal stupidity. Pauline's tirelessly repeated attempt to alter her husband and make him a worthy man resulted in a humiliating and terribly embarrassing consequence for her. So she started serving as a 'Mammy' in the house of a white man. She was profoundly affected by the set of standards kept by the white family in almost all aspect of decent life of an individual. How overwhelming her experience of working as 'mammy' in a white man's family gets reflected in the following lines cited from the text,

It was her good fortune to find a permanent job in the home of a well to do family whose members were affectionate, appreciate, and generous. She looked at their houses, smelled their linen, touched their silk draperies, and loved all of it. The child's pink mightie, the stacks of white pillow slips edged with embroidery. The sheets with top hems picked out with blue cornflowers. She became what is known as an ideal servant for such a role filled practically all of her needs. (98-99)

It has become apparently evident that Pauline Williams, Cholly Breedlove's wife and a worker in a white man's family, has been in the gripping spell of white

standards and privileges. Her contact with white standards and privileges created a mounting sense of superiority. Although she herself is a black nigger her frequent presence as a worker in a white man's house implanted an obsessive concern with the established set of white privilege. As her involvement in the household of a Whiteman prolonged she internalized the outside gaze. Consequent upon internalization of outside gaze Pauline William became detached from her nigger self and happened to inherit a pretentious superior self. She began to neglect her own house as she became more and more attached to the household affairs of a Whiteman. She began to deprive her daughter Pecola of motherly love and affection. She became, over time, enmeshed in the torturous problem of discrimination, "Soon she stopped trying to keep her own house. The things she could afford to buy did not last, had no beauty or style, and were absorbed by the dingy storefront. More and more she neglected her house, her children, her man - they were like the afterthoughts one has just like the afterthoughts one has just before sleep, the early-morning and late - evening edges of her day, the dark edges that made the daily life with the fishers lighter, more delicate, more lovely. Here she could arrange things, clean things, line things up in neat rows. Here her foot flopped around on deep pile carpets and there was no whenever sound. Here she found beauty, order cleanliness and praise. She reigned over cupboards stacked high with food that would not be eaten for weeks, even months, she was queen of canned vegetables bought by the case, special fondants and ribbon candy curfed up in tiny silver dishes. The creditors and service people who humiliated her when she went to them on her own behalf respected her, were even intimidated by her, when she spoke for the Fishers. She refused beef slightly dark or with edges not properly trimmed. The slightly reeking fish that she accepted for her own family she would all but throw in the fish man's face if he sent it to the Fisher house. Power,

praise and luxury were hers in this household. They even gave her what she had never had - a nickname - polly. It was her pleasure to stand in her kitchen at the end of a day and survey her handiwork. Knowing there were soaps bars by the dozen, bacon by the rasher and reveling in her shiny pots and pans and polished floors. Hearing, “We'll never let her go we could never find anybody like Polly. She will not leave the kitchen until everything is in order. Really, she is the ideal servant” (99).

Mrs. Breedlove, Cholly Breedlove's wife, earned honest status as a servant in a white family. With that recently earned status as an ideal servant Mrs. Breedlove began to breathe swaggering air of superiority within her African-American minority race. First of all she began to demonstrate discriminatory behaviour within her family. Influenced and somewhat changed by her token of ideal servanthood offered from a white family Mrs. Breedlove found her alcoholic bastard husband far more lowly, debased, decadent and corruptible. Because certain anglophilia and Anglophobic superiority had got transmitted into Mrs. Breedlove, she began to dominate her own nigger husband who himself was tailor-made for subjugation. Both a husband and a wife belonging to the same black race are engaged in intra-racial conflict. With a view to make her husband as an utterly ruined man, Mrs. Breedlove began to goad her husband to indulge in those cardinal flows and morally catastrophic weaknesses. Mrs. Breedlove had seen husbands of her friend afflicted with shockingly minous errors and immoral flows. So with a view to ruin her husband utterly she goaded her husband to lead a minous life of moral ravages and psychological chaos:

She took on the full responsibility and recognition of breadwinner and returned to church. First, however, she moved out of the two rooms into a spacious first floor of a building that had been built as a store. She came into her own with the woman who had despised her, by

being more moral than they; she avenged herself on Cholly by forcing him to indulge in the weaknesses she despised” (98).

