

The Bluest Eye

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Outline

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 - Racism
 - Weak community
 - Sexual harassment
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 - Pecola
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THESIS STATEMENT

During 1940s in the USA, black society was in the lower status which affected many aspects of their life and it also led to black women's active response against racial oppression in 1970s which called Black Feminist Movement.

Political and Social Commentary

- Racism
- Weak community
- Sexual harassment



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Racism



racial self-hatred



low self-esteem

Pecola

her demand on physical perfection
ideal beauty – white women
blue eyes

Geraldine

niggers vs coloured people
“You nasty little black
bitch” (p. 92).

Mrs. Breedlove

idolizes the Fishers and their
white ways
dislikes herself, tries to adopt
white ways
Fishers’ house vs her own house

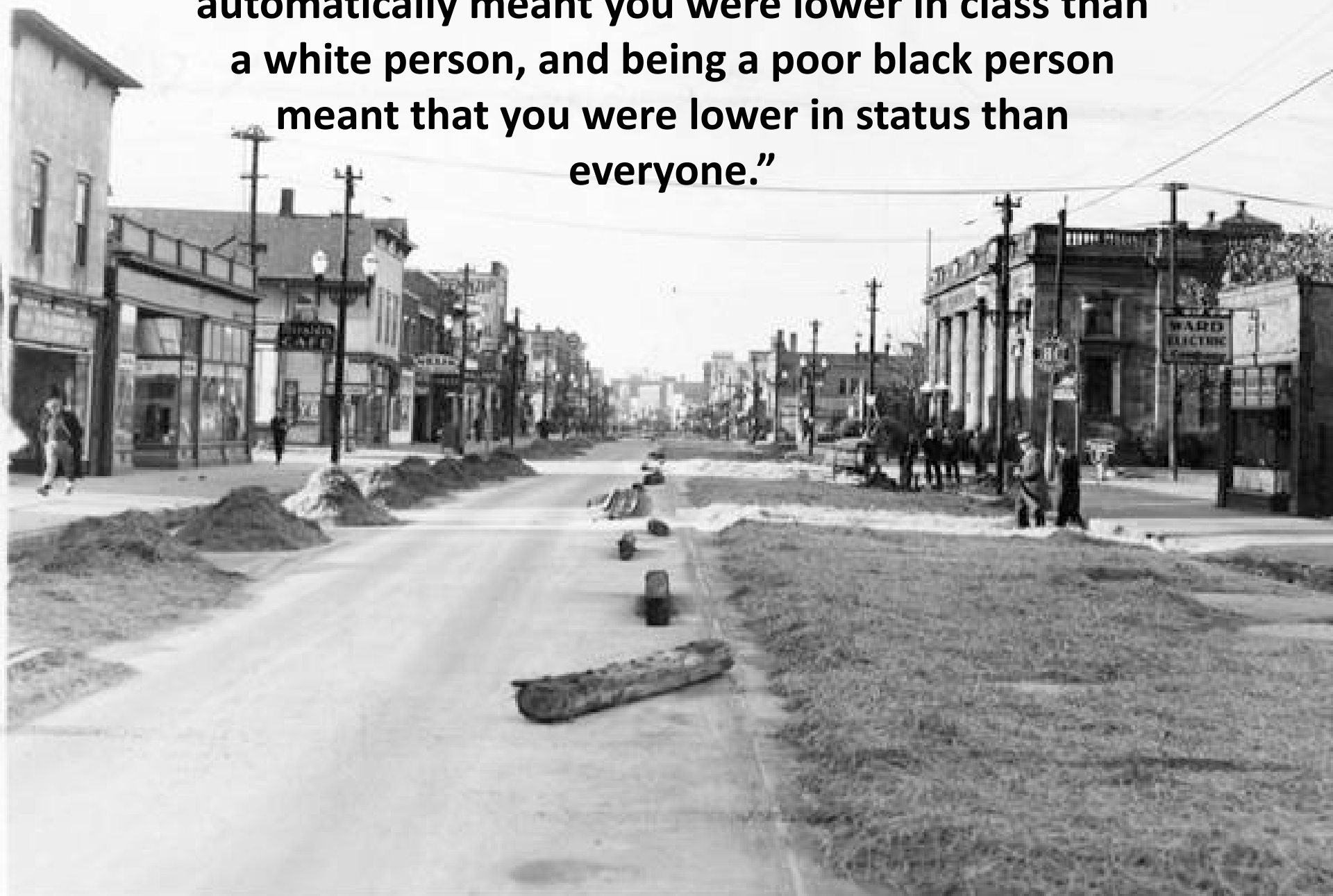
“Adults, older girls, shops, magazines, newspapers, window signs - all the world had agreed that a blue-eyed, yellow haired, pink-skinned doll was what every girl child treasured” (p. 20).

