

Racial Deviancy in the Select Novels of Toni Morrison

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ABSTRACT

People in the past have been the victims of racial deviancy based on their colour or caste. It may be said that people's mind set has been changed with time but still we see instances where people are discriminated based on their appearance or colour. To say, we have modernized and have become educated enough to treat everyone equally irrespective of their gender, colour, culture, faith or caste, instead it is still seen advertisements which indirectly relate our appearance, race, religion, nationality, culture and complexion, somehow happen to support the statement that some skin colour or race is superior than other. Though we are in the 21st era where everyone claim to be respectful of everyone irrespective of their race or colour but still many people have to face discrimination based on their race be at workplace or some gathering. The background of the story is set after the end of the American civil war. It tells you about a story of a family living in Cincinnati who were once slaves, and the reason that they were slaves was that they were afro-americans. The best reason for the American Civil War was that the North America wanted to curb this practice of slavery by the black people and the South America was against it. As a matter of fact North America people and their ideology won but that does not mean that people have changed their thinking and mind set about it and are free from prejudice. This research analysis aims to elucidate and elaborate the meaning of racial deviancy and it's consequences. This research paper is aimed to elucidate the term racial deviance and how people of different languages communities and different backgrounds are affected due to this. This study aims to explain the true

meaning of racial divisions through a best selling novel written by Toni Morrison's "Beloved". The Novel beloved was written by the famous American writer Toni Morrison in 1987. She had won the Nobel prize for Literature. This book also received the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1988 and Anisfield - wolf book award in 1988 and has been appreciated worldwide because of the way it has beautifully explained and interpreted the concept of racial deviance throughout this novel.

KEY WORDS: *Discrimination, Brutalism, Oppression, Dehumanization, Mutilation*

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH PROBLEM

Over time, the people have become educated and have learnt about their fundamental rights, people became more aware of this discriminations and also became vocal about it in newspapers on different social media handles and public speeches and debates. People's mind set about racial deviancy has expanded in the horizon of thinking has expanded from just examining people based on their caste, colour or community to examining them based on their intellect and value system. Today every other country claims to be non-discriminatory, they claim to treat all of its citizens equally, every workplace, every gathering and each person today claims that, but there are instances which clearly indicate that's people still differentiate and discriminate people based on their colour, caste or community, at their workplaces, social gatherings etc. It clearly shows how consciously or subconsciously people judge other people based on their race or colour and community.

To cite a small example, we still see a lot of advertisements which indirectly relate your success to your appearance for colour complexion, and not based on their capabilities, skill and intellect. People on one hand support non discriminatory actions on social media but on the other hand unconsciously support these advertisements and start to believe that they need to be fairer or good looking to be accepted by people. The book beloved written by Toni Morrison is inspired by a true story of a black slave woman named Margaret Garner who happened to escape from a plantation in Kentucky along with her husband and their children in 1856. The book very beautifully explains the hardships and brutality faced by these African people before the

To start with the term Racial Deviancy refers to the practice when a group of people belonging to a particular community, particular background or particular race are discriminated against others because of irrational reasons i.e. their colour or caste. People around the world have been the victims of racial deviancy from the very past itself, and it was a major factor which decided their lifestyles, whether they were born in a race considered higher or lower. Before the American civil war the black people were forced to do slavery in America, and the reason was just because they were black. The main reason which led to the American Civil war was the fact that a significant part of America was against this practice of forceful slavery of the black and wanted to curb the act itself and the others wanted the black to be their slaves. To say, the people who wanted abolition of black slavery won the war, but the real question to be asked here is, did they win the fight?

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The story later introduces us a character named Paul.D who was also a slave in the sweet home plantation under school teacher with Sethe. Paul.D describes how brutally the slaves were treated, how brutally they were beaten and put into jails. He explains how they were not considered as humans but as animals and also what made notes upon during their stay in the name of study of the black. The novel tries to put

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forward the feelings of the oppressed and make the reader understand their pain. Although we have made significant advancements by eradicating such in discriminatory practices, By being vocal and trying to spread awareness about the topic and making people feel more educated about the fundamental rights but we still need to go a long way to eradicate this belief completely.