Mrs. Breedlove convinced at her husband's frequent indulgence in the weakness she despised with malice aforethought. Once Cholly Breedlove fucked his own daughter and impregnated her. His daughter Pecola, whom Cholly Breedlove, her father fucked, told her mother Mrs. Breedlove several times about her sexual exploitation by her father Cholly. But Mrs. Breedlove disbelieved in the report. Why did not she react to the report about Pecola's sexual exploitation by Cholly Breedlove? Mrs. Breedlove became indifferent to her daughter's report about her sexual exploitation by Cholly Breedlove. She disbelieved in the news why? Answer is she (Mrs. Breedlove) Wanted to see her husband Cholly Breedlove falling from the grace and dignity to the lowest line of debauchery and gross lechery.

“Well. Go ahead. Still what? I wonder what it would be like.

Horrible

Really?

Yes, terrible

Then why didn't you tell Mrs. Breedlove?

I did tell her.

I don't mean about the first time. I mean about the second time, when you were sleeping on the conch.

I wasn't sleeping! I was reading! You wasn't sleeping! i was reading! You don't have to shout.

You don't understand anything, do you? She didn't even believe me when I told her.

So that's why you didn't tell her about the second time?

She wouldn't have believed then either" (158).

Mrs. Breedlove, being a black wife of a black nigger, deliberately goads her own husband to indulge in terrible weakness to such a dangerous extent that she does not take any initiative to prevent her debased and totally demonic husband from fucking her daughter repeatedly. Mr. Breedlove was also tailor made for such victimization. In the growing discriminatory hostility between Mrs. Breedlove and Cholly Breedlove lies the single most aspect of intra-racial conflict.

Mrs. Breedlove is not maintaining intra-racial conflict with her husband only. She also started giving more love and care to a Whiteman's children. She deprives her daughter Pecola of full-fledged maternal love.

Once due to Pecola's nervous awkwardness in the kitchen of a Whiteman, where her mother works, a kitchen pan dropped on the floor and splattered blackish blueberries everywhere. Swollen and infested by the germs of the white superiority, Mr. Breedlove chastised Pecola recklessly she (Mrs. Breedlove) spends more time in careful treatment of white baby. She cruelly develops insensitivity and disregard for her own daughter Pecola.

It may have been nervousness, awkwardness, but the pan tumbled under Pecola's fingers and fell to the floor, splattering blackish blueberries everywhere. Most of the juice splashed on Pecola's legs, and the burn must have been painful, for she cried out and began hopping about just as Mr. Breedlove entered with a tightly packed laundry bag. In one gallop she was on Pecola and with the back of her hand knocked her to the floor. Pecola slid in the pie juice one leg folding under her. Mrs. Breedlove yanked her up by the arm, slapped her again, and in a voice thin with anger, abused Pecola directly and Frieda and me by

implication. (84)

Furthermore, her discriminatory revelation of parsimony in displaying love to her daughter becomes transparent in the following textual citation.

The little girl in pink started to cry. Mrs. Breedlove turned to her Hush, baby, hush - come here. Oh, Lord, look at your dress. Don't cry no more polly will change it. She went to the sink and turned tap water on a fresh towel. Over her shoulder she spit out words to us like rotten pieces of apple. 'Pick up that wash and get on out of here, so I can get this mess cleaned up'. Pecola picked up the laundry bag, heavy with wet clothes, and we stepped hurriedly out the door. As Pecola put the laundry bag in the wagon, we could hear Mrs. Breedlove hushing and soothing the tears of the little pink - and - yellow girl. (85)

Intra-racial Conflict at School

Pecola hails from inferiorized, impoverished, uglified and marginalized black minority class. She comes from the nadir of lowly and demonized, humiliated and culturally uprooted family background. She was discriminated and uglified in every section and cross-section of her life. At school she was discriminated and neglected to the point of shame and humiliation.

