



**Pecola as devastated and secluded  
character in Toni Morrison's novel  
"The Bluest Eye"**

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## Abstract

This paper explores the nature of racial inequality in America, both in terms of its historical variations and contemporary realities represented by a selected woman character (Pecola) in Toni Morrison's work *The Bluest Eye*. Pecola believes that beauty and self-respect are connected with the color of the skin and whiteness, Toni Morrison as a black writer wants to reflect the struggles and difficulties which confront the black women community in united states represented by her black character girl Pecola, she can't accept herself as a black girl in white people society and search for a way to get rid of her self-loathing and her low self-respect, this way of thinking shows how the white beauty standards affect on the black community. Morrison through out her work wants to make the world aware of the misery and gloomy life of the black women in united states, Pecola has nothing to do with her black skin and its her nature, as one kind of racism, Pecola ill-treated and degraded and this is the reason of her desire that pushed her to wish to gain a blue eyes, to be accepted black girl by her community and settle in peace.

**Keywords:** Pecola, devastated, white beauty standards, racism, black

## 1. Introduction

Toni Morrison's works, especially *The Bluest Eye*, showing ill-treatment of black women in different ways. Racism is defined as a class distinguished that is degraded by others. However, at *The Bluest Eye*, racial discrimination is seen in a very special way. Pecola of is the protagonist of this novel is going through a series of values passed from its descendants and fragmented. The black women in the work accept the criteria of white skin beauty. It is showed that Maureen's pale skin is beautiful and accepted by society and the black skin of Pecola is ugly. And that's justified the strong desire of Pecola to gain "the blue eyes". Morrison clearly shows the influence that the legacy of the classic racist of the 19th century had on the poor black community in the America. In this novel, Pecola, a daughter of a poor and a misery family, has internalized the criteria for white skin beauty to the extent that she wishes to become a beautiful girl and wants to get a blue eyes. This aspect is very clear, and the double struggles between the Western white class and the black African class In *The Bluest Eye*, The writer shows the black American girl identity issue. The feminist Bildungsroman analyzes the dilemma of growing older as black and girl in a community that equates beauty with blue-eyed white privilege. Consumer goods, press, parental consent, and a dismissive view toward her brainwashed the protagonist Pecola Breedlove to internalize white beauty values. Toni Morrison in her novel, she finds out how integration refers to racial self-loathing and finally to self-destruction Moreover, *The Bluest Eye's* adverse mood is partly counteracted by Claudia MacTeer, whose narrative is juxtaposed with Pecola's anti-Bildung and hence transforms the novel to a double Bildungsroman with one girl "raising up" and the other "aging down." out nature and ugliness still work. This paper focuses on the treatment and inferiority towards the black American, especially girls and showing the immense differences between black and white beauty and all of these aspect could be shown in the black character Pecola, Morrison shades light on this side to uncover for the world her case and explores the injured character of black skin woman that should confront her society and overcome all of these obstacles in order to live separately in united states.

## 2. Black Americans as second class citizens

It's far in reality proper about the statement about black individuals being the second one beauty citizens. sooner or later of the 1945-1955 durations the black individuals suffered many troubles. There are three considerable factors which may be related to many different elements. those three elements are social, political and low value, in which black individuals were dealt with as second-class residents. in the social issue, black individuals were going through boom in segregation. within this element, it closely pertains to different elements together with Jim crow legal guidelines; a especially made up law for segregation amongst whites and black human beings because of the truth they believed in white supremacy, lynching; brutally overwhelmed and tortured task to no protection from any forces and this referring to the kukluxklans; who

had been a major risk to the lives of many black people because of them main the lynching techniques. as a substitute, the political factor account black people not having the proper to vote is a major factor. And eventually the comparatively reasonably-priced aspect consist of black humans being unemployed or maybe in the event that they had artwork, the salary became a big doubt. Moreover when investigating extensive we ought to additionally remember the areas the ones befell in, similar to the northern and the southern states( Uk Essays, 2018).

after the end of the civil war, slavery was abolished, but this was not imply a full dissociation of racial oppression Enforced by law. The 14th U.S. Amendment on paper. In 1868, the Constitution guaranteed equal rights for all citizens and guaranteed equal rights for black american, and in two years, the fifteenth amendment expressly set forward these those rights applicable to all individuals or groups, whatever their race or colour. If the changes were done carefully and exclusively and strictly implemented, furthermore the form of second-class citizenship could not have been taken by racial oppression (August, 2009).