American civil war and had won many awards and appreciation from people and book critics worldwide. The story tells you that how a mother who loved the children had to go to extreme step of killing her daughter so as to save her family from slavery and brutalism. The story tells of a place, a plantation named sweet home where the black people were forced to do slavery and were treated very badly like animals. The protagonist of the story named Sethe, currently living in Cincinnati Ohio with her daughter Denver had a very dark past where she with her husband was living in sweet home as slave workers under a cruel man called school teacher. The story tells how she manages to escape from the sweet home when she was pregnant and had to deliver a baby on the way with the help of a white lady Amy Denver and hence keeps her daughter's name Denver. The story further tells that how upon her previous owner the school master finding her and forcing her slavery again, she tries to kill her own children and kills her own 2 years old infant daughter so as to protect her family from slavery again that she had gone through.

Twelve years after the termination of the 'American civil war,' The novel "Beloved" was underway. The novel's story moves around the protagonist 'Sethe' who was a gratified and self-determining woman, escaped from slavery. Even though the present scenario of the novel's story was underlying at 124 in Cincinnati in '1873,' the story recurrently goes on flash-back, providing a sparse view of the protagonist Sethe's life as a slave on a farm named Sweet Home, together with her shocking evocative memories. The novel, Beloved put forward the distressing understandings of slavery which is comprised of "dehumanization" along with the physical and mental abuse, and exceptionally presents the psychological effect of such suffering through its narrative tactics. Coming to the early life of Sethe, she was born in an African family in the South. At a very little age of thirteen, she was sold to Mr. Garners who was the owner of the Sweet Home plantation, the place where he practice compassionate kind of slavery. Though he treated their slaves with a measure of esteem, asking them for their thoughts and ideas, also letting them to use his rifles for their hunting. Sethe was the only woman there while the rest of them are men, namely Paul A , Paul D , Paul F , Sixo and Halle. It was too threatening for a women to survive within all the men.

Sethe was married to Halle as he seemed most benevolent to her. Halle had been proven kind-hearted and benign enough by hiring himself out on weekend in the pay of his mother's freedom, letting his mother out of slavery. Having the permission of Mr. Garner, both of them got married. They had a small family of a daughter and two sons before the illness and the death of Mr. Garner. After the consequent death of the owner of Sweet Home plantation 'Mr. Garner', her widow Mrs. garner asked a favor to her merciless, fervently racist brother-in-law, to take the control of the Sweet Home plantation. He was known as the Schoolteacher to the slaves. The Schoolteacher, along with his nephews, oppressed the slaves too brutally that their lives became even more unbearable. Here, the narrator expresses the sufferings of the racial discrimination taking the context of Sethe as how a black woman is treated so heartlessly to survive in the world of opposite race. The black community suffered the most, from the severe tortures and the unbearable experiences, just in the shade of racial discrimination. The novel "beloved" contains the decisive perception of resistance by illuminating and analysing the themes of slavery, based on racial discrimination. Slavery also leads to cause the distressing sensitive and psychological impact to the slaves, and this novel is one of the very first novels to experience this harsh face of oppression.

As the novel exceeded, we get to know about the extreme sufferings of Sethe, at the farm. At the Sweet Home plantation, although all the slaves are affected by the brutal oppressive presence of Schoolteacher, but it was Sethe in the first place who suffered the pain mostly. She got raped and whipped by the nephews of Schoolteacher, treated by them in a very rough and cruel manner. After being oppressed and humiliated by the schoolteacher and his nephews, all the slaves decided and executed a plan to escape from the farm through the Underground Railroad. But unfortunately, schoolteacher and his nephews anticipated the plan of the slaves of escaping from the Sweet Home plantation, and captured Sixo and Paul D. Sixo was killed by Schoolteacher and Paul D was brought back to the farm, where he saw Sethe. He thought that it was the last time he will be seeing her. She was totally determined to escape, had already sent her children forward to her mother-in-law "Baby Suggs's house in Cincinnati". Although, she got caught by the schoolteacher's nephews. They grasp Sethe in the barn and tortured her terribly by stealing the milk her body had been storing for her newborn daughter. Undiscovered to Sethe and the schoolteacher's nephews, Halle was watching this devastating scenario from an attic above her, where he was frozen with traumatic shock. After that, Halle went mad and wasn't found after that incident. Halle wasn't there for Sethe when she needed him the most. That made Sethe to hate him extravagantly. In the meantime, Paul D was forced to suffer the humiliation of wearing an iron bit in his mouth.

