

# Female's Identity Dilemma: Two Marginalized Heroines in *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *The Bluest Eye*

Min Peng

School of Foreign Languages, Yunnan University, Kunming, China

Email: yumipeng0310@163.com

**How to cite this paper:** Peng, M. (2020). Female's Identity Dilemma: Two Marginalized Heroines in *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *The Bluest Eye*. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 8, 324-334.

<https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2020.82025>

**Received:** January 5, 2020

**Accepted:** February 25, 2020

**Published:** February 28, 2020

Copyright © 2020 by author(s) and Scientific Research Publishing Inc.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

## Abstract

Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) depicts Antoinette Cosway, a white creole girl, who is subdued by both English and black people in a hostile context, and hence undergoes identity crisis. *The Bluest Eye*, published in 1970, is contemporary with *Wide Sargasso Sea*. It is Toni Morrison's first novel, which reveals a little black girl Pecola's sufferings in a white-dominated society and the tribulations black families experience. The two heroines are both driven to lunatic by their torturous journey of identity dilemma. Thus, conducting a comparative study on their shared tragic fate is of great literary value. By comparing the resemblance between Antoinette and Pecola, the aim of this paper is to explore their identity dilemma, rendered by their shared racial, maternal, and sexual encounters, from the perspective of trauma theory. In addition, this paper is of paramount importance to women in rebuilding their self-identity in colonized and white-dominated societies.

## Keywords

Antoinette, Pecola, Identity Dilemma, Trauma Theory

## 1. Introduction

Jean Rhys (1890-1979) is an outstanding British writer. *Wide Sargasso Sea*, set in the West Indies, is her masterpiece, which wins her the Royal Society of Literature Award in 1966 and then the prestigious W. H. Smith Award in 1967. On the other hand, Toni Morrison (1931-2019) is the first black woman winning the Nobel Prize in Literature, whose influence is far-reaching for African American literature as well as for women's status. *The Bluest Eye*, published in 1970, is Morrison's first novel. Set in her own hometown, Ohio, it tells a tragic story of a

little black girl named Pecola.

*Wide Sargasso Sea* and *The Bluest Eye* depict two women who share similar sufferings. Hence, this paper aims to discover the self-redemption journey experienced by the two heroines, Antoinette and Pecola, both faced with identity dilemma, induced by their shared racial, maternal, and sexual encounters, in the light of trauma theory. This paper will be divided into three parts. The first part is the literature review. It sums up relevant researches on *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys and on *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison at home and abroad. After the review of researches, a research gap in the resemblance between the two marginalized heroines' madness emerges. The second part is the theoretical framework. It elaborates trauma theory from three angles including racial trauma, childhood trauma, and sexual trauma, which are adopted throughout the research. The third part is the main one, which sheds light on the two mad heroines' identity dilemma derived from their racial, maternal, and sexual encounters on the basis of trauma theory and this part is comprised of three sections. The first exposes their racial predicament in the light of racial trauma. The second illuminates their absence of normal maternal love on the basis of childhood trauma. The third unfolds their sufferings of horrible sexual assaults from the perspective of sexual trauma.

Finally, this paper draws a conclusion that owing to their overlapping racial, maternal, and sexual encounters, the two heroines are reduced to identity dilemma and madness.

## 2. Literature Review

The heroine Antoinette in *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Pecola in *The Bluest Eye* have attracted wealthy attention from home and abroad. Numerous researchers have conducted a variety of studies from the perspectives of eco-feminism, existentialism, post-colonialism, feminism narratology, narrative voice, discursive authority, symbolic images and more. This paper concentrates mainly on the current researches on the theme of identity dilemma represented in the two works as below.

