A Family’s fight in Racial Discrimination in *Noughts + Crosses* Novel by Malorie Blackman

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**ABSTRACT**

This study explained the experiences of Callum and his family through the levels of racism as well as how they responded towards the racism itself in the novel *Noughts + Crosses* by Malorie Blackman. This study itself was a literary criticism focusing on sociological approaches by employing two theories, including Jones’ levels of racism (2000) and Richman and Leary’s multimotive theory (2009). The first level of Jones’ theory seemed to be the most prominent out of the three which was the institutional racism, in which the characters of this novel were restricted or had limited access to quite a lot of government infrastructure, silenced voice, as well as small quantity of representative in power. While the personally-mediated racism manifested itself through the suspicion of minorities; especially Callum, who was lack of respect from the Crosses, devalued minorities’ capabilities, scapegoated, and dehumanized through hate crime and police brutality. In internalizing racism there was also evidence of whiteness as in Lynette’s case where she believed herself to be black as well as self-devaluated by the characters themselves, for example Ryan who used the slur word to his own race. Callum and his family responded to various types of responses, such as Jude who was leaning towards being more aggressive after the experience of racism while Callum at least tried to regain relational value within the society with relationship-promoting response as well as trying to exclude or withdraw himself from the society with avoidance or withdrawal response.

**Keywords:** levels of racism, racism, response

**INTRODUCTION**

According to United States Sentencing Commission (2017), African or African-American men are more likely to receive almost up to 20% longer sentences in prison compared to Caucasian men regardless the offenses they had committed. This is merely a fraction of racism “inferior” races had to endure during their lifetime. A racial inequality, injustice, oppression or discrimination is a topic that has been debated for decades. Many
literatures; fiction or non-fiction, written by many great authors throughout the era that tackled the racial issue such as Harper Lee, Walter Dean Myers, and Angie Thomas. However, to some people, the word “racism” is still an unfamiliar idea; therefore, it is the biggest issue that needs to be resolved.

Racism, as mentioned above, also exists within literary works. Most of the literary works took implicit or explicit references towards real life situation. Malorie Blackman, as the author of *Noughts + Crosses*, chose a more indirect way to depict racism on her book, so that she did not “offend” anybody. She also explained that fictional literary work is “a simple but brilliant way to educate children of racism”, while in sociological perspective racism is defined as “an all-encompassing social system characterized by the amalgamation of institutions, practices, and discursive regimes that put people of color in a position of disadvantage” (Shiao & Woody, 2020, p. 503).

Literature and racism are highly connected to one another, considering that racism is a part of sociological phenomenon and literature is one of the main sources of sociology data, so both of them are two sides of the same fence. Hudson (1913, p. 11) stated that "an impactful literature born from life and in life itself we have to find the 'impulse' which humanity has that gave birth to many various forms of literature up until now and the social conflict of racism is one of them".

*Noughts + Crosses* by Malorie Blackman was one of the novels that tackled almost everything about racism, covering segregation, oppression, discrimination, injustice, and inequality mixed with fully fledged forbidden romance between two characters of different races. It told a story set in a 21st century alternate universe where Africa had colonized The Great Britain and its people were divided into two groups, which were the Crosses, who were the dominant black individuals occupying the top of the hierarchy, and the Noughts, who were the inferior white individuals situated at the bottom. The story focused on two main characters as well as their families, Callum who was the member of the Noughts with his family that included Jude, Lynette and, Ryan, and Persephone who was in the Crosses family. Callum and Persephone were caught in a complicated relationship that was loathed by almost everyone around them.

Previous studies explored various aspects related to racism, literature, and discrimination. One notable journal by Lyngstad (2021) focused on the impact of dystopian literature, specifically Malorie Blackman's *Noughts + Crosses*, on students’ perceptions of society, highlighting its role in building children's competency in citizenship. Other studies, including the theses by Rahmi (2018) and Yunitri et al. (2019), and journals by Potyk and White (2020) and Mutmainnah et al. (2022), delved into the influence of writers' social backgrounds on the portrayal of racism in novels. Additionally, Prakasa (2020) and Bimantara (2020) examined racism in a drama and a movie, respectively, utilizing discrimination theory to reveal social class distinctions and discriminatory acts. Another quantitative analysis by Fatnah et al. (2020) on "The Help" film categorized racism acts using Krippendorf content analysis, highlighting hatred as the dominant type. The present study distinguishes itself by employing the levels of racism theory by Jones (2000) and delves into literary criticism, being the first to use *Noughts + Crosses* as the primary data source to analyze levels of racism and characters’ responses with the multimotive theory of Richman and Leary (2009).