After all that misbehaves, Sethe complained about the behaviors of the schoolteacher's nephews to Mrs. Garner, the farm "Sweet Home" owner at that time. When schoolteacher came to know that Sethe had informed his and his nephews' misdeeds to Mrs. Garner, he thrashed her cruelly, even known to the fact that she was pregnant. Once again, after being tortured and with the swollen and mutilated body, Sethe however ran away from the farm, but on the way she warped from exhaustion in a forest. A white girl, "Amy Denver", founded her, healed and nursed her back to health. Also the white girl Amy Denver, well along helped Sethe to deliver her baby in a boat. After that, Sethe named her second infant daughter after the white girl's name 'Denver' after the girl who helped her when she was suffering with the devastating pain. Also, a benevolent person Stamp Paid helped her in crossing the Ohio river to her Mother-in-law Baby Suggs's house. Baby Suggs cleaned the whole body of Sethe before she was allowed to see her other three children.

In Cincinnati, Sethe spent her "twenty-eight wonderful days", where her Mother-in-law 'Baby Suggs' took control as an informal preacher to the black community. At the end of those twenty-eight splendid days, nevertheless, schoolteacher came for Sethe to take her and her children back to the farm, Sweet Home. Instead of granting her children a life of brutalizing slavery, she escaped with them to the woodshed and tried to kill all of them. But only her older daughter died as her throat was cut with a Handsaw by Sethe. This intricate decision of Sethe to kill her children, not granting them a life of brutalizing slavery showed that the slaves were extremely different from the mindless creatures, their masters took them to be. Somewhat, they were also the humans, being able of taking bitter decisions in sake of love. After this horrible incident, the schoolteacher refused to take her back to the farm believing that Sethe had gone crazy and was no longer fit to serve. In grief, Sethe organized the baby's headstone, engraved with the word "Beloved" on it. Although she had envisioned to engrave "Dearly Beloved" on it, but she didn't have the energy to pay for the two words long as each word charged her ten minutes of sexual practice with the engraver.

Sethe's deeds as an act of love to help her children untie from the confinement of slavery, had downgraded her stature in her own community. She was looked upon as a deranged woman and along with her mother and other children, they were secluded. Baby Suggs was spiritually crumbling. Due to

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racial practices, they lost the charm of their lives and were living a life filled with agony, a life very different from standard way of life. Paul D was no exception. He was imprisoned in a jail in Georgia and was brutally treated. Providentially he had managed to breakout and years after, he reached at 124 in Cincinnati. Besides all the tragic past and poignant memories, Paul D saw an optimistic future with Sethe. They started holding a good connection in due course of time until one day when they confronted an uncanny woman sitting at the doorsteps of 124. She was Beloved, that was her appellation, believed as the spirit of Sethe's dead child.

Beloved's dark image epitomized how inevitable, inexorable practice of slavery doomed the black community and fabricated a stairway to racial boundaries. Beloved's attempts in rupturing Sethe and Paul D's relation and her propinquity in Sethe delineates the lasting wound of slavery that cannot be healed in occupancy of racial beliefs. Beloved and Paul D never allied and always had a repulsive connection with each other. Beloved also tried to allure Paul D against his wish. With the leaving of Paul D from 124, Beloved became more malign and evocative. Heeding the emotional attachment of mother Sethe with Beloved, Denver's suspicion on Beloved grew stronger day by day. Denver joined a new job and tried to take authority of her family due to the worsening condition of her mother, Sethe. Threatened by the negativity in 124, Denver left the house and guided herself to find redemption for her family. Denver met lady Jones and sought her help. Ella, a black woman who allied Sethe earlier, mentored the community to 124 for catharsis of Sethe. They found both Beloved and Sethe at the entrance of the house grinning and displaying deep affection towards each other.