**To what extend, media plays
role on our definitions of
ideal beauty?**

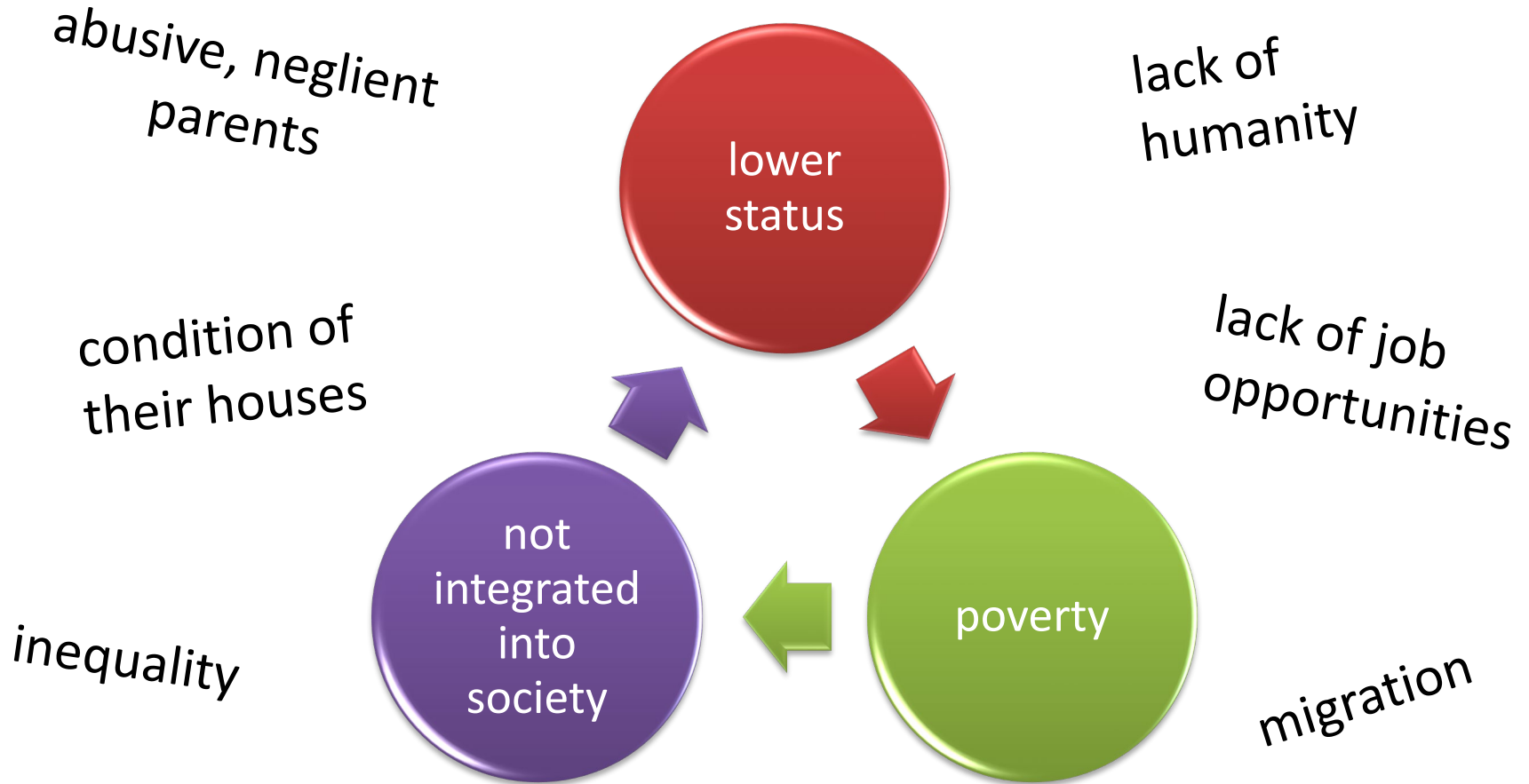
**If Pecola had blue eyes, would the
society's point of view to her be
different as she thought?**