This study was different from the previous studies for some reasons. Firstly, it used a different theory called levels of racism proposed by Jones (2000), covering a wider topic...
of racism rather than just racism in general. Secondly, no literary criticism research had used *Noughts & Crosses* as its primary data source, whether it was a journal or thesis, making it appropriate for this research to fill that gap. The research analyzed the levels of racism (Jones, 2000) and the characters’ response to it with the multimotive theory of Richman and Leary (2009).

Based on the background of the study, two research questions were raised. The first question aimed to figure out the levels of racism experienced by Callum and his family in Malorie Blackman’s *Noughts + Crosses*. The second question sought to understand how Callum and his family responded to the racism in the novel. After obtaining descriptive answers to the first research question, it was only appropriate to explore how Callum and his family responded to racism.

The study discussed the various levels of racism experienced and responded to by characters such as Callum, Ryan, Jude, and Lynette. Despite its aims, the research had a limitation due to the lack of substantial data on the main character, Persephone, leading to her exclusion from the analysis. The theories used in this study included the levels of racism theory by Jones (2000) to address the first research question, suggesting that racism had several levels, each with its own role. The second theory, the multimotive response theory by Richman and Leary (2013), was employed to answer the second research question, proposing that victims of racism might respond differently based on their characteristics.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This study was considered a literary criticism, which analyzed and evaluated works of literature and interpreting the meaning of words and sentences within literary works. The steps in composing the thesis were, first, to find the appropriate material object for the study and identify the prominent topic within it. Afterward, the researcher found the theoretical framework that suited the identified topic. The researcher intended to apply the Levels of Racism theory by Jones and the Responses theory by Richman and Leary (2013) to *Noughts + Crosses* by Malorie Blackman to better understand the levels of racism experienced and the responses of Callum and his family.

The data for this research was a novel entitled *Noughts + Crosses* by Malorie Blackman. The softcover book was originally released in 2001 by Doubleday, and the researcher obtained the second edition, which included an additional story at the end and was re-published in 2017 by Penguin Books, United Kingdom. The book consists of 436 pages of the main book, and the last 20 pages, which is the additional story, were not used as a data source in this research. The chapters alternated between the perspectives of the two main characters.

In collecting the data, the researcher followed four steps. Firstly, reading through the novel several times to better understand the words and utterances within the novel was an essential part of the research. The second step involved highlighting some utterances that could prove significant for further analysis, whether or not they were related to the theory. The next step was classifying; after highlighting the data, the researcher filtered it to specify which parts were more relevant to the proposed theories by Jones (2020) and Richman and Leary (2013). Lastly, the most important step was analyzing. After filtering the data, the researcher began analyzing, interpreting, and
connecting the data with the theories to draw the findings, discussion, and conclusion for this study.

**FINDINGS & DISCUSSION**

*Levels of racism experienced by the main characters in Malorie Blackman’s Noughts + Crosses*

Many kinds of racism were portrayed in the novel as the story progressed. The most prominent forms were institutional racism, personally-mediated racism, and internalized racism, as explained by Jones (2000).

**Institutional Racism**

The first of the three levels that will be analyzed is institutional racism. As explained by Tyson (2015), it involved the practice of racist policies in various government institutions, including education, law, and healthcare. Additionally, Bailey, Feldman, and Bassett (2021) added that these racist policies are often considered the norm in today's society, with many people turning a blind eye to the situation. An example can be found at the beginning of the novel when Callum was accepted at the Crosses' school despite being a Nought or a white person. The first evidence of institutional racism experienced by Callum was revealed during his conversation with his friend Sephy.

Datum 1

’Jeez, Sephy, I’m fifteen, for heaven’s sake! In six months’ time I’ll be sixteen and they’re still sticking me in with twelve-and thirteen-year-olds. How would you like to be in a class with kids at least a year younger than you?’ Callum asked.