As long as she looked the way she did, as long as she was ugly, she would have to stay with these people. Somehow, she belonged to them. Long hours she sat looking in the mirror, trying to discover the secret of the ugliness, the ugliness that made her ignored or despised at school, by teachers and classmates alike. She was the only member of her class who sat alone at a double desk. The first letter of her last name forced her to sit in the front of the room always. But what about

Marie Appolonaire? Marie was in front of her, but she shared a desk with hake Angelino. Her teachers had always treated her this way.

They never tire to glance at her, and called on her only when every one was required to respond. She also know that when one of the girls at school wanted to be particularly insulting to a boy or wanted to get an immediate response from him, she could say “Bobby loves Pecola Breedlove! Bobby loves Pecola Breedlove” and never fail to get peals of laughter from those in earshot, and mock anger from the accused.

(34)

Pecola is convinced from every side by every friend and kith and kins of her that she is ugly. She is forced to believe that she is not beautiful. She is pressurized to believe that her eyes are ugly, her face is ugly, her colour is dangerously dark, her body is ugly, her family is backward. She is brainwashed that she began to feel anxious that perhaps even her soul is ugly.

They had extemporized a verse made up of two insults about matters over which the victim had no control; the colour of her skin and speculations on the sleeping habits of adults, wildly fitting in its incoherence. That they themselves were black or that their own father had similarly relaxed habits was irrelevant. It was their contempt for their own blackness that gave the first insults its teeth. They seemed to have taken all of their smoothly cultivated ignorance, their exquisitely learned self-hatred, their elaborately designed hopelessness and sucked it all up into a fiery cone of scorn that had burned for ages in the hollows of their minds - cooled - and spilled over lips of outrage, consuming whatever was in its path. They danced a macabre ballet around the victim, whom, for their own sake, they were prepared to sacrifice to the flaming pit.

Once because of certain cause Pecola had to spend sometime in the house of her friends - Frieda and Claudia. While living in that house she happened to drink three quarts of milk.

When mother of Claudia and Frieda knew that it is Pecola who drink milk from the Shirley Temple Cup. She gave vent to her anger in the language of intra-racial stereotype. The 'folks' my mother was referring to was Pecola. The three of us, Pecola Frieda, and I listened to her downstairs in the kitchen fussing about the amount of milk Pecola had drunk. We knew she was fond of the Shirley Temple Cup” (16).

Furthermore Pecola is everywhere treated as outsider, as alienated and as othered creature. She is treated in department by a black storekeeper named Mr. Yacobowski in a discriminatory and dehumanized way. “How can a fifty-two-year-old white immigrant storekeeper with the taste of potatoes and beer in his mouths his mind honed on the doe-eyed virgin Mary, his sensibilities blunted by a permanent awareness of loss, see a little black girl? Nothing in his life even suggested that the feat was possible, not to say desirable or necessary. “Yeah?” She looks up at him and sees the vacuum where curiosity ought to lodge. And something more. The total absence of human recognition - the glazed separateness.” (36)

From every side Pecola was made confused. She was neglected and discriminated by her light-skinned own parents. At school she is inferiorized. At home she is estranged and alienated. In her circle of friends she is 'othered'. Hence she appears to stand as a victimized creature submerging into the treacherous quick sand of intra-racial conflict, chaos and confusion.

Impoverished and inferiorized by other light-skinned swaggering mulattoes, Pecola was right from her childhood convinced of the inferiority of her own sex and class. She thought that she does not have anything which is genuinely called beautiful.

The fact that she is ugly is implanted to the deepest corpus of her psyche.

So Pecola's attention began to more on the direction of beauty and charm. She began to watch those who had been held to be beautiful. She began to talk about beauty and charm with her friend she asked her friends how to become beautiful, what makes one beautiful, how to attract boys, how to increase the number of boy friends. She saw Moureaan Peal admired and respected for her standards and beauty. She gradually struggled to know that if she becomes beautiful, people stop neglecting her and cares for her.

