

# A Study on Feminine Consciousness in Toni Morrison Novel

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## Abstract

Toni Morrison's writing style is easily distinguishable due to her unique use of language. Her novels are easy to read, and she incorporates many different styles into her writing, such as switching the voice of narration throughout her stories for a change of perspective. Some of her most commonly used techniques are the use of descriptive analogies, important historical references, and varied sentence structure.

**Keywords:** Story, Historical, Writing, Important

Toni Morrison was born Chloe Ardelia Wofford on February 18, 1931 in Lorain, Ohio, to Ramah and George Wofford, she later took the name Anthony, shortened to Toni. As a child she enjoyed storytelling and reading, so it was assumed that she would do well in school. Her upbringing inspired many of her novels (Bloom 10). From her family she was taught to have a strong, black self-image which is prevalent in her novels. Maternal authority and equality in marriage. Power in black community, African American identity, shame, trauma, and family life.

Today, the feminist literary criticism is the direct product of the 'Women's movement' of the 1960s. This movement was literary from the beginning, in the sense that it realized the significance of the images of women promulgated by literature, and saw it as vital to combat them and question their authority and their coherence. Black feminism argues that sexism, class oppression, and racism are inextricably bound together. Forms of feminism that strive to overcome sexism and class oppression but ignore race can discriminate against many people, including women, through racial bias.

Feminists such as Alice Walker (1983) believed that black women experienced a different and more intense kind of oppression than that of white women. They point to the emergence of Black feminism, after earlier movements led by white middle-class women, which they regard as having largely ignored oppression based on race and class. Patricia Hill-Collins (1991) defined Black feminism, in *Black Feminist Thought*, as including women who theorize the experiences and ideas shared by ordinary black women that provide a unique angle of vision on self, community, and society.

## Aims of Study

The aims at studying and critically exploring the major novels by Morrison. The scholars around globe have attempted to study and scrutinize her novels from different points of view such as social realism, male domination and double harassment by Black as well as White.

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## DISCUSSION

Toni Morrison, the Nobel laureate in literature whose best selling work explored black identity in America and in particular the often crushing experience of black women – through luminous, incantatory prose resembling that of no other writer in English, died on Monday in the Bronx. She was 88. Her death, at Montefiore Medical Center, was announced by her publisher, Alfred A. Knopf. A spokes woman said the cause was complications of pneumonia. Ms. Morrison lived in Grand View on Hudson, N.Y.

The first African-American woman to win the Nobel Prize in Literature, in 1993, Ms. Morrison was the author of 11 novels as well as children's books and essay collections. Among them were celebrated works like "Song of Solomon," which received the National Book Critics Circle Award in 1977, and "Beloved," which won the Pulitzer Prize.

In all of her fiction, Toni Morrison (February 18, 1931 – August 06, 2019) explored the conflict between society and the individual. She showed how the individual who defies social pressures can forge a self by drawing on the resources of the natural world, on a sense of continuity within the family and within the history of a people, and on dreams and other unaccountable sources of psychic power. In *The Bluest Eye*, Morrison shows how society inflicts on its members an inappropriate standard of beauty and worth, a standard that mandates that to be loved one must meet the absolute "white" standard of blond hair and blue eyes. Morrison's narrator says that two of the most destructive ideas in history are the idea of romantic love (canceling both lust and caring) and the idea of an absolute, univocal standard of beauty.

In the novel, the most extreme victim of these destructive ideas is Pecola, who finds refuge in madness after she has been thoroughly convinced of her own ugliness (confirmed when she is raped by her own father, Cholly). Mrs. Breedlove, Pecola's mother, is another victim who gets her idea of an unvarying standard of beauty from romantic motion pictures that glorify white film stars. When she realizes the impassible gap between that ideal and her physical self (she has a deformed foot and two missing teeth), she also gives up any hope of maintaining a relationship with Cholly, her

husband, except one of complete antagonism and opposition. Mrs. Breedlove even comes to prefer the little white girl she takes care of at work to her own daughter, Pecola, whom she has always perceived as ugly.

Toni Morrison boldly presents African American Feminist consciousness through her literary endeavor where she strongly expresses her philosophy as a feminist. She is awakened and conscious about women's life and problems and believes that human consciousness is the peer experience. Consequently, her novels manifest and highlight Black women who are doubly differentiated in the form of male standard and poverty as well as Euro-American women's standard. In her work, Morrison has explored the experience and roles of black women in a Americans is the center of her complex and multilayered narratives.

Toni Morrison is recipient of several Awards : National Book Critics Circle Award for *Song of Solomon* (1977), American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters Award (1977) Robert F. Kennedy Book Award (1987-88), Helmerich Award, American Book Award for *Beloved* (1988), Anisfield-Wolf Book Award in Race Relations for *Beloved* (1988), Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for *Beloved* (1988), MLA Commonwealth Award in Literature (1989), Nobel Prize for Literature (1993), Commander of the Arts and Letters, Paris (1993), Condorcet Medal, Paris (1994). Pearl Buck Award (1994), Rhegium Juli Prize for Literature (1994), Jefferson Lecture (1996). National Book Foundation's Medal of Distinguished Contribution to American Letters (1996), National Humanities Medal (2000); UUA: Frederic G. Melcher Book Award, scholar Molefi Kete Asante listed Toni Morrison on his list of 100 Greatest African Americans (2002). She received an honorary Doctorate of Letters from Oxford University in 2005. She honored as Doctor or Letters at Rutgers University Graduation Commencement in 2011. She has received an honorary Doctorate of Letters from the University of Geneva in 2011. Apart from this, she has got the Nominations for Grammy Awards 2008. Best Spoken Word Album for Children 'Who's Got Game? The Ant or the Grasshopper? The Lion or the Mouse? Poppy or the Snake?'

This can be seen in *Song of Soloman* at Hagar's funeral as Pilate whispers "my baby girl" and Morrison describes the atmosphere of the church

: Words tossed like stones into a silent canyon” Another instance, in which Morrison uses a unique comparison occurs in *The Bluest Eye* when Pecola Breedlove lies awake at night, listening to her mom and dad tigh: “the un quarrel evening hug like the first note of a dirge in sullenly expectant air.” Clearly, these analogies not only make the novels more interesting, but they also contribute to the overall style of Toni Morrison’s writing. One of the key “trademarks” of Morrison work is her frequent use of significant references to history.

## CONCLUSION

Storytelling tradition plays a very important part in Toni Morrison novels. At the heart of the novel is the story which reveals the truth Set he’s infanticide, a story in which the characters and readers keep ask ‘What really happened” Created form pieces so memories and in multiple perspectives, they story is a process of improvisation, which depends on the reciprocal activities between the speaker and the listener. The bits and pieces of the story are related each time unfinished, without disclosing the shocking end. She regards Set he as a creature who has gone wild “due to the mishandling of the nephew who’d over beat her and made her cut and run”. Both Stamp Paid’ Baby Suggs’ stories recall the exact scene and the reaction after the horrible event. Stamp paid attempts to disclose the whole story to Paul D but the latter refuses to accept the truth by repeating insistently : “But these aren’t her mouth,”.

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