‘I . . . well . . .’ I sat back down.

‘Exactly!’

‘I’m fourteen in three weeks,’ I said, unwilling to let it drop.

‘That’s not the point, and you know it.’

“But the school explained why. You’re all at least a year behind and . . .’ ‘And whose fault is that?’ Callum said with erupting bitterness. ‘Until a few years ago we were only allowed to be educated up to the age of fourteen – and in Noughts only schools at that, which don’t have a quarter of the money or resources that your schools have.’(p.7)

In the quoted passage, the two individuals were arguing about the school’s decision to place Callum in a class with a bunch of twelve-year-olds, even though he was fourteen. It was clear that Callum was furious with the decision, seeing it as unfair because he was a Nought or a minority. Callum also stated that he and his kind could only receive education when they were fourteen years old, while their counterparts, the Crosses, could start their education as early as they wanted. This correlated with Jones’s (2000) theory, where the minority had limited access to resources, and in this case, it was the institution within education that became a problem.

On the day when Callum first entered the school, he encountered a mob of angry Crosses. Later, Callum watched the news on television about the incident.

Datum 2

“When at last Kamal Hadley had stopped dribbling on, Heathcroft School appeared on the telly. Of course, they didn’t bother showing the fact that the police officers
who were meant to be guarding us were letting the crowd get to us to poke and pinch and punch. Somehow the camera was never in the right place to show that the whole back of my jacket was awash with Cross spit. Surprise! Surprise! There wasn’t even a hint of any of that.”

“‘The noughts admitted to Heathcroft High School met with some hostility today . . .’ the news reporter began.”

“Some hostility? This reporter’s middle name was obviously ‘Euphy’, short for Euphemism! Police officers were drafted in to keep the peace as it was feared that nought extremists might try to take advantage of the volatile situation . . .’ the newscaster continued.”

After watching the news, Callum noticed something was amiss. The news did not show the fact that he and other Noughts kids were getting punched left and right and getting spat on. The media clearly and intentionally overlooked the main issue of the news, which was the spitting and violence directed at the Noughts. This is, of course, another piece of evidence of control over the media, as stated by Jones (2002). Various institutions within the government are not exempt from the grasp of racism.

Datum 3
“I was trying so hard to understand how and why things were the way they were. The Crosses were meant to be closer to God. The Good Book said so. The son of God was dark-skinned like them, had eyes like them, had hair like them. The Good Book said so. But the Good Book said a lot of things. Like ‘love thy neighbour’, and ‘do unto others as you would have them do unto you’. If nothing else, wasn’t the whole message of the Good Book to live and let live? So how could the Crosses call themselves ‘God’s chosen’ and still treat us the way they did?”

“...They said it’d been written and translated by Crosses, so it was bound to be biased in their favour.”

As seen from the quotation above, in his contemplation, Callum encountered another obstacle in his mind. He stated that the Crosses were meant to be closer to God, and there was also the belief that God is black or dark-skinned like the Crosses, according to the Crosses themselves. In this novel, there is a similarity with Christianity, which is why black people are called Crosses due to their "strong" connection with the religion itself. The Noughts, being the minority, are forced to adhere to this religion because there are no other options. This represents another instance of racist manipulation by the media, as stated by Jones (2000), particularly by the branch of the government handling religious affairs to maintain power and assert dominance from the so-called Good Book. In the first history class Callum attended, he encountered an act of racism from his teacher, Mr. Jason.

Datum 4
“Throughout history, from the time our ancestors in Cafrique sailed to other lands and acquired knowledge of gunpowder, writing, weapon-making, the arts and so on, we have been the dominant race on Earth. We have been the explorers, the ones to move entire backward civilizations onwards”

“Robert Peary. He was a Nought who co-discover the geographic North Pole.”

“How come I’ve never heard of him then?” Mr. Jason challenged.”