This portrayed Sethe's fondness for her loved ones, which had been breached by the then existing racial thoughts. Sethe was filled with remorse for what she did, although she knew that that was the only escape she could help her children with from racial tortures. These feelings gradually weakened Sethe and she missed her child. Although Sethe was emotionally affected by Beloved, but physically she was never crumbled. She was seething and the intense flame in her heart against the racial system was never doubted. This fact grew much stronger when Mr Bodwin reached 124 to summon Denver to her job. Sethe confused him with the school teacher and instead of becoming a victim to her own pool of regrets by killing one of her children again, she rushed towards Mr Bodwin with a shrap tool in her hand in order to kill the latter. Sethe was impeded from doing so by her own community lead by Ella and at the mean time Beloved scrambled from 124. By this, the narrator, Toni Morrison, brought an intense point in the storyline describing the conflict of the whites and the Blacks created by the racial system and displayed a major turning point in Sethe's life, which shown that the only remedy to overcome tough times was by stop caring about the baleful past.

Subsequently Paul D returned back to 124 and helped Sethe to forget her memories with Beloved. Paul D made Sethe believe the greatness of self belief. Paul D understood how Sethe's memories with Beloved kept on disturbing the former and how she deeply missed her. Sethe was totally annihilated and with the disappearance of Beloved she was getting a chance to heal herself. This showcased the pain one had to go through in order to revive back from racial discriminations. The only treatment to frame oneself again from racial terrors was by propelling their emotions of past away. The people who had been enslaved, tried to quell their memories with the racial system to forget their terrible and troubling past and move on in life. This process of quelling and detachment from the olden days resulted in disintegration of oneself and dissolution of their identity. Some people were able to revive themselves but for some their unpleasant past kept on reinstating. Racial practices made the blacks to suffer terribly and this made the latter defunct and numb. Slavery made their lives excruciating and lost. Sethe, Paul D, Denver and the

other characters had undergone the same. Beloved's picture portrayed the oppressed and unforgettable feelings of past which Sethe had gone through. Beloved's prompting nature displayed the fact how repressed olden days had driven the blacks away from themselves.

RESEARCH UNEXPECTED FINDINGS

The downtrodden racial system cleaved one's morale in life and set their life apart from the others in power. Due to this a huge deviance can be observed in the lives of the blacks. The system created very ruinous effects on the African Americans both physically and emotionally. The African Americans were estranged. This was reflected by the picture of Paul D, who was deeply self-destructed due to the racial boundaries, and there are ample of happenings in his life which gave clear evidence of it. Paul D was not able to perceive whether the shriek he got to hear was his or others'; Paul D was very apprehensive and doubtful about his morale as a man. Slavery is a very huge and unexplainable story filled with cataclysm and utmost savagery. At that period the lives of African Americans turned very different from everyday routines of normal people thronged with failure and refusal and hence created an impactful racial deviance.

The scene of Sethe getting isolated from her community for her infanticide, which she did thinking of as an escape from slavery, were instances in the novel which portrayed segregation in own community and hardships. Due to racial deviance, the thinking abilities of the African Americans were limited and they were unable to trust their ownself. They became voiceless and were forbidden from expressing something. Their dreams were shattered and the downtrodden supremacy made their families very vulnerable. They were bought like commodities by the slave owners which leave the former with broken connections with their loved ones. Such concerns depicted the barbarous effects of slavery and deviance in the lives of the African Americans. Racial discrimination escalated the menace for the black community and one's prospect of displeasure. Discriminations incited misery, imperilment and detachment from standard behaviours and values. Standard human behaviours such as remembering memories, thinking independently, etc were not found in the lives of African Americans back then as their past memories were very petrifying and discouraging to them infact they were trying to run away from evocations in order to survive.

CONCLUSION

To conclude this study, "The very serious function of racism is distraction. It keeps you from doing your work. It keeps you explaining , over and over again, your reason for being." Through the story one can get to know about Sethe , who's an epitome of a black slave in the world run by whites , the so called higher race. The question that arise is who said whites is the higher race , who gave them the spot. No one, yes history gives the same answer. Toni Morrison has beautifully explained the atrocities by Sethe , by her charred back from the whips she received . From the pain caused to her by the school teacher . Be it killing her own daughter so that she does not have to face the same atrocities as all the blacks in world were facing. How can one's color decides how they might be is the unanswered question is made by this article. it can't be. Later on Beloved comes back, she's the ghost of her daughter who was murdered by her in a very young age . She takes over the house and is a parasite that eats on the energy of the house; the author has tried to make the ghost an epitome of the barbarity, brutality, savagery, wickedness, dehumanization of the blacks in this world of whites. Ultimately, she's exorcised from the house but Sethe felt a void in her heart , it was her daughter she lost long back .