In time she knows that blue eyes are the standard of the beautiful. So she started hankering after the bluest eyes.

Frieda and Claudia incited Pecola to cultivate a hankering after the Shirley Temple's Cup. She was made to believe that by drinking milk from the Shirley Temple's Cup one can make one's eyes blues. Pecola did also. In the course of her intense hankering after the bluest eyes Pecola happens to meet a bevy of prostitutes who also goads Pecola to indulge obsessively in the lowest art of attracting many boyfriends, of appearing beautiful. She builds up an obsessive interest in the bluest eyes. Thinking that via blue eyes it would be possible to be charming and beautiful, Pecola becomes ready to lose anything and do anything. Blue eyes, blue eyes, blue eyes and non-other than blue eyes. That becomes her single most motto echoing in her outward quest for beauty.

Finally she goes to meet Soaphead Church - a Mulatto bastard who claims to solve and suffering of any seeker and sufferer. Soaphead Church is a so-called spiritualist and psychic reader. He used to think that he is capable of bringing an appropriate solution to every problem whatsoever brought to him by sufferer. Actually, Soaphead Church is a Charlattan and a Wolf-in-sheep's clothing. His

apparent mission is salvation. But his inner satanic mission is to lead a sufferer into damnation.

Almost in an insane mood due to the fever-pitch of obsessive hankering for the bluest eyes, Pecola reaches the haven of Soaphead Church. As she pleaded him to make his eyes blues, Mr. Soaphead reacts in a way suggestive of intra-racial biases.

“Help you how? Tell me Don't be frightened.”

“My eyes”

“What about your eyes?”

“I want them blue.” (172)

Soaphead pursed his lips, and let his tongue stroke a gold inlay. He thought it was at once the most fantastic and the most logical petition he had ever received. Here was an ugly little girl asking for beauty. A surge of love and understanding swept through him, but was quickly replaced by anger. Anger that he was powerless to help her. Of all the wishes people had brought him - money, love revenge - this seemed to him the most poignant and the one most describing of fulfillment. A little black girl who wanted to rise up out of the pit of her blackness and see the world with blue eyes. His outrage grew and felt like power. For the first time honestly wished he could work miracles. Never before had he really wanted the true and holy power - only the power to make others believe he had it. It seemed so bud, so frivolous. (138)

The interaction between Pecola and Soaphead Church is reflective of the fact that Soaphead Church's Manner of approaching Pecolais tainted with trademarks of intra-racial disfavour and deceptive racial haughtiness.

Pecola's relationship with Maureen Peal further more brings into light some of the dark terrain of intra-racial conflict. Maureen disdainfully and haphazardly talks to Pecola in the language of intra-racial conflict:

Maureen said to Pecola, "Did you even see a naked man?"

Pecola blinked, then away. 'No, where would I see a naked man?'

"I don't know. I just asked."

"You stop talking about her daddy", I said.

"What do I care about her old black daddy?" Asked Maureen

"Black?who you calling black?"

"You!"

You think you so cute.

Safe on the other side, she screamed at us, "I am cute! And you ugly, black and ugly black eyes. I am cute." (55)

Maureen is also a black. But she is a light-skinned black. She is a somewhat wealthy light-skinned on the strength of her slightly upgraded status she started calling other dark skinned blacks black. This brand of Maureen - Pecola episode fragrantly dramatizes open intra-racial conflict.

Intra-racial Conflict amidst Growing Children

Frieda, Claudia and Pecola are three characters belonging to the dark-skinned class of blacks. They are economically, academically and socially much more backward. On account of this backwardness they are discriminated by other light-skinned blacks in school and elsewhere in community. In their class there is another girl named Maureen Peal. Maureen peal is light-skinned. She is wealthy. She has certain status and standing. Even teachers and most of other white girls also admire her. Proud of her status and superior standing Maureen castigates other dark-skinned girls like Pecola and Clandia.