“Because all the history books are written by Crosses and you never write about anyone else except your own. Noughts have done lots of significant things, but I bet no-one in this class knows . . .”
Mr. Jason was boasting and bragging about how the Crosses was the one who pioneer everything, the dominant race who explored the world and obtained all its knowledge. But Callum knew the truth, he counteracts by saying that the Nought did play a part in history as well. In this case, the education of this country preferred to make the Crosses to be the pioneer of everything, when in fact, as Callum had stated, the truth is completely different, there were many Noughts or light-skinned people who have contributed to the civilization as well but the world chose to ignore them. Which was what Jones (2000) considered as limiting people’s own history by shutting them out from the public. Callum mentioned in his monologue of how the Crosses and Noughts.

Datum 5
"Centuries ago, Crosses had moved across northern and eastern Pangaea from the south, acquiring along the way the know-how to make the guns and weapons that made everyone else bow down to them. But that didn’t mean that what they did was right. We noughts had been their slaves for so long, and even though slavery had been formally abolished over half a century ago, I didn’t see that we were much better off. We were only just beginning to be let into their schools. The number of noughts in positions of authority in the country could be counted on the fingers of one hand – without including the thumb! It wasn’t right. It wasn’t fair."

Callum stated that the Crosses were indeed an invasive race coming from across the sea colonized his land back then and made the Noughts their slaves, he contemplated whether the past or the present which had better condition considering that there was not much difference and there were only a handful of Noughts’ representatives in power as stated by Callum. This lacks of representative fell under the category of voice within the institutional racism theory Jones (2000) has laid. It was not right and it was not fair because it has been rigged from the start. Another institutional racism is experienced Ryan or Callum’s father when it was the time for him to defend himself in a public court.

Datum 6
"I sat up high in the packed public gallery. Far below me and to my right, I could see my father. Just the bruised left side of his face. It was only the second time I’d seen him since the police had crashed into our lives. The judge was droning on and on at the jury, telling them what the case was about and what it was not about. Twelve good men and women and true, hanging on the judge’s every word. Twelve good Cross men and woman, of course. How else could justice be served? My stomach churned as the clerk of the court finally stood up and faced Dad."

From the quotation above, the court was en-route, the day of Ryan’s sentencing was coming and seeing it through Callum’s perspective, the jury were packed with twelve Cross men and one Cross woman, not a single Nought’s jury in sight. The jurors were usually selected randomly and as diverse as possible in order to avoid bias and unfairness within the verdict but not in this court. This definitely screams rigged case; one where the defendant, which was Callum’s dad or Ryan, is destined to lose in the end. This portrayed how corrupt and racist the court of justice was, and it also fell within the category of lack of voice within the institutional racism by Jones (2000).

Personally-Mediated Racism
Contrary to institutional racism as stated in the previous chapter, it was quite easy to know the suspect or the perpetrator behind the act of racism in personally-mediated
racism. Personally-mediated racism as stated by Jones (2000) consisted of prejudice and/or discrimination, it could unintentional or intentional as well. When it came to school settings the discrimination did not just come from the teachers, there were many other sources where this racism could ensue. One of them was from their fellow students at the school as experienced by Callum.

Datum 7
“So how was school? How were your lessons, son? Dad asked quietly.”
“The honest answer or the acceptable one?”
“I was OK, Dad,’ I fibbed.”
“Once we got into school it was all right.’ Except that the teachers had totally ignored us, and the Crosses had used any excuse to bump into us and knock our books on the floor, and even the Noughts serving in the food hall had made sure they served everyone else in the queue before us. ‘It was fine.’”

In the quotation above, Ryan asked about the first day of Callum’s school in which Callum lied to his dad about the truth, according to Callum the fact is it was not okay because the act of racism he received. Bjereld (2018) suggested that in some cases, the victim of such discrimination or bullying did not tell their parents about it, the reason may relate to shame and fear that leads to embarrassment. It is the same case as Callum in this evidence, he did not disclose the incident due to some reason. Even though in reality he got shoved around like a sack and even worse, they do it intentionally with heart full of hatred that leads to this act of discrimination. Not only that, the head cafeteria also intentionally put Callum as the last priority when it came to lunch-time. This racism as categorized by Jones (2000). This next quotation described the time Callum take a walk around town only to be met with constant personally-mediated racism.