Answer: From white people's point of view, there might be no difference. They would still see her as black and ugly. However, black people would admire her blue eyes.

“In Lorain in 1940, being a black person automatically meant you were lower in class than a white person, and being a poor black person meant that you were lower in status than everyone.”

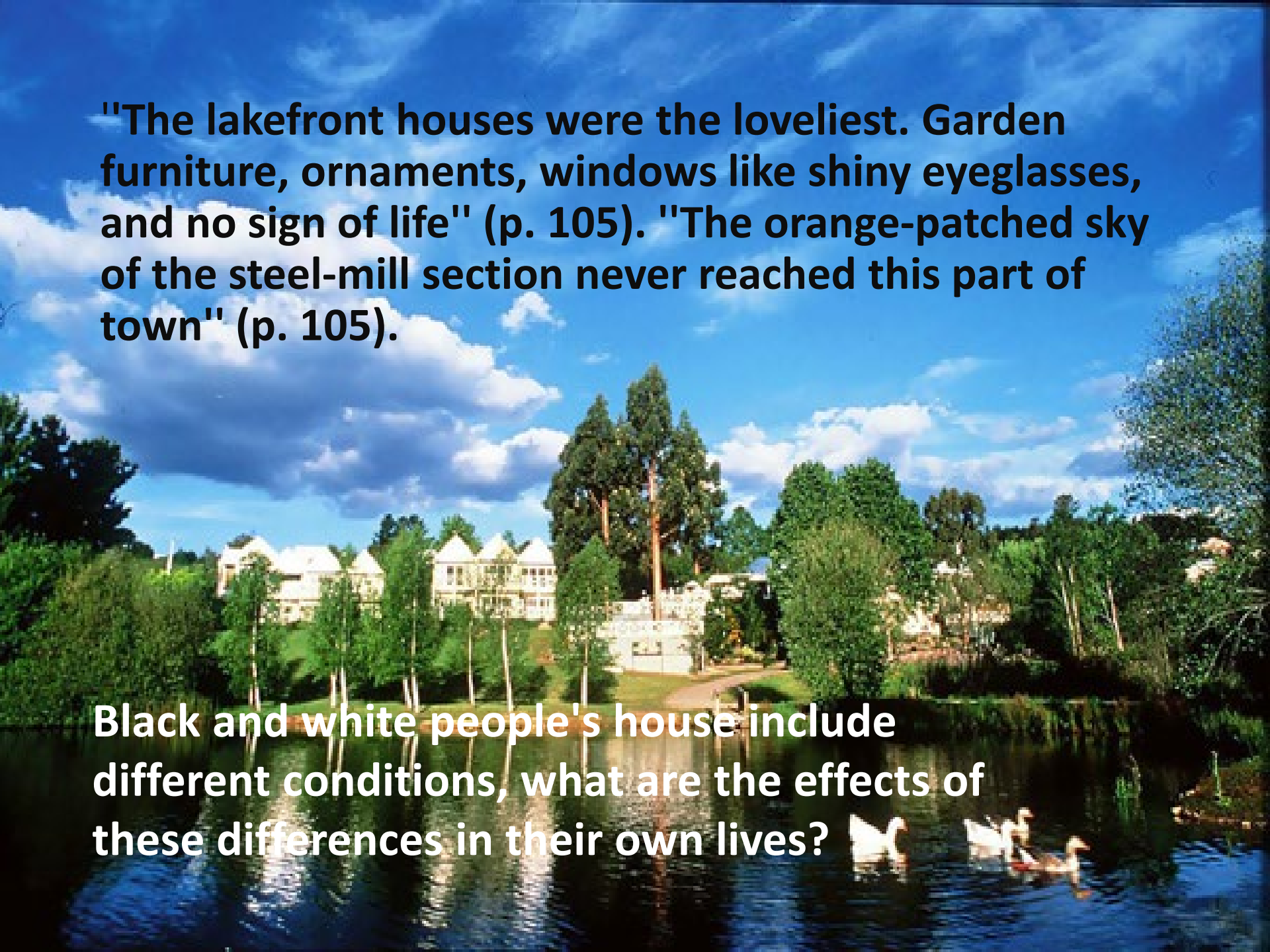


Weak Community



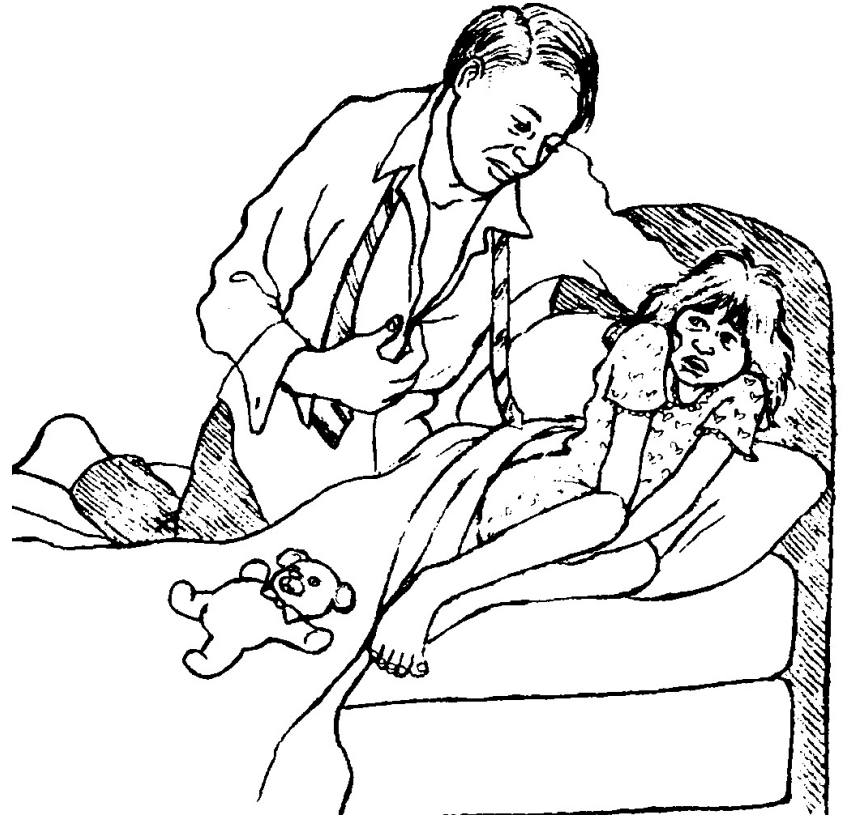
"The lakefront houses were the loveliest. Garden furniture, ornaments, windows like shiny eyeglasses, and no sign of life" (p. 105). "The orange-patched sky of the steel-mill section never reached this part of town" (p. 105).

Black and white people's house include different conditions, what are the effects of these differences in their own lives?



Sexual Harassment

- Pecola – Cholly
- Mr. Henry – Frieda
- Soaphead Church – young girls



Retrieved from
<http://info.k4health.org/pr/l11/pg13a.jpg>

one



"Contemporary Black feminism..

is the outgrowth of countless generations of personal sacrifice, militancy and work by our mothers and sisters."