Indignant with her much vaunted superiorities, Frieda and Clandia began to finding weaknesses in Maureen. They were delightfully amazed to find that Maureen

had a six fingers in hand. They twisted Maureen Peal into Meringue pie. They envied her. In the growing conflictual relationship among Frieda, Clandia and Maureen Peal overtones of intra-racial conflict is evident.

Frieda and I were bemused, irritated and fascinated by her. We looked hand for flaws to restore our equilibrium, but had to be content at first with uglying up her name, changing Maureen Peal to Meringue pie. Later a minor epiphany was ours when we discovered that she had a dog tooth - a charming one to be sure - but a dog tooth nonetheless. And we found out that she had been born with six fingers on each hand and that there was a little bump where each extra one had been removed, we smiled. They were small triumphs, but we took what we could get - snickering behind her back and calling her six-finger-dog-tooth-meringue - pie. But we had to do it alone, for none of the other girls would cooperate with our hostility. They adored her (48).

Intra-racial Conflict and the Black Community

Intra-racial conflict had taken firm at family level also. Light-skinned African-American parents do not allow their children to mix and play in the group of the children of dark-skinned blacks. Geraldine does not allow her light-skinned son to dirty himself by playing with of her children of niggers.

Geraldine didn't allow her baby, junior, to cry. As long as his needs were physical, she could meet them - comfort and satiety. he was always brushed, bathed, oiled and shod. Geraldine did not talk to him, coo to him, to indulge him in kissing bouts, but she saw that every other desire was fulfilled. It was not long before the child discovered the difference in his mother's behavior to himself and the cat. As he

grew older, he learned how to direct his halted of his mother to the cut, and spent some happy moments watching if suffer. The cat survived, because Geraldine was seldom away from home and could effectively soothe the animal when junior abused him. (84)

Geraldine, Louis, Junior and the cat lived next to the playground of Washington Irving School. Junior considered the playground his own and the school children coveted his freedom to sleep late, go house for lunch and dominate the playground after school. He hated to see the swings, slides, monkey bars, and seesaws empty and tried to get kids to stick around as long as possible. White kids, his mother did not like him to play with niggers. She had explained to him the difference between colored people and niggers. They were easily identifiable. Colored people were neat and quiet; niggers were dirty and loud. He belonged to the former group: he wore white shirts and blue trousers; his hair was cut as close to his scalp as possible to avoid any suggestion of wool, the part was etched into his hair by the barber. (67-68)

As intense animosity escalated amidst the families of light-skinned blacks and the dark-skinned blacks. The light-skinned mulatto families did not allow their children to mix and play in the group of the children of niggers.

Owing to this brand of intra-racial conflict at family level, children of the dark skinned blacks had to fall prey to the evils of inferiorization and demonized. Light-skinned people and children assert their superiority and their sense of beauty. They constantly persuade the dark-skinned blacks and the children of the niggers that they are ugly. The light-skinned class continuously implanted, in the psyche of nigger children the idea that they are inferior ugly. Every organ of a nigger is taken to be ugly. The light-skinned African-American class set the standards of beauty. This class put forward a claim that it is essential to have the bluest eyes to appear as beautiful.

From every side dark skinned children were convinced of their ugliness and inferiority. The worst effect of the inferiorization of the black children by the light-skinned class fell upon the young growing children of black family.

Pecola is a black dark skinned girl ridiculously and dejectedly called nigger by her superior friends. Her delicate psyche was contaminated completely. She was harassed, inferiorized, uglified, demonized and madden by the slightly superior mulatto people. She is told that if she gets blue eyes by hook or crook she becomes beautiful. She will be recognized and perhaps she happens to have a large number of boyfriends. She has dark eyes in actuality. She moves heaven and earth to have the bluest eyes. She leaves no stone unturned to have the bluest eyes. This high-flown obsessive hankering after the bluest eyes renders her mentally insane. Her morally bankrupt father ruins her sexually. He impregnated her. Her teenage pregnancy invited unendurable shame and degeneration.

Consequently, she is brought to the state of insanity and social alienation. To cut the matter short she falls prey to the treacherous violence of intra-racial conflict.