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What it is understood from this is that, the history of racial deviancy goes long back, it's a pity that even after so many years of our evolved brain and society still holding onto such customs, when one is holding onto such lives, and holding onto those dogmas it's a pitiable at the core of humanity. Racism not only affects a person physically from the beating but emotionally and psychologically, it's a common study and is pretty clear from the book that the emotional effect is worse out of all three. It's known that a person who has been a sufferer of racism is always so pre occupied in his/her past that they can't live life normally. Just as a person who once lived his life in a prison cannot return back to his/her normal life, the same way here is the case. A person is made to go through inhumane treatment physically and mentally. Abuse for so long can result in dehumanization of the human himself/herself, leading to suicides. It's easy for them to take lives of their own or of their loved ones than to go through all that pain. Just as any part of history see changes of course of social evils, so has the racial deviancy seen the changes of the world, in history the abuse was prevalent in a large part of the world (almost everywhere the whites exited) as per a study lack of awareness was a contributing reason for people not understand the wrongdoing. History has seen examples of racial deviancy be it slavery of blacks in the USA, be it even the great boxer Muhammad Ali facing the racial injustice. Leave alone the average black, racism has affected everyone from the rich to poor, average to legends. This social evil has affected around sixty million blacks in history. In today's world racial deviancy exists too, people are now using different ways of forcing their thoughts on racism, be it abusing a person on social media, the reach social media has provided is immense its sad but its true, today people have a sense of passive anger towards the blacks wherever we see racism, just because laws change does not mean all the people have a change of thought.

History is a reminder for one to change the ways today, so that one must act today in order to make the past for our future much different and so the way blacks were looked down wouldn't in future. Toni Morrison has beautifully highlighted the themes of racism by taking examples from past and present, to give words to the atrocities faced by a large section of society requires courage and brains. Courage because the opposite section of society is definitely going to be offended but if it was not for people like Toni Morrison, nobody wouldn't have understood the underlying layers of racial deviancy. Be it from the eyes of a mother, be it from the eyes of a lover, be it from the eyes of a daughter, be it from the eyes of a white himself. According to Toni Morrison, people who practice racism have a wrong psychology, they are people who have been grown up in such a way, in such a surrounding where this gets into their mind. It's a pity due to the inability of people to see what is right and what is wrong. We all come with a pre-disposition in our minds that judge what's right and what's wrong, bad part is that a person is unable to even use that part and so many layers develop in us that we just can't turn back and understand whatever we do is wrong. The common thinking among children is my grandfather did it, my father did it so what's wrong, I will do it today so it has to be right, my society is not judging me so why should I think about it much, it has become a stereotype today. She questioned a lot of things be it why do churches are different, why are places to eat different, why is the basic human treatment different just because they were born with a different color. This also has effect on the black community which sees changes in their children from an early age, be it premature brain development, be it increased anger, be it inability to live socially. The dark they lived in affects them in the way we can't even relate to. He is not a gangster if he's black, it is enough today to see the barbaric attitude of whites against blacks. Ultimately we learned that everyone's equal in the world, it has been a dark world for blacks in the past it doesn't mean it has to be the same for our future, it is us who define the present and the future, we have to work together for a better society tomorrow. It is literature, it is speeches, it is art in any form that forms the society. Nobody

deserve to be treated like dirt , everyone's equal . The faster we adopt methods and the positive thinking the better it is for the world.

Time moves and waits for no one. Change is the only constant as it is said , human have to roll with changes. Whatever is done in the past is done, this paper calls all its readers to bring change by today itself by spreading awareness, to work at the grass root level, to change the justice rules of past, to documentation of the needs and requirements of people of both the sections, public plays ,peaceful protest. A single voice also has the ability to change the world as is said. Toni Morrison has done her part to raise her voice in order to call the attention of the entire human race through all her literary work and how the literary men and women is going to repay to her as a token of respect?.

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