### 2.1. Current Researches on Identity Dilemma in *Wide Sargasso Sea*

*Wide Sargasso Sea* earns international acclaim for Jean Rhys and attracts great attention home and abroad. Zhang Deming (2006) analyzes the protagonist Antoinette's identity crisis from the perspective of narrative strategy and Jacques Lacan's mirror stage theory. Later on, Chen Liping (2013) does ample researches on the heroine as well. She explores the phantasmatic nature of white identity with a focus on the identity crisis undergone by Antoinette and Rochester. Moreover, a vast number of researchers do similar studies in their master theses on the heroine's identity crisis and her arduous journey of self-identity reconstruction on the basis of Lacan's mirror stage, the modern narrative theory, and

Homi K. Bhabha's post-colonial theory (Huang, 2008, Fan, 2013, Wang, 2015, Sha, 2015, Wang, 2019, Wang, 2006). Similar to my study, Xie Lina (2010) adopts trauma theory to analyze Antoinette's traumatic experiences which result in her identity crisis. Additionally, there are a variety of studies on this theme abroad. Fann Oudah Aljohani (2016) elaborates Antoinette's personality and identity crisis as a Creole girl. This research also analyzes the effect of family relationships on a person's identity, and how it becomes a reason of mental disorder. Some researchers also discuss Antoinette's occupation of a hybrid identity in the light of "the third space" (Khem, 2015).

## 2.2. Current Researches on Identity Dilemma in *The Bluest Eye*

There have been abundant studies on the heroine Pecola as well. Plenty of researchers have focused on the analysis of her identity dilemma. Meng Qingmei & Yao Yujie (2010) discuss the tragedy of the loss of national cultural identity in *The Bluest Eye* from the perspective of cultural colonialism, racism and existentialism. Myriad researchers do studies on the construction of black cultural identity and analyze the reasons for the absence of black identity from the perspective of post-colonialism (Ma & Wang, 2018, Tao & Guo, 2017). On the other hand, Tang Hong (2014) interprets the cultural identity of black people from the perspective of ecological feminism, aiming to awaken the ecological conscience of mankind. Moreover, master theses on this theme are like a kaleidoscope. Mainly from the perspective of post-colonialism, they focus on the analysis of the reasons for black female's identity loss and on the significance of rebuilding a reasonable, healthy, and independent cultural identity (Ying, 2017, Li, 2016, Li, 2014). As for abroad studies, Bin Yuan (2018) points out that Pecola's tragedy results not just from the denial and rejection of the mainstream society, but more significantly, from the blind identification of some blacks in the mainstream culture, and their incompetence to cherish their own culture and identity.

## 2.3. Research Gap

From the above overview, the author discovers the resemblance in identity dilemma between the two protagonists is immensely remarkable. However, the comparative research on *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *The Bluest Eye* is rare in number at home and abroad. A vast majority of researchers do the comparison of *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Jane Eyre*, including Stephanie de Villiers (2018), Lv Weisong (2014), and Susan Lydon (2010). However, few researchers compare Antoinette's identity dilemma with that of other heroines. Some master theses contribute a bit in this field. Gao Jia (2010) does a comparative study on the identity crisis in *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *The Grass Is Singing*, and Xiao Ai Qin (2005) on the different madwomen narratives in *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *The Woman Warrior*. Chai Ya Qin (2014) analyzes the mad women in *The Yellow Wallpaper* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*. In addition, studies abroad are also few and far between in this respect, among which are comparative researches on the

identity crisis in *Annie John* and *Wide Sargasso Sea* (Stanchich 1994), and on the post-colonial situations and the experiences of namelessness and marital sexual violence which lead protagonists in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Anna Kavan's *Who Are You* to doubt about their identity and existence (Victoria Walker, 2012).

In short, few scholars make a comparative study on the shared identity dilemma experienced by the two protagonists. Hence, this paper is devoted to bridging this gap, aiming to enrich the feminist study and the marginalized women from a brand-new perspective.

### 3. Trauma Theory

This paper employs racial trauma theory, childhood trauma theory, and sexual abuse and assault trauma theory to interpret the two heroines' racial, maternal, and sexual encounters in their life. Springing from the Greek word "Traumatikos", the term "trauma" originally means a wound or an injury on a person's body. Trauma theory then undergoes several distinct stages. Sigmund Freud (1953), the pioneer of trauma study, describes the term "trauma" as a wound inflicted on the mind. According to him, trauma may bring about shifts in worldview, patterns of intimacy, interpersonal relationships, beliefs about human nature, conceptions of oneself, ego-process and personal identity.

