

Review of: "Oppressed Become the Oppressor: Psychoanalytical Intersections of Trauma in Toni Morrison's the Bluest Eye"

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I appreciate the authors' efforts to analyze Morrison's famous work with psychological trauma, but as a psychologist who also enjoys literary criticism, especially of Black literary criticism, I found it difficult to follow much of this analysis. Yes, there indeed are some profound insights to be gleaned from *The Bluest Eye*, and Morrison is an artist who I consider a literary *and* psychologically-minded genius. I am always open to reading virtually any examination of her exquisite body of writings.

The authors identified important themes, and for that, I offer praise, such as the internationalization of negative messages and the influence of societal forces like racism and sexism in feeding into it. The authors competently point to the pathologies that inform *identity*, like the sinister messages and violence that effects Pecola, her notions about beauty and how they shape her desire for approval in White society that is hostile toward Black women and infests the attitudes, beliefs, and actions of other Black people. The authors emphasize the intersection of forces and how it explains not only Pecola's tragic existence, but that of others like Cholly, Pauline, and Sammy. I appreciated the authors' efforts to present illustration after illustration of how "cultural" forces are pathologizing.

There are several ways to improve the article. I humbly recommend the following:

1. There are words used that suggest a diminishment of racism, a term that bears definition in this piece. For example, "racial prejudice" and "discrimination," and even "skin tone," are used to suggest that these terms are synonymous with racism. Clarification of the terms is recommended.
2. It's not always clear in the article how psychoanalytic thought is relevant to the analysis. At times, there are quotes by authors inserted that aren't followed by a discussion of their relevance to the authors' argument. An example is with the Barbara Christian quote.
3. I'd suggest the authors include a definition of trauma. Psychologists have long been criticized for downplaying the role of cultural influences on psychological phenomena, but writings that stem from as early as the 1940s and 1950s (e.g., Frantz Fanon) have indeed directed some attention to addressing the matter of racial-related trauma (as well as gender, sexual orientation, religious-related trauma, as examples) and their impacts on individual manifestations of trauma. I realize that this article is not psychologically based; however, the authors can derive much benefit from writings on racial trauma, especially the relative surge that has been written in the past 10 years. On a related note,

the term “schizophrenia” is used by the authors, but it is not clear what their understanding is of the phenomenon. In conventional wisdom, it can refer to a person who has a "split personality," but it actually aligns with such features as a break from reality, auditory and/or visual hallucinations, and so forth.

4. There is considerable redundancy in the article, including multiple repetitions of book titles. I would advise the authors to go over the article again with care to eliminate unneeded repetition.

I consider it a privilege to review all academic efforts, and this is no exception. I thank you for the opportunity to review your work and hope that the recommendations prove useful.