



## WHITE MALE MASCULINITY IN COETZEE'S WAITING FOR BARBARIANS

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## Research Highlights

This article will investigate how Coetzee's white male characters confront their pasts that revolve around abuse of power in both familial relations and the community. Most importantly, I will examine how masculine identities in the novel fit in the wider society and how they respond to changing power structures because they influence their behavior. Furthermore, it is important to understand his stand against white supremacy at a time many of his colleagues from the civil rights movement were writing about equality and human rights.

## Research Objectives

My objective is to investigate whether Coetzee ascribed to the patriarchal Boer societal values that marginalized both women and servants into silence. Since masculine discourse is recurring in his other works, it is both an ideological and political discourse representing oppression and colonialism.

## Methodology

As an qualitative research concerning english literature, I am alert to the complexities of the masculinity crisis and how it fused with changing power relations and imbalances. Although Connell (1995) posits that the masculinity crisis emerged from the dismantling of gender roles that allowed men to perform certain duties and use them to define themselves, it is also because some men who were considered inferior gained power and changed power relations in the society. This article argues that Coetzee constructed the white male as a hegemonic oppressor who finds it difficult to fit in an equal and open society. It seems that the writer was worried that the traditional and dominant white male was being destroyed by freedom and empowerment campaigns.

Today, it is important to examine the literary representation of white masculinity, which continues to dominate the world. New masculinities written by women often imagine new and alternative models of manhood. Their objective is to deconstruct the traditional masculinity and construct a new one. Many critics have attributed these works to women writers because male views on masculinity have largely been ignored by literary criticism (Hughey, 2012).

Masculinity studies in the west, particularly the US were limited to gay, lesbian, and queer studies. It is now difficult to distinguish between gay and masculinity studies in the US because they share common features. However, recent studies on masculinities incorporate issues of race to analyze gender. Therefore, the theory of masculinities demonstrates the importance of race in our social and political lives. Recently, the theory of masculinities has become an interdisciplinary field

## Results

Coetzee exposes the story of domination and oppression that are perpetuated by men of white descent. Later, he allocates violence to blacks in the post apartheid South Africa to show the challenge of white supremacy. Some of Coetzee's protagonists in a select of his novels attempt to escape from the prison of their mind. They find it difficult to shake off past memories: memories of abuse and lost innocence. Severing of their roots is seen an impossibility because the past is etched on to their personal psyche. The writer shows that though the white man is a masculine hegemony, he is not the measure of everything. The





change of power structures exposes him to ridicule and transforms him into a misfit into the evolving social fabric. Coetzee's characters in a select of his works exemplify the weaknesses and problems associated with being a white South African. It is a reflection of the author's own struggles to find his identity. This article examines the construction of white male hegemony that represents both oppression and colonialism. It exemplifies the psychological dilemma of those who are subsumed with power (Buboltz, 2009).

## Findings

McGlynn (2010) posited that Masculinity has been turbulent times since World War 11. As a result, the discourse of 'crisis' is popular in many literary works. Masculinity can be used as a vital instrument to identify practices and attitudes that perpetuate gender inequality involving some men's domination over both women and other men (Jewkes, et al.2015).

There is a need to investigate the construction of white male hegemony by male writers, particularly white to understand whether they are part to the phenomenon of of constructing new identities of manhood or are complicit in perpetuating white supremacy.

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