Racial trauma is one of the most persistent themes of the traumatic narration. Frantz Fanon (1967) initiates racial trauma theory in his *Black Skin, White Masks*. According to him, racial trauma is caused by the racism, colonialism to the colonized and the colonizer from the perspective of body, society, culture and history.

In addition, in 1970, women's liberation shifts the focus of trauma study to women and children. Represented by such well-known psychiatrists as Cathy Caruth, Caroline Garland, and Judith Herman, the study of trauma turns its attention to sexual and domestic violence inflicted on women and children in 1970s. Also, Judith Herman points out, "repeated trauma in childhood forms and deforms the personality" (Herman, 1992: p. 96), which incurs physical and mental symptoms with a great possibility. Moreover, the symptoms of trauma are authoritatively defined by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in 1980. PTSD arises from persistent consequences of traumatic events such as a natural disaster, an accident, a sudden death of family members, sexual abuse, and physical harm.

The aftermath of trauma includes a sense of helplessness, terror, paralysis, dissociation, startle, having nightmare, self-loathing, social maladjustment, among which the split of self-identity is the most devastating.

### 4. Two Mad Heroines' Identity Dilemma Rooted in Racial, Maternal, and Sexual Encounters

Both Antoinette and Pecola cannot be accepted by the dominant culture. In-

stead, they are despised and marginalized by both white and black folks. Still, tragically, their mothers never offer them due maternal affection. Moreover, they both are born in a male and white dominant society, where they suffer tremendous trauma from sexual abuse and exploitation. After experiencing dehumanized racial, maternal, and sexual encounters, the two heroines form a fragmented and false self-identity, ultimately being trapped into madness. This paper attempts to compare their shared encounters which bring about their identity dilemma from the following three aspects.

#### 4.1. Trauma from Racial Encounters

For many countries where blacks and other minor ethnic groups are living at the bottom of the society, racial discrimination is a deep-rooted social illness. Both Antoinette and Pecola are born in a similar social context featuring racial discrimination and prejudice, which brings racial trauma to them and nearly suffocates them.

Antoinette is born in a slave-owning family in Jamaica in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At that time, the West Indies abolitionist movement is surging, and the uprising black slaves rise to fight for their equal rights. Owing to her father's sudden death, Antoinette and her family experience vicissitudes of economic status. Their lives turn harsher and harder. Black Jamaicans reject Antoinette because her father is a slave-owner and the English people marginalize her because she comes from the West Indies. Hence, she is trapped between two distinct cultures, neither fully accepted by the colonized black people nor by the white European colonizers. Similar to the victim Antoinette, the 12-year-old black girl Pecola is also born and raised in the society dominated by the aesthetic standards of white skin and blue eyes. On account of her dark skin, she is so ambivalent about her identity as to assimilate into the white aesthetics unconsciously.

In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Antoinette lives a life filled with loneliness and isolation and gradually gets used to a solitary life. She is cursed by the black people as "*White cockroach*" and is asked to "*go away*". No one wants to be friend with her except her nanny Christophine for people at large hate her. Although she regards the little black girl Tia as her friend, Tia still cheats her, takes her money away, and steals her dress. She is then reduced to despair and feels the razor grass, the ants and even the venomous snakes are better than people. After marriage, even the black servant Amelie despises her and sings a song about a white cockroach in front of her husband Rochester. Although she flies into a rage at it, yet she feels acquiescent she is the white cockroach: "*That's me. That's what they call all of us who were here before their own people in Africa sold them to the slave traders. And I've heard English women call us white niggers* (Rhys, 2011: p. 76)."