~Combahee River Collective Statement 1977

Combahee Survival

Black Feminism

Black Feminism highlights the disadvantages of gender, class and race that shape the experiences of black women and it emerged in 1970s. Black Feminist Movement was a response to black women's racial oppression in Women's Movement and sexual oppression in Black Liberation Movement. It argues that early feminist analysis reflected the specific concerns of white, middle-class women and they ignored the existence and needs of black women. In short, Black Feminism is against white over black and male over female; its aim is to stop racist, sexist and classist discrimination. Alice Walker was the one of the important figures in this movement.

Sexual

Racial

Black

1970

White

Alice Walker

Racist



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RACE

GENDER

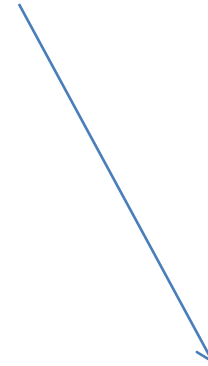
CLASS

Do you think that black women face similar difficulties in today's world?

Black Feminism in The Bluest Eye



PAULINE vs other white women
“I hurt just like them white women” (p. 125).



“White men taking such good care of they women, and they all dressed up in big clean houses with the bathtubs right in the same room with toilet” (p. 123).

Compare this image with Breedlove family?

The Theft of Innocence



- Cholly
- Pecola
- Three whores

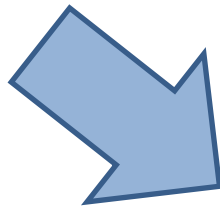
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What are the characteristics of an innocent person from your point of view?

Children in their innocence feel like they are special ; however in the novel social conditions impose the major characters otherwise.

Cholly

- Abandoned at birth
- Aunt Jimmy's death
- Traumatic childhood, adolescence
- Humiliated by two white hunters who interrupted his first sexual experience
- Rejected by his father



**Do you blame Cholly
for raping Pecola?**

- Alcoholic
- Domestic violence
- Rape of Pecola

Pecola

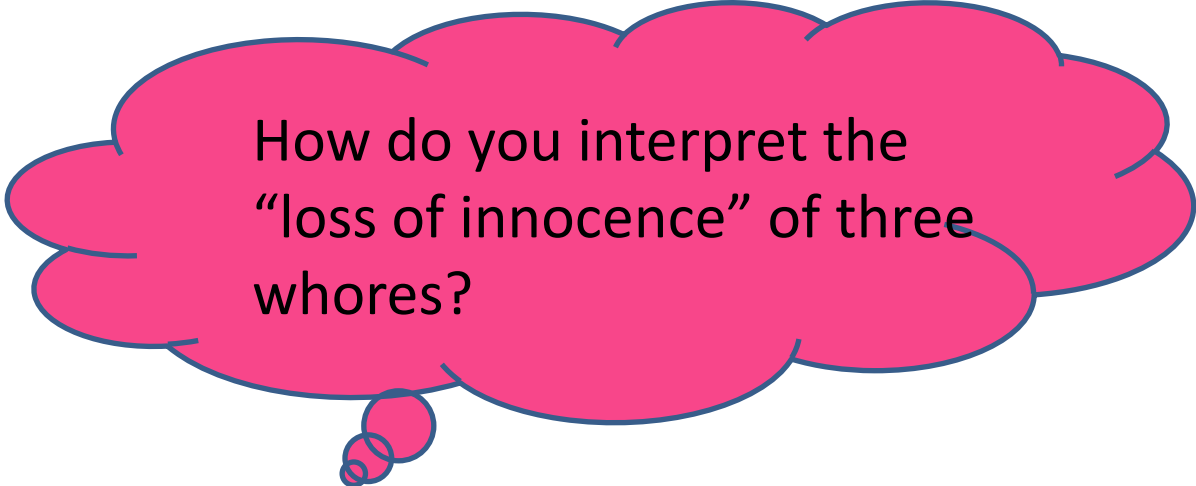
- Pecola as other
- “ugly, black”
- raped by her father
- scapegoat of the society
- she goes mad



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China, Poland and Miss Marie

“They were not young girls in whores’ clothing, or whores regretting their loss of innocence. They were whores in whores’ clothing, whores who had never been young and had no word for innocence” (p. 57).



How do you interpret the “loss of innocence” of three whores?

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THANK
YOU!



THANK
YOU!