Datum 8
“I turned to look out of the window. I didn’t want to look at Sephy. Not yet. I didn’t want to blame her for the way the police treated me and every other nought I knew. I didn’t want to hold her responsible for the way security guards and store detectives followed me around every time I entered a department store. And I’d stopped going into bookshops and toy shops and gift shops when I realized that no matter where I went in them, all eyes were upon me. After all, it was one of those well-known Cross-initiated facts that we noughts didn’t pay for anything when there was the chance of stealing it instead. I didn’t want to resent Sephy for the way my education was automatically assumed to be less important than hers. I didn’t want to hate her because she was a Cross and different to me.”

As seen above, Callum stated that he got treated negatively by the police and other Crosses, and how a store clerk followed him around the store suspicious of him because of the prejudice of Noughts being a shoplifter. The Crosses were following Callum around even though he did not do anything wrong nor he was going to, but people are quick to judge that Callum as a Nought or white man, is a thief. This again fell under the category suspicion of the minorities by the majorities (Jones, 2000). The next quotation showed another personally-mediated act experienced by Callum by his teacher Mr. Jason.

Datum 9
“Why . . . why did I get a C-minus for my mid-term grade when I got twenty-seven marks out of thirty in your last test and came first?”
“Your grade reflects other things besides how well you did in the test.”
“Like what?”
“Like your coursework and homework to date, not to mention your attitude.”
“I’ve never got less than nine out of ten for my homework.”
“Mr Jason stopped in his tracks, just beside the door. I finally had his full attention. ‘Are you questioning my judgement? Because that’s exactly what I mean when I say your attitude leaves a lot to be desired.’”
“I’d just like to know your reasons, that’s all.”
“I gave you the grade you deserved – no more, no less.”
“Adotey got a B when my work so far this term has been getting better marks than his and I got five more in the test.”

The quotation above showed Callum disagreeing with Mr. Jason about his bad grade, he asked Mr. Jason why he got C even though he excels at his study and Mr. Jason stated that it is a grade he deserved. In this scenario, Mr. Jason is surprised at Callum’s ability and intellectual; far exceeding his expectation from a minority, thus why in order to contain this he intentionally failed Callum in his class even though the factual evidence said otherwise. According to Jones (2000) this is part of devaluation; where the majority is surprised at the minority competence and abilities. This next act of racism involved police and Callum experienced it first-hand after the bomb incident when the police barge into their home.

Datum 10
“There was no warning. No knock at the door. No warning shouts. Nothing. The first I knew about it was the CRASH when our front door was battered in. Shouts. Calls. A scream. Footsteps charging. Doors banging. More shouts. More footsteps – pound, pound, pound up the stairs. By the time I was fully awake and had swung my legs out of bed, smoke was everywhere. At least I thought it was smoke. I dropped to the floor.”
“Jude? JUDE!’ I yelled, terrified that my brother was still asleep. I jumped up, looking around for him.”
“It was only then that I realized it wasn’t smoke filling my room, filling the house. The strong smell of garlic caught in the back of my throat and brought instant tears to my eyes. I coughed and coughed, my lungs threatening to explode from my body and my eyes were streaming. Tear gas. I struggled to my feet and groped my way to the front door.”
“DOWN! GET DOWN!’ A voice, no, more than one voice, screamed at me.”

Callum, aware that he had not done anything wrong in the past, felt like he did not deserve the awful treatment by the police. The tear gas and physical violence were too much for him. This aligns with what Jones (2000) described as dehumanization, specifically police excessive brutality, especially when it comes to minorities with little to no power. Every action in this world bears consequences, but in this situation, Callum had nothing to do with the action, yet he experienced racism himself.

Datum 11
“...They occasionally showed Callum and his mum hiding their faces from the cameras as they came out of the court.”
“The night they showed Callum’s house burnt to the ground I went to my bedroom and cried and cried. Luckily, Callum and his mum were staying with relatives but it still hurt to think of what my friend was going through.”

The quotation above described the situation in which Callum’s house was burnt to the ground by an angry mob of Crosses after they found out that Ryan or Callum’s dad was guilty of the bombing but at the time fortunately Callum and his family are not at home. This is the consequence of the racist act of the government that leads to discrimination by
the people towards Callum’s family and is considered as a hate crime or dehumanization in Jones (2000) framework. The next personally-mediated racism is experienced by Ryan, the bomb incident on the mall left many people in frustration, especially the Crosses. The society has grown anxious considering no suspect has been found yet. Ryan unfortunately has to be the victim of another act of racism as seen below:

Datum 12

“‘They said they had Jude – and proof he was the bomber. They said someone had to take the blame for the Dundale bomb and it was up to me who took the fall.’”