In *The Bluest Eye*, Pecola also suffers hostile and brutal social environment where people around her jeer at her due to her black appearance. At school, no classmate is willing to stay with her. Teachers try every possible way to avoid

glancing at her unless absolutely necessary. Her classmates play jokes on and sneer at her due to her dark skin, even though they all share the same color. Her neighbor the little boy Junior plays tricks on her and yet she is reviled by the boy's mother Geraldine as "*nasty little black bitch*" (Morrison, 2007). When she comes to a candy store in her community for some sweets, the white storekeeper shows an overwhelming sense of aversion to her in his eyes. As she holds the money toward him, he hesitates, not wanting to touch her hand. Consequently, Pecola is determined to discover the secret of her ugliness which makes her ignored and despised, considering that the ugliness is the major factor that fuels her misfortunes. She believes if her eyes were blue, she wouldn't encounter cynical classmates, and snobbish neighbors. So she yearns for the blue eyes and prays for them every night.

Both the two mad heroines are haunted a great deal by visible racism which leaves them with invisible racial trauma because they diverge from the mainstream. Tragically, however, trauma can shatter, fragment or even destroy the victim's sense of self-hood, and self-identity. Due to racial trauma from both the white and the black, their sense of self is shattered, which gradually results in their identity dilemma.

To sum up, both the two mad heroines undergo identity dilemma rooted in their overlapping social environment where racial discrimination is too rampant. Moreover, their sense of nonrecognition is exacerbated in that people around them are apt to be despicable with intensive racial hatred and contempt. As such, their own identity is torn apart by racial discrimination and prejudice, which imposes incredible racial trauma on them.

#### 4.2. Trauma from Maternal Encounters

The two heroines' trauma not only originates in local people's despise and abuse but in distorted mother-daughter relationships. Both Antoinette and Pecola grow up in the similar families deprived of any maternal love and care. Worse still, their mothers inflict a great deal of pain and abuse on them.

Annette, Antoinette's biological mother, is a widow of a slave-owner, and a daughter of a slave-owner. She also gives birth to Pierre, Antoinette's younger brother, who is born with cretinism. Due to Pierre's severe illness, Annette devotes much of her time to taking care of him, thus scarcely offering Antoinette warmth and care. Similarly, the other victim Pecola is also raised in the family devoid of maternal love and care as well. Pauline, Pecola's biological mother, accepts the dominant white culture, and is thus unable to affirm her and her children's beauty. So she never transmits love to Pecola, for she is far from the white aesthetics she adores.

In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, although Antoinette loves her mother deeply and tries to win her mother's love, yet she gains nothing but coldness. Her mother spends most of her time sitting with Pierre when he is extremely sick. On one occasion when Antoinette touches her mother's forehead and tries to smooth her frown,

she pushes Antoinette away coldly without a word as if Antoinette is useless to her. In her mind, Antoinette is old enough to look after herself, and she never cares where Antoinette is or what she does. One hot afternoon, when Antoinette sees the beads of perspiration on her mother's upper lip and the dark circles under her eyes, she starts to fan her, but her mother turns her head away. In addition, one evening, when Antoinette is cheated by the black girl Tia, her mother doesn't speak to her or look at her, let alone comfort her. Her indifference makes Antoinette feel that her mother is ashamed of her. Moreover, when Antoinette has a nightmare and wakes crying, her mother blames her for making a noise which frightens her little son Pierre. Despite the fact that Antoinette yearns ferociously for normal maternal love, her mother does not show her any maternal affection. In contrast, she is rejected and alienated violently by her mother who only cares for her brother Pierre.

In *The Bluest Eye*, Pecola is also overwhelmingly neglected by her mother Pauline. When he loses his work, Pecola's father Cholly grows to be an alcoholic and gains a sense of self-hatred. Thus, Pauline takes on the full responsibility of breadwinner but gradually neglects her children. She doesn't care for Pecola at all because she loves the baby of the white family she works for more than Pecola. The ridiculous scene that happens in the white family's kitchen is remarkably impressive. When Pecola splatters the boiling blueberries and frightens the little white girl, Pauline does not show any care or concern to her but scolds and slaps her strongly. Ironically, she turns to comfort the white girl immediately, hushing and soothing the tears of the little pink-and-yellow girl, even if her daughter's legs have a painful burn. However, in her mind, even the floor is far more important than her own daughter. Apart from cursing Pecola as "*crazy fool*", she keeps shouting "*my floor, mess ... crazy ... my floor*" over and over again (Morrison, 2007). In addition, when she is born, although Pecola is a smart baby with pretty hair, yet Pauline still considers she is ugly.