In United States, African women taught to laugh and to splendor in despair and anxiety. Each of them are carers and breadwinners, magnificent opposition and energy, devotion, extraordinary passion and ardour. They grew above several years of suffering and incomprehension, so these days, They may no longer be only helping households, they are popular organizations, the major media companies, the army, our federal government in a few years trying to handle the racist-sexist inaccuracy of community with its devastating conflict and impensable unfair treatment. Black females were often the champions in the sporting organizations of our country, which broke Olympic data, The country's direction to success by black females. In the tradition of our cases in America and elsewhere they played an excellent role, providing strong-quality writings, newspaper, record, play, theatre, robotics. With their courage and vision, they have re-etched the cultural landscape. Maya Angelou. Oprah Winfrey. Mae Jemison. Venus Williams. Alfre Woodard. Judith Jamison. religion Ringgold. Lauryn Hill. Ruby Dee. Bell Hooks. Carol Moseley-Braun. Anna Deavere Smith. Faye Wattleton. Toni Morrison. Johnnetta Cole. So many skilled, smart, charming, careful and wise women are Africans who shaped our world and are making every effort to create this area bigger and greater. (Jones & Shorter, 2003).

### 3. Pecola as devastated and secluded character in the bluest eye

Werrlein remarks in her paper "Dick and Jane, not as fast," that the only difference between the two names Pecola and Peola is the missed letter "C" It has a "C" in Pecola's name which can be read as "see"(Werrlein, 2007, p.204) This vision trouble is brought into the conversation, and the writer explains how the White Male Frame is the abstract body designed within the legal rules. Therefore, the body has been granted access to rights and freedoms (Werrlein, 2007,p.197). Werrlein states that the farther you are from that concrete corporeality, the more your bodies are noticeable –and in a negative way. The author presents that the more conspicuous the body, the less conspicuous the object, as the subject's presence can be clarified by associating this with the above described white male body, which is protected by law. (Werrlein, 2007,p.203-204). Pecola would not be farther away than this supposed abstraction, as a a poor black girl.

In the text she wants herself could find its body vanish in her battles with her apparent physical body. "Please, God," she whispered into the palm of her hand. "Pleasemake me disappear.", " She squeezed her eyes shut. Little parts of her body faded away. Now slowly, now with a rush. Slowly again. Herfingers went, one by one; then her arms disappeared all the way to the elbow. Her feet now. Yes, that was good. The legs all at once. It was hardest above the thighs. She had to be real still and pull. Her stomach would not go. But finally it, too, went away. Then her chest, her neck. The face was hard, too. Almost done, almost. Only her tight, tight eyes were left. They were always left. " (Morrison,1970,p. 43)

the eyes of Pecola are the only part of her body that Pecola can't hide. the letter "C" means ("see") can't go away, therefore the Pecola can't be Peola ever. The Imitation of the character of life can never be acknowledged as lovely or as a subject. In reality, almost everyone who immediately abuses her notices her visibility and undesirability – although a number of personalities indicate her to be hideous.

For example, a white american storekeeper, his name is Mr. Yacobowski, gazes at Pecola with his eye vacuum and "the total absence of human recognition," on a distastened edge (Morrison,1970,p. 46–47). The small girl believes that her blackness skin causes her disgust. Yacobowski is very upset with Pecola and looks confused to contact her to get the cash she pays for her sweet (Morrison,1970, p.46–48 ). When this little girl is leaving the store, she felt embarrassed of herself, she notices dandelions. Prior to that she believed they were beautiful and could not realize why the people called them weeds. Pecola judged by the gaze of mr.Yacobowski, Pecola considered the flower ugly plant (Morrison,1970,p.45-48). In different phrases, Pecola integrates the thoughts and points of view of others. . the word "ugly" arises again when Maureen peel horrified Pecola with the same word In attempt to get her to speak, she had been good to the youngest of Breedlove family girl Pecola. Maureen begins a questioning after purchasing Pecola ice-cream. Maureen's aim is to know the story whether what the boys at school had been yelling about Pecola having seen her father naked was true or false.