“And you believed them?” Mum asked furiously.”

“‘Meggie, they threatened that you and Callum would also go to prison for conspiracy. It was my life or the lives of my entire family.’”

“‘Did you do it? Did you plant the bomb that killed all those people?’ Dad looked straight at Mum. He didn’t even blink. ‘No.’”

“‘Then why . . .?’”

“I had no choice,’ Dad repeated. Anger held his body tense and rigid. He looked like he was about to snap in half. Mum blinked, totally bemused.”

“If you put your hand up to the Dundale murders, you’ll hang.”

“I know,’ said Dad quietly.”

Ryan was seen arguing with his wife about his decision to take the blame for the incident. He stated that the police had Jude, and in order to release him, Ryan had to be the scapegoat. Callum’s dad did have ties with the militia that planted the bomb, but he was not the one who planted it. Considering Callum’s dad’s affiliation, the government took this opportunity to scapegoat him by threatening his family’s well-being if he didn’t comply. This also aligns with Jones’s (2000) concept of personally-mediated racism regarding scapegoating. The government did this to ease people’s anxiety about the bomb incident, even though the real culprit had not been arrested yet.

Internalized Racism

The perpetrator of internalized racism did not come from anyone but themselves; it originated from the people who were discriminated against. As stated by Jones (2000), internalized racism could manifest as whiteness, self-devaluation, as well as hopelessness. Ryan, in the following quotation, shows a sign of self-devaluation during an argument with his wife.

Datum 13

“‘Meggie, get real!’ Dad said impatiently.”

“‘Alex Luther is barely living, just about breathing proof that trying to change the way it is by using peaceful methods doesn’t work. That blanker has been in prison more times than any eight prison governors I know.‘”

‘Don’t call him that,’ Mum said furiously. ‘It’s bad enough when ignorant Crosses call us blankers without us calling ourselves by the same name.’

“We name it, we claim it,” said Dad.

“Nonsense! We use it, Crosses think they can too. Besides, that’s not my point. Alex Luther is a great man . . .””

When talking about Alex Luther, who was probably this world’s version of our Martin Luther, Ryan said that Alex’s peaceful method to build a bridge between Noughts and Crosses did not work. Not to mention, he also used the term "blanker" when he was talking about Alex Luther, to which his wife disagreed. He was referring to a Nought as a
blanker, which was the slur for white people. He used it nonchalantly without realizing that his act was, in theory of Jones (2000), a form of self-devaluation that degrades their own kind’s name, especially when used repeatedly.

Datum 14
"Why am I here?" My sister’s troubled grey eyes narrowed. ‘I shouldn’t be here. I’m not one of you. I’m a Cross’"
“My stomach lurched, like I was in a lift which had suddenly plunged down at least fifty storeys in about five seconds flat. Every time I convinced myself that Lynette was getting better, she’d get that look on her face . . . She’d stare at us like we were all strangers and she’d insist she was one of them.”
“What’re you talking about. You’re a nought,’ Jude said with scorn. ‘Look at your skin. You’re as white as the rest of us. Whiter.’”
“No, I’m not.”

Lynette, Callum’s sister, after exposed to whatever her traumatic experience was responded with a shocking statement when she was talking to Callum and Jude as seen above. She believes herself to be a Cross or black person when in fact she’s whiter than any of Callum’s family according to Jude. In this scenario, she was embracing what Jones (2000) called as the “whiteness” in internalized racism, an idea where the discriminated person chose to be like the majority appearance-wise and/or personality-wise. In Lynette’s case, she seemed to be not in her right mind when she made that decision, but a response was a response nonetheless. Lynette thought herself as a Cross, but she was not the only one with this internalized racism as Callum has it too.

Datum 15
“He was huddled in a corner with two other men. One had untidy, wavy-blond hair tied back in a pony-tail and he wore a trim moustache. The other had dark chestnut-brown hair and the kind of tan that must’ve been paid for. He looked almost mixed race – lucky beggar. How I wished I could afford the treatment to make my skin permanently darker.”