Being abused and alienated in childhood, the two heroines' identity is split and shattered. Living in the indifferent family environment day after day, the abused children have to cheat themselves that the abuse does not really happen so as to preserve their primary attachment to their parents. Once they realize it is impossible to avoid the abuse, they often become superb performers to calm the abuser's anger, which forms the contradictory identity of abused children. Both Antoinette and Pecola are traumatized by their mothers' estrangement and thus gradually lose their identity. Because of the unavoidable abuse, their personalities, emotion and cognition are impaired and twisted, hence forming contradictory identity.

All in all, both the two heroines never have the privilege to enjoy normal maternal love, which brings devastating childhood trauma to them. As is well known, maternal love and care is of crucial significance to children's well-being. However, they both undergo a miserable and melancholy childhood, which results in their deformed mind and thus identity dilemma.

### 4.3. Trauma from Sexual Encounters

Born in the patriarchal society, Antoinette cannot master her own destiny. Her marriage is arranged by her brother to marry Rochester who is a white English man. After marriage, Antoinette falls prey to Rochester's sexual oppression for he marries her only for the purpose of her money and legacy. On the other hand, the innocent black girl, Pecola also experiences similar sexual abuse by her biological father, Cholly. Hence, unpleasant sexual encounters leave long-standing sexual trauma in their life, which affects their identity construction.

Being marginalized by appalling racism and abominable alienation, Antoinette is inclined to regard her husband as the backbone of her life. Unfortunately, as a noble English man, Rochester treats her as a subordinate for she is born in the declined slave-owning family. Similarly, as the victim of internalized racism, Pecola is raped by her father for he experiences a distorted life since childhood. Hence, due to their parallel sexual encounters, the two heroines suffer profound sexual trauma and eventually form shaky and shattered identity.

In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Antoinette has no intimate friends. People around her all take hostile attitudes to her. As she lacks normal maternal love, Antoinette longs for her husband's love ardently. She tries to cater to Rochester's pleasure, and wears the white dress he admires. However, the white dress doesn't fit her correctly, so Antoinette holds her left wrist with her right hand. Upon watching that, however, Rochester considers it an annoying habit. It seems that he is so obsessed with Antoinette's beauty that he is thirsty for her and inflames her desire for love as well. In effect, however, he doesn't love her at all for he confesses that he desires her but that is not love because he feels very little tenderness for her and regards her as a stranger who can satisfy his sexual desire. Being at a deadlock, Antoinette cannot bear the fact that her husband does not come near her, kiss her or talk to her any more. Absurdly, she even asks her nanny Christophine to come up with ways of making Rochester love her. In this sense, Antoinette is uncommonly controlled by her husband, suffering from her husband's sexual exploitation. Matters go from bad to worse, to annoy Antoinette, her husband even has sexual intercourse with the black servant Amelie who disdains Antoinette at great length, which contributes to her final collapse.

In *The Bluest Eye*, Pecola grows to be obedient and coward due to the absence of normal maternal love. In addition, she develops a sense of self-loathing and self-losing, thus not knowing how to resist others' bullying. His father Cholly is abandoned by his mother when he is just four days old. When he comes to find his father and finally meets him, he is seized by frustration and fright for his father does not recognize him and even shouts at him. It poses grotesque impacts on his growth. To Cholly, his first sexual encounter with a little country girl is incredibly humiliating. He is watched by two white men and is ordered to continue. However, absurdly, he does not hate the white folks but despises the girl. Severely tortured by white racism, however, her father finds an outlet, making Pecola a scapegoat for his distorted mind. He rapes Pecola in their kitchen and



makes her pregnant because he does not know how to transmit his paternal love to his daughter. Hence, the paternal love is transformed to incest, which makes Pecola gradually sink into destruction.

Sexual abuse and violence can pose fatal trauma to women and children. Freud also believes that sexual assault is exactly the source of trauma. Because of sexual abuse and assault, both Antoinette and Pecola are traumatized fiercely. Apart from detachment from others, they both particularly demonstrate a cracked and crumbled self-identity and self-structure.

