

A B S T R A C T

This study examines the literary treatment of the colour dynamics within the context of the mixed marriage (black and white), in three selected works. These are George Lamming's Water With Berries (1971), Frank Hercules' I Want A Black Doll (1967), and Joyce Gladwell's Brown Face, Big Master (1969). The three works treat the subject in three societies - the Caribbean, North America and Britain - though not exclusively; for in a single work the setting may include one or more of these societies.

Against a background of slavery and colonisation in the Caribbean, colour consciousness is part of the Caribbean psyche.

Accordingly, my treatment of the colour dynamics in the mixed marriage, relates primarily to the culture and world view of the black partner, that is, The Black Aesthetic. The arguments of this paper vary according to the situation of the particular mixed marriage as I have chosen not to examine each union against any blue-print except that of the particular society's norms and the outlook of the individuals involved.

I have essentially argued that the problems of Roger and Nicole's marriage (Water With Berries) seem to relate to Roger's 'East Indianness' which is subconsciously related to the complex dynamics of purity versus impurity in the Hindu Caste System. Despite the virtual incompatibility of the Black and White Aesthetic in the first place, this added factor created insurmountable problems in the confusion it brought Roger himself. But even more so, his

white wife Nicole seemed at a loss in understanding her husband. Roger is neither typical East Indian, West Indian, White or Mulatto. He is an extremely alienated figure of East Indian descent, and this invariably brought problems to his marriage especially because it is mixed.

The arguments are more clear-cut and logical in the case of John and Barbara (I Want A Black Doll). The norms of their American society are well-known. The white Southern lady's marriage to a black man is taboo. Nevertheless, they fell in love and thought this enough a weapon to fight the odds. Despite their education and liberalism, they were wrong. Mutual love was not enough to fight the racial stereotypes of the American South in the '40s and '50s. The marriage invariably failed, an outcome which I have argued is supported by Jungian and Freudian dream theories.

Finally, the arguments are also clear in Graham and Joyce's case (Brown Face, Big Master). The odds were against them too but there being hardly any British equivalent to the American South in racial dogma, the outlook for the survival of a mixed marriage was less traumatic despite general opposition from both family and society. But more importantly, the strong christian faith of both parties guaranteed a buoyancy unmatched in the other unions. This appears to be the only blue-print of success if any does exist.