The previous quotation described Callum’s depiction of a Nought beggar, he noticed that the beggar’s skin tone is definitely tanner than most Noughts and that he must be a mixed race. At the end he also stated that he wished he had a darker skin as well. Since darker skin tone means higher social standards and that could also mean that he wouldn’t get discriminated anymore. This is of course another evidence of “whiteness” by Jones (2000), where one person from the discriminated race expressed their wants to have the skin color as the majority through any means necessary.

Responses of Callum and his family against the racism in Malorie Blackman’s Noughts + Crosses
After all of the racisms, the characters had to endure, it was only fair to raise the question of how do they fare with it. This part would apply Multi-motive theory by Richman and Leary (2013) and it could be manifested as a relationship-promoting responses, antisocial responses, and avoidance responses. After Lynette was projecting her so-called “whiteness”, Callum’s brother, Jude had enough with her antic and showed a response towards the racism:
Datum 16

“I’m not like you. I’m . . . I’m different. I’m brown. Look at my dark skin. Look . . .”

“Pushing past Dad, Jude grabbed Lynette’s hands and pulled her to the cracked wall-mirror behind the sofa. He pulled her back against him, his cheek against her cheek. Lynette instantly tried to pull away but Jude wouldn’t let her.”

“See that!” Jude roared. ‘You’re the same as me. As white as me. Who d’you think you are? I’m sick and tired of being looked down on by you. You’re the most pathetic person I know. If you hate what you are, do something about it. Just die or something! And if there is a God, you’ll come back as one of those ruddy daggers you love so much, and then I can stop feeling guilty about hating you.”

In the last line of the previous quotation, Jude was seen confronting Lynette of her antic, stating that she is not a black person, rather she is as white as everybody else and cursed her with slur word. In this scenario did a relationship-damaging response and it was part of verbal antisocial response. According to Richman and Leary (2013) someone who got rejected or discriminated by the society might get their empathy lessen time by time to anyone around them and that included their own. Lynette got into this state was all thanks to the Crosses, a family member usually comforted and reassured them in this situation, but not Jude. Filled with anger towards the Crosses, he let out his hatred to Lynette, to her “whiteness”, this was the part of antisocial response by Richman and Leary (2013). The previous quotation was evidence of verbal antisocial response, but Jude also did another type of antisocial response.

Datum 17

"Jude, did you plant that bomb? NO! Don’t look at your father. I asked you a question – now answer it.”

“We . . . ’Jude, keep your mouth shut, d’you hear?’ Dad ordered grimly.”

‘Jude, I’m still your mother,’ Mum said very, very quietly. ‘Answer me please.’ Desperately, Jude looked from Mum to Dad and back again.

‘Jude . .?’ said Mum.

‘We had to, Mum. Our cell was ordered to do it. Some of us set it up last night, but they said they’d phone through with the warning an hour before it went off. I swear they did. They said that everyone would be evacuated in plenty of time.’ The verbal waterfall tumbled from Jude’s mouth.

Jude, in the quotation above, was unsure if he should tell the truth or not, despite Ryan telling him to keep it a secret his mom pressured him to give it up and eventually he did it. He admitted that he did plant the bomb with some other people but he did not expect so many casualties. As stated above this an example of physical antisocial response by the minorities towards the majority. Richman and Leary (2009) raised a good statement, since people who were discriminated often responded with aggression not only to those who directly discriminated them but also anyone who got nothing to do with said discrimination, though they most likely belong to the same race or skin color of the majority. This was what happened in this situation, the Noughts militia responded with antisocial that led to lethal violence and bombed the mall that is full of Crosses. Richman and Leary (2009) also argued that there were many reasons minority did this physical antisocial response, but the most relevant to this situation is that they might do this because they wanted to reestablish control in society for their kind or race and they responded this way to “punish those who have hurt them”, lastly the antisocial response might come because the rejection or discrimination from the majority was intertwining.
and blocking their path towards their goal whatever it might be for Jude. Eventually after the death of his dad, Callum was forced to response with this racism and that response showed up when he met up with Jude.