Its motive is to find out whether or not what the men at college had been yelling about Pecola having visible her father naked changed into genuine or not (Morrison,1970,p.68–71). The Macteers sisters are coming into her assistance and an assertion is being made, which senses Maureen's motives and Pecola's annoyance. the word "black " is mentioned by Peal as an indignity to Pecola, and her very last assault is "I'm lovely! And also you unsightly! Black and unpleasant black e mos. I'm lovely!" (Morrison, 1970, p. 69–71).

once more, Pecola knows what other people feel about her, and everything is linked to appearances, and that it's miles all associated with appearances. She is not a white girl And she is not regarded as lovely girl because of her black skin ; thus, others think that they can tease her, Geraldine's child is Junior. He hates his mom because she rejects his love, she likes her cat . knowing that he is impotent to woman , he moves his righteous anger to the animal and to other weak creatures – such as Pecola. (Morrison, 1970, p.84–86).

One afternoon when he notices Breedlove, the youngest, walking in front of his house, he contemplates that "no one ever performed along with her. in all likelihood, he notion, due to the fact she turned into unsightly" (Morrison,1970,p. 86). Then, Junior lures the child in, just put the cat on her face to terrify and harm her. Rather, the boy is getting crazy and killing the cat when both seem together. And after that, when his mom comes, he blames Pecola.

Geraldine wrathfully commands her to quit and calls her a "nasty little black complain" (Morrison,1970,p.86–90). The two words "ugly" and "black" All over again used to attack the little girl Pecola as purposes and violations.

Claudia MacTeer's first event of aggression poor conduct in Morrison's novel The Bluest Eye. When she is given a white baby doll as a Christmas gift ,She likes to crack it. Her parents is saying that they are puzzled "Now-you-got-it-up-what's-the-matter-with-you?" (Morrison, 1970). Claudia recognizes her aggressive act that indicates "I destroyed white baby dolls" (p.22). frankly, Claudia would like to understand the secret of the beauty of white people. "Claudia's acts are motivated in the main by a need to locate the source of white beauty that is not immediately apparent to her" (McKay, 1988). Although she tears in pieces the white babies, she can not accept the supremacy of race of white. "But dismembering of dolls was not the true horror. The truly horrifying thing was the transference of the same impulse to little white girls" (Morrison, 1970,p.21). The result of this fact is this awful instance of Claudia "...Claudia is envious of Shirley Temple..." (Bjork, 1992,p.35). she is a small white teenager. . Aggressive manners can also be seen through the dad of Pecola, his name is Cholly. He is not only struck his daughter Pecola , but also raped her, which means incest in a black family community . Toni Morrison shows "...the emotional violence heaped, upon children by parents as a special concern" (Bloom,1990,p.13). Pecola represents the mentally and physically ill-treated girl. "The Bluest Eye delineates how Pecola is repeatedly exposed to psychological violation, and how physical violation completes the psychological destruction" (Kubitschek, 1998,p.30). The sole issue for Pecola is not to have the bluest eye ; she intends to break away from the racist conduct of white people too,therefore, the novel of Morrison The bluest eye "...bears witness not only to



the trauma of the incest and rape that Pecola experiences, but to the trauma of pervasive racism” (Matus, 1998,p.47).