IV. Conclusion

Racism: The cause of Violence

The Bluest Eye introduces black characters to reveal the cultural problems which are deep-rooted in black society. Most of her characters forget their past heritage, property, and cultural values rather they attempt to assimilate themselves with white culture. For example, Pecola Breedlove, the protagonist of the novel, internalizes the white standard of beauty and develops the notion that blue eyes are the symbol of beauty. Because she lacks blue eyes, she internalizes the idea that she is ugly and people do not love her because of her eyes. Therefore, she craves for blue eyes thinking that they might change her into a beautiful loveable girl and deserve love and affection in her family and community. Consequently, her abandonment of her own self and vigorous effort to achieve blue eyes-the white standard of beauty degenerates her life and ultimately turns insane. In addition, their (black people's) attempt, mother's rejection of her role in her own family and her acceptance as a servant in a white family. Pauline Breedlove is so much obsessed with the white culture that she does not find pleasurable to spend even a short moment with her family. Further, she feels that she is the most powerful and secure woman when she is with white family. But she loses power and becomes an insignificant creature while she is in her own family. It clearly reveals her attraction towards white culture and despise against black. Cholly Breedlove, Pecola's father, is also the victim of the same situation. He also enters into material world, indulges in the world of wine. Through these references Morrison does not blame white culture rather she exhibits that the blacks themselves are responsible for their tragic situation.

It is clear that Morrison's most of the characters have neglected their cultural values, past and heritage. Finally, neglecting their past and in the attempt of

assimilating themselves with white culture they have been rootless and suffered from intra-racial conflict. Intra-racial conflict emerges when the people of same race forget their own past, myth and culture. Similarly, they negate their own people and run after material gain. Thus, they become self-centered. This kind of attitude leads to disintegration of one's community and cultural norms. The community gets divided itself in terms of race, colour, gender, more significantly, the conflict within the same race arouses prejudices and hatred among the people and ultimately leads to tragedy. Moreover, most of the characters suffer from intra-racial hatred. They have created hierarchy by dehumanizing each other. For example, Pecola, Breedlove becomes the victim of one after another in a chain of black people, including her own mother and father, who have been twisted and perverted by the false, empty, and often vicious standards of the white world. Moreover, intra-racial conflict can be observed in terms of class. The concept of superiority and inferiority is rampant among black people. For instance, Geraldine explains to her son that there is a difference between color people and niggers. She further says that their family belongs to the first category. She thinks that colored people are superior to the nigger having standard of behavior more in line with white bourgeois sensibilities. She always encourages her son to play with white children and not to speak to black children. It is evident that Geraldine and her family have fully internalized the white standard of beauty, and live their lives aspiring for bourgeois respectability. Though she belongs to the black race, she hates black people. Her hatred towards black people is evident when she uses nasty words to Pecola while Pecola was in her home. It is clear that intra-racial hatred is deep-rooted among black people. Morrison proves that intra-racial hatred is not the imposition of white upon black rather it occurs when blacks adopt the white culture and internalize that they are inferior and try to assimilate themselves with the whites

rejecting their own values.

Additionally, we find the fragmentation of family values in black community. Like all, in black community as well there is the tradition of looking after the children by the parents. Parents are believed to play the vital role to shape the future of the children. On the contrary, Cholly Breedlove is not brought up by his parents. He was born to unwed mother; his father ran away the day of his birth and his mother abandoned him three days later. This horrible beginning reflects his everyday views and actions. His mother attempted to leave him along in the world. His father figure was an empty void in his life. He was brought up by his aunt. After the death of his aunt, Cholly goes to search for his father and tries to explain his identity to his father. But his father instead of helping him abuses and shouts at Cholly, As Cholly did not get parental love, he becomes self-centered and does not know his responsibility towards his family. He becomes irresponsible and can't find out what he should do and should not do. His insanity reaches to the climax and ultimately he rapes his own daughter.

With these references, Morrison has vividly exposed that the blacks have become so self-centered that they have forgotten their responsibility towards their family and children. It has caused the disintegration of family values among blacks.

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