

# White Saviour Complex and (Mis)Portrayal of Blacks in Kathryn Stockett's *The Help*

*Alesha Nasir\** & *Sarah Abdullah\*\**

---

**ABSTRACT:** *This article critiques the use of the white saviour trope in American fiction. Taking Kathryn Stockett's debut novel *The Help* (2009) under study, the article argues that the text's black female characters' assertions of power and agency are subverted by their characterization as faithful mummies and maids who need the white female protagonist to exercise their agency and emancipate themselves. Instead of destabilizing the binary between blacks and whites, Stockett reaffirms them by positioning a white female character, Skeeter, as its central narrator. Hence, Stockett's attempt to critique the imperialist nature of white society ends up in recapitulating the message that only a white person can rescue blacks from a life of drudgery. In a broader context, the article problematizes the use of a white saviour as a subversive trope as it does little to dismantle the institutional, ideological and systematic racism that primarily privileges whites over blacks.*

**Keywords:** White Saviour, Kathryn Stockett, *The Help*, Civil Rights Movement, Racism.

---

Email: [aleshanasir27@gmail.com](mailto:aleshanasir27@gmail.com)\*  
[sarah-farooq@hotmail.com](mailto