Pauline says when Pecola born that she “knowed she was ugly” (Morrison,1970,p.124). The woman was not proud of her daughter Pecola , but Claudia was angry with the white fisher girl who called Pauline “Polly” when MacTeer's sisters come to the fisher's house to chat with Pecola, while Pecola changed into most effective allowed to name her mom “Mrs. Breedlove” (Morrison,1970,p.104–106). Pauline becomes very furious when an accident occurs and Pecola knocks over a pot full of deep-dish berry . and doesn't care if Her daughter Pecola has burnt her hands, she starts to beat the girl hardly , shouting at her (Morrison,1970,p.106–107). Similarly, when Pecola is raped and gets pregnant by her dad, a woman remarks that “they say the way her mama beat her she lucky to be alive herself” (Morrison,1970,p.187). Since Pauline's first ideas when Pecola was born were that the child is ugly, it appears that this could be one reason why her mother doesn't reveal love and affection to her girl Rather, the little blonde Fischer girl is preferred, who fits the image of beauty of the dominant society. When she is raped by Cholly, Pauline also hits Pecola, so we can suppose that the her mother blamea the girl for her case—as women are often blameed when they are Sexual abuse perpetrators. Once again, Pecola is being exploited for being black, "ugly" and female. before the end of the novel, Pecola ent to the soaphead church and ask him to gain blue eyes , soaphrad ideas are that “ here was an ugly little girl asking for beauty” (Morrison,1970,p.172). the church man mourns that he can't assist her, which shows that he never thinks that black can be lovely.

despite his obvious willingness to support her.the old person uses only Pecola to murder a dog that disturbed him, guiltlessly ,the Pecola gives the dog he poison which Soaphead Church had given her that to kill the dog , believing his convulsion to be a mark of the magic and she will get what she desired to be the man of this church is the fourth person who called Pecola ugly and used the same words Those who don't use the phrase themselves, Yacobowski and Geraldine, seem to be obvious that the girl is also unwanted depending exclusively because of her shape. however, But at least another individual thinks that Pecola is hideous the girl. when disturbed by Cholly and Pauline's chaotic conflicts, Pecola thinks she couldn't escape her agonies because “as long as she looked the way she did, as long as she was ugly, she would have to stay with these people” (Morrison,1970,p.43).

In the powerful presence of black idoles and icons, like Mary Jane and Shirley Temple, Pecola prays for and beg god for blue eyes to be lovable like a Temple, the Fischer woman and Jane, seeing how they all seem to love them. Maybe the woman hopes to be treated in this manner. Pecola thinks she's got blue eyes after going Soaphead Church. The girl is shattered and shows that by the manner she now possesses two selves: one with blue eyes and the other her fictional companion, she perceives as her real self. Even if she now thinks she has blue eyes, that doesn't seem enough:“Please. If there is somebody with bluer eyes than mine, then maybethere is somebody with the bluest eyes. The bluest eyes in the whole world. That's just too bad, isn't it? Please help me look.No. But suppose my eyes aren't blue enough? Blue enough for what? Blue enough for...I don't know. Blue enough for something. Blue enough...for you! I'm not going to play with you anymore (Morrison,1970,p.201–202). as one can see, what Pecola really wants is love and someone who will remain with her, The girl is afraid if she has no blues eyes, she will be abandoned alone again. This quote demonstrates just how Pecola will never really function to attain black beauty norms: she chases them permanently. If blue eyes, which is the women's beauty principle, can not function for her and create her adored, this seems not to be the right solution to heal an African American image.

Fragmentation of the self and western requirements of beauty inside the Bluest Eye, The identification disassociation is strongly linked to the racial prejudice spread among Blacks by the prevailing white culture and its impact on their own definition. The prevailing system of culture was successful in the mental colonization of African Americans. The minority topic has internalized the values of the hegemonic community, the whites. This interiorization “fragments both character psyches and the community as a whole” (Pérez-Torres ,1997,p.21-22) And it's a

