

This thesis argues that Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* reveals how systemic racism, colorism, and Eurocentric beauty standards perpetuate cycles of trauma and internalized self-hatred within Black communities. Focusing on the Breedlove family, specifically the young protagonist Pecola, the essay explores how historical injustices such as slavery, humiliation, and discriminatory media representation shape individual identity and reinforce racial and social hierarchies that continue to harm Black lives.

Set in 1940s Ohio, settled within the Jim Crow era, redlining, and rising media influence, *The Bluest Eye* uses storytelling and shifting narrative perspectives to emphasize how deeply embedded racism manifests psychologically and emotionally. The essay connects themes from Morrison's fictional depiction to historical practices like the paper bag test, preferential treatment of lighter-skinned individuals, lynching, sexual abuse of enslaved women, unjust labor practices, and the economic disenfranchisement of Black families through housing discrimination. Characters like Pauline and Cholly Breedlove, through the lens of intergenerational trauma, reveal how systemic oppression creates cycles of violence, neglect, and internalized anti-Blackness.

Morrison intended to make visible the often disregarded consequences of racial and gender-based oppression. Rather than solely focusing on Black resilience, Morrison confronts the reader with a grim yet urgent truth: For many, resistance is not an option. The essay concludes that *The Bluest Eye* is a literary exploration of suffering and a crucial social commentary that forces readers to examine and challenge the racist systems that continue to shape American society.