In sum, both the two girls encounter distorted and dehumanized sexual assaults, which constitute the primary source of their sexual trauma. Born in the men and white dominated society, they are marginalized, alienated, and even regarded as objects. Finally, they fall into the abyss of identity dilemma, losing their own mind and being lunatic.

## 5. Conclusion

This paper brings to light the two mad heroines' acute trauma derived from racial, maternal, and sexual encounters which engender their identity dilemma.

Born in the slave-owning family, Antoinette is abused by the colonized black people and the white European colonizers who take inimical attitudes to her. Pecola, born in the distorted society dominated by internalized racism, develops a sense of self-loathing and self-losing. Apart from racism, they both undergo abnormal maternal love. Maternal love plays an indispensable role in children's growth. However, their mothers never devote love and care to them. Antoinette's mother is engaged in attending to her younger brother, never showing her any maternal affection. Similarly, Pecola's mother follows suit to pursue the white aesthetic value, neglecting her all the time. Hence, the two girls are raised without any love, which brings trauma to their future life. Due to the lack of maternal love, Antoinette is eager to win her husband's love. However, he only treats her as an object for sexual pleasure. On the other hand, because of abuse and bullying from the community and the family, Pecola is too obedient to resist her father's rape, and does not know how to prevent herself from sexual assault.

By comparing the two heroines' encounters of distressed racism, distorted maternal love, and depraved sexual abuse, this paper discloses their identity dilemma on the basis of racial, childhood, and sexual trauma. Still, this paper enlightens marginalized women about identity reconstruction in colonized and white dominant societies.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Professor Zou Hong for her encouragement and enlightenment throughout this study. Her sense of responsibility and patience leave a deep impression on me. I am also indebted to my friends for their constructive advice on this paper. Finally, my grateful thanks go to my parents who have never failed in their support on my postgraduate study.

Thanks so very much for their hard work and devotion.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

## References

- Aljohani, F. O. (2016). *Wide Sargasso Sea: Antoinette's Living Spaces as a Case Study*. M.A. Thesis, Saudi Arabia: Al-Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, College of Languages and Translation. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/th.228>
- American Psychiatric Association (APA) (1980). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (3rd ed.). Washington DC.
- Chai, Y. Q. (2014). *From Silence to Awareness—An Analysis on the Mad Women in Both the Yellow Wallpaper and Wide Sargasso Sea*. M.A. Thesis, Hohhot: Inner Mongolia University.
- Chen, L. P. (2013). Identity Crisis in Jean Rhys's Wide Sargasso Sea. *Contemporary Foreign Literature, No. 2*, 119-126.
- De Villiers, S. (2018). Remembering the Future: The Temporal Relationship between Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre and Jean Rhys's Wide Sargasso Sea. *Journal of Literary Studies, 34*, 48-61. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02564718.2018.1538079>
- Fan, X. L. (2013). *The Exploration of Antoinette's Self-Identity in Wide Sargasso Sea*. M.A. Thesis, Qufu: Qufu Normal University.
- Fanon, F. (1967). *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press. Inc.
- Freud, S. (1953). *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. London: Hogarth.
- Gao, J. (2010). *Journeys of Self-Discovery—Identity Crisis in Wide Sargasso Sea and the Grass Is Singing*. M.A. Thesis, Shanghai: Shanghai International Studies University.
- Herman, J. (1992). *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*. New York: Basic Books.
- Huang, J. (2008). *A Reading of Wide Sargasso Sea from the Perspective of Lacan's Mirror Stage and Sexual Relations*. M.A. Thesis, Kaifeng: Henan University.
- Khem, G. (2015). The "Third Space" and the Questions of Identity in Jean Rhys' Wide Sargasso Sea. *Localities, 5*, 65-88. <https://doi.org/10.15299/local.2015.11.5.65>
- Li, C. X. (2014). *The Loss and Reestablishment of Black Identity: A Study of the Bluest Eye from the Perspective of Post-Colonialism*. M.A. Thesis, Nanchang: Jiangxi Normal University.
- Li, Y. (2016). *The Loss and Rebuilding of the Black Female's Identity—An Analysis of the Bluest Eye from the Perspective of Post-Colonial Feminism*. M.A. Thesis, Xi'an: Xi'an International Studies University.
- Lv, W. S. (2014). *A Comparative Study on Female as the "Other" in Jane Eyre and Wide Sargasso Sea*. M.A. Thesis, Yantai: Ludong University.
- Lydon, S. (2010). Abandoning and Re-Inhabiting Domestic Space in Jane Eyre, Villette and Wide Sargasso Sea. *Bronte Studies, 35*, 23-29. <https://doi.org/10.15299/local.2015.11.5.65>
- Ma, W. J., & Wang, M. (2018). The Construction of Black Cultural Identity in Morrison's the Bluest Eye from Perspective of Post-Colonialism. *Journal of Social Science of Jiamusi University, 36*, 124-125+128.
- Meng, Q. M., & Yao, Y. J. (2010). Tragedy of the Loss of National Cultural Identity and