denial of life because Blacks can never survive up to the standards that they measure. thus, the adoption by Black people and their self-worth by others can be only the result of their own race's disapproval. Morrison attracts focus, with the Breedlove family, to the negative effect on Black people by the dominant Western cultural system. Their fault is the consequence of the dispute between the prevalent culture's perfect norm of living and its true norm. Michael Awkward said that the Breedloves are "the very antithesis of the standardized, perfect (white) American circle of relatives"; Therefore, the others, both blacks and whites people , can only be seen as completely fruitless "to conform to the standards by which the beauty and happiness of the primer family (and, by extension, American families in general) are measured" (1988,p.58). The family of Breedlove not only fails because it can not comply with the Western social scheme and therefore the new paradigm of the perfect family, but also as they begin to ignore their own communal black principles, such as solidarity. Harris (1991) finds out how "The breakdown of the bonds of human caring in the novel reflects the general absence of ethics and morality" (p.38). Therefore, the violence experienced by the Black community in its colonized Western culture leads to the feeling of indignity of its individuals and the reduction of its system of values. in according to Gurleen Grewal, "The Bluest Eye is an antibildungsroman" (Morrison,1970,p.125). Pecola Breedlove is the supreme illustration of how internalised racial prejudice affects Black people all over the world, particularly as they are only children and how they can lead them to madness. For the society, and for others, colour is at the heart of its own state of being: its sense of inferiority and self-disgust. She believes beauty and self-worth are related to whiteness and its attributes, so she can not develop a favorable image of herself. Pecola believes she is ugly, like the rest of her family, an ugliness that is not belong to her, "it came from conviction, their conviction [...] they took the ugliness in their hands, threw it as a mantle over them, and went about the world with it" (Morrison,1970,p.28).

Claudia surmises: "All of us —all who knew her [Pecola]— felt so wholesome after we cleaned ourselves on her. We were so beautiful when we stood astride her ugliness [...]. We honed our egos on her, padded our characters with her frailty, and yawned in the fantasy of our strength" (Morrison,1970,p.163). Marginal topics in a colonized society are subjected to despairing ostracism, which pushes those who are highly susceptible to the edges of insanity. Due to her ' ugliness ' Pecola suffers from other Blacks, who ignored and disdained her, and also suffers first-hand constant mental violence . It becomes the scapegoat community: "Pecola will never be an insider in the black community and cannot possibly hope for acceptance beyond that community" (Harris 1991,p.21). Pecola becomes an simple casualty, being a kid whose situation is highly assailable. In a patriarchy scheme, the victimization of females or even teenage girls is shown by how individuals suspect them of sexual abuse while they do not recognize the real victims. A female in the story accuses Pecola of the statutory rape of her dad: "She carry some of the blame" (Morrison,1970,p.149), That implies that, although the black girl was only eleven, the black girl didn't fight him. The disrespect of the black girl community is dramatically transfered into her baby who they believe will, whom they think will "be the ugliest thing walking" (Morrison,1970,p.149) and the want the baby dead But some representatives of the society, Claudia and Frieda, crack this chain of self-disrespect between the generations, think accountable for Pecola and experience the need for someone. "to want the black baby to live — just to counteract the universal love of white baby dolls, Shirley Temples, and Maureen Peals" (Morrison,1970,p.149). Therefore the two sisters agree to make a difference and ask for a miracle to allow the baby to stay alive. They attempt to make some magic, bury the money and plant marigold seeds. Claudia rejects conformance with the paradigm of beauty in the dominant culture, unlike other Blacks such as Pecola. Indeed, she even ruins, in a ritualistic event, a black toy she got as a Christmas gift. In contrast to Breedloves, the McTeers family still retains community principles. When it is raped, they bring Pecola in despite the complicated financial condition. within the McTeer circle of relatives, "Morrison illustrates that the values that can sustain and provide the guidelines for growth are not alien to the community" (Harris,1991,p.42). When Claudia herself supports Pecola from some of the children who bully her or despises the