Datum 18

“He was deliberately being enigmatic, answering each of my questions with a question of his own. And it was really cheesing me off. But I knew what he was asking. This was my chance to link up with the Liberation Militia. And I knew in my gut that if I turned Jude down now, I’d never be asked again.”

“Well?” Jude prompted.
I licked my lips, trying to delay the moment of decision.
‘This is your chance to make a difference,’ Jude told me.
And just like that, I felt a calmness, a purpose I hadn't felt in a long, long time. I looked at Jude and said, ‘I’m in.’

From the quotation above, Callum was hesitating whether he should join the militia or not, if he joins, that means he is against the government for real and eventually he is convinced to enlist by Jude. In a case where one has been discriminated by the society whether it was fair or undeserved, it would lead to sadness, remorse, and self-doubt and often time they are trying to reestablish relational value (Richman & Leary, 2009) which was exactly what Callum was going through at the moment of time, he left wandering around with no purpose until Jude came along and give Callum a chance for making differences and the sense of belonging with a proper goal. He found acceptance and relational value in Jude and that was what made this response a relationship-promoting response (Richman & Leary, 2009), knowing that he couldn’t repair his relationship with the society he searched for an alternative within Jude. After he joined the militia against the Crosses, he thought about his life decision so far and how he handled it and gave out several responses.

Datum 19

My thoughts turned to my sister, Lynette. Funny, but I thought of her more and more often these days. She’d always been there for me. She made our home bearable. Each time I thought I couldn’t take it anymore, she’d smile or put her hand over mine and I’d calm down inside. When she’d died, part of me had despised her for being a coward. Part of me had hated her for leaving me. It’d all been about me. Now I thought about all the things Lynny had been through. I’d allowed all the things that’d happened to me to rob me of my humanity. Do unto others before they did unto you, that’d been my philosophy. That’s how I’d coped with the world. Lynny’s solution was better. Just fade out, until you were ready to fade back in. (Blackman, 2000)

Callum, as seen in the quotation above, thought about his sister a lot. He stated that she has been the comfort person to talk to that before she died. Now that she had gone, his philosophy has changed to a more antisocial, but he still thought that his sister was solution of fading out is still better.

This thought alone by Callum gave away three responses by Richard and Leary (2009) simultaneously, when his sister was still around, he sought shelter in her longing for her acceptance and comforted which was a relationship-promoting response, then he adapted the “Do unto others before they did unto you” philosophy, it basically meant to aggress and retaliate physically or verbally towards those who have wronged him which was an antisocial response. But maybe withdrawing himself whether it was physically or
socially, from the society and its complication was the wise decision, seeing that doing it may avoid him from further discrimination (Richman & Leary, 2009).

CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION

The first level of racism experienced by Callum, Lynette, Ryan, and Jude were institutional racism, which according to this analysis was the most prominent level out of the two. Institutional racism in this novel were manifested several times to Callum and Ryan, which included unfair regulation, small representative in power, silenced one’s history, controlled over media as well as the court of justice to path the way whichever they like as in Ryan’s case. Personally-mediated racism also manifested several times throughout the novel to Callum and Ryan which included everyday avoidance, suspicion, devaluation by the majority, Ryan’s scapegoating, police brutality, and hate crime towards them. The internalized racism manifested as the case of whiteness is within Lynette and Callum, self-devaluation also prevalent with the use of racial slur as a nickname which was uttered by Ryan.

As for the responses, Callum and his family responded each with their own way, Callum at the very least try to did relationship-promoting response seeking to regain relational value with the society while also looking for comfort and acceptance in Sephy, Lynette, and also the Militia which includes Jude, he also showed avoidance or withdrawal responses when he expressed his desire to fade out from the society. Lastly, Jude himself was leaning towards being aggressive after the racism responded with anti-social response letting out his anger towards those who discriminated them; through the bomb incident and even let out his anger verbally to his own family member.

There are number suggestions the researcher gives out towards the readers. First, based on the discussion above are how to properly handle racism and which responses might be more appropriate. In a more practical way, it is to be expected that further researchers to find more under-rated novel to be analyzed as there are still many out there that are not yet touched. Last but not least, further researchers could also deeply analyze with psychoanalytic approach the character development of the character in this novel especially Callum considering how dynamic he is as a character.

REFERENCES


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