- Reflection in the Bluest Eye by Morrison. *Journal of Northwest University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 40, 174-176.
- Morrison, T. (2007). *The Bluest Eye*. New York: Vintage International.
- Rhys, J. (2011). *Wide Sargasso Sea*. London: Penguin Essentials.
- Sha, S. (2015). *A Study of the Correlation between First-Person Narration and the Heroine's Identity Construction in Wide Sargasso Sea*. M.A. Thesis, Hangzhou: Zhejiang Gongshang University.
- Stanchich, M. (1994). Home Is Where the Heart Breaks Identity Crisis in "Annie John" and "Wide Sargasso Sea". *Caribbean Studies*, 27, 454-457.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/25613284>
- Tang, H. (2014). An Interpretation of the Cultural Identity of Black People in Toni Morrison's the Bluest Eye—From the Perspective of Ecological Feminism. *Journal of Changzhou University (Social Science Edition)*, 15, 83-86.
- Tao, Y., & Guo, H. (2017). The Identity Construction of Black Women in Mainstream White Culture: Take the Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison as an Example. *Journal of Beijing Institute of Graphic Communication*, 25, 183-185.
- Walker, V. (2012). Ornithology and Ontology: The Existential Birdcall in Jean Rhys's Wide Sargasso Sea and Anna Kavan's Who Are You? *Women: A Cultural Review*, 23, 490-509. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09574042.2012.739847>
- Wang, Q. (2019). *Anxiety, Resistance, and Redemption: A Post-Colonial Interpretation of Wide Sargasso Sea*. M.A. Thesis, Beijing: Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications.
- Wang, T. (2006). *The Loss and Reconstruction of Identity in Wide Sargasso Sea and in the Castle of My Skin*. M.A. Thesis, Nanjing: Southeast University.
- Wang, X. M. (2015). *Post-Colonial Interpretation of the Heroine's Cultural Identity Exploration in Wide Sargasso Sea*. M.A. Thesis, Shenyang: Shenyang Normal University.
- Xiao, A. Q. (2005). *A Comparative Study of the Different Madwomen Narratives in Wide Sargasso Sea and the Woman Warrior*. M.A. Thesis, Wuhan: Wuhan University.
- Xie, L. N. (2010). *Trauma with Identity Issue in Wide Sargasso Sea*. M.A. Thesis, Shijiazhuang City: Hebei Normal University.
- Ying, D. W. (2017). *Identity Building of African Americans in the Bluest Eye: An Intercultural Reading*. M.A. Thesis, Shanghai: Shanghai International Studies University.
- Yuan, B. (2018). Struggle and Survival in Cultural Clash: A Case Study of Pecola in the Bluest Eye. *English Language and Literature Studies*, 8, 104-108.  
<https://doi.org/10.5539/ells.v8n1p104>
- Zhang, D. M. (2006). Canon Rewriting and Identity Narrating: On Wide Sargasso Sea. *Foreign Literature Studies*, 3, 77-83.