feeling of Maureen supremacy that she is light skin. Having a struggle against an authoritarian regime, Claudia and her parents represent the power of Blacks and endurance of black community against the authority. Pecola makes use of invisibility as a defense mechanism against different human beings's disdain. The schizoid person may also have phantasies of being invisible, as being a "seeable object" means to be "constantly exposed to danger" (Laing, 1990,p.113). As a response to the common family quarrels, The black woman attempts to hide her face by a quilt, and she appears to be dying slowly (Morrison,1970, p.33). The hatred of Pecola's own self is due to the refusal of others but also to the understanding that her existential non-being is invisible in the Community. This metaphor has been used repeatedly to portray the Black person in the modern culture. When Pecola went to Mr. Yacobowki's candy store, a white immigrant, he denied the self of Pecola: "He does not see her, because for him there is nothing to see" (Morrison,1970,p.36). according to Grewal, "Pecola's story demonstrates, the socially mandated charade of being something one is not (white) and of not being something one is (black) makes one invisible" (1997, p.122). Pecola can interpret in another person's look the elimination of her subjectivity, her unbeing. "She would see only what there was to see: the eyes of other people" (Morrison,1970,p.35).in the novel, "The self-hatred is often focused on the body as the most obvious indicator of race;hair and color, for example, are recurrent concerns" (Peach, 1995, p.28). The real purpose of the discrimination is shade of people's pores and skin inside the Bluest Eye. "The poignancy of Pecola's victimization arises not only from the racism and resulting interracial conflicts...but also from the intraracial conflicts related to color ..." (Bloom,1990, p.12) within the novel the idea of black "...is a construct partly of the characters own making but mostly social, based on white definitions of blackness which associate it with violence, poverty, dirt and lack of education..." (Peach, 1995, p.26-27) , Morrison claims the black women are seen only by the white race as charlady or slaves. Even white children order something and act as though they don't want to , The white people "use to despise African individuals" (Kubitschek, 1998, p.34).

The black females are always regarded as someone who must bear and live the violence and torture, even at house, should be abused . Black women were supposed to "...combat the waywardness of their husbands and children and the racism of whites" (McKay, 1988, p.70)

Pecola and her circle of relatives members all be given the expression of the human beings round them. "The community senses the Breedloves self-hatred and encourages it with the aid of agreeing that the Breedloves are ugly" (Kubitschek,1998, p.34). as a result, Pecola herself is aware of the truth that she is a colored character and unsightly. As a member of black race "Pecola, suffering from a sense of self-loathing and false identity..." (Peach, 1995, p.27) . she wants God grant her blue eyes to be seen in the society as the symbol of beauty. In The Bluest Eye, beauty standards demonstrate the supremacy of the white people. Therefore, in white society, Pecola can not experience the happiness of being distinct. As the novel's narrator, recognized the problem isn't Pecola's and her family "...ugliness, but their "conviction" of their ugliness that makes the difference" (Bloom,1990,p.13). Their acceptance causes them to experience almost every bad human racial or racial act and not only Pecola, but their family members accept that state of suffering.

### Conclusion

In the Bluest Eye book, Toni Morrison succeeds in demonstrating black women's misery and suffering. In this novel, the African protagonist Pecola attempts to continue in discrimination against women, violence, race and sexual abuse. Morrison's novel touches on the pain and suffering of black females in a new society of white community. This novel shows what racism, violence in the entire U.S. culture and in white black families are all about. In this novel , The black girl her name is Pecola Breedlove is a girl who recognizes the supremacy of a culture and wants to benefit from the advantages of white women. she wish to get blue eyes and be like the white girls in American society to get admired and liked by people around her The superlative type of this word is used to demonstrate the willingness to be even inferior to white races and this novel by Toni Morrison illustrates the suffering of Black women, such as

violence, rape, motherhood, and racism., which is their color. The white society discriminates against them because of their colors given by God. They are seen as artifacts that have no emotions. In Morrison's novels, A few african females have the chance to discover their identities and live in racial society's stressful environment. Pecola believes that by the end of the novel she has had her blue eyes, but she still wants more: she demands a bluest eye. And besides, rules of beauty will always be unthinkable, even for white citizens. The Bluest Eye is the African American community, because this is the leading character. The bluest eye, after all, does not refer purely to the wish of Pecola. The word "eye" can we read as "I": self, topic the bluest eye can be perceived in A powerful tradition in African America. If she believed that she would be healed if she gets the bluest eye , the writer seems to think that an entirely restored personality certainly would emerge from social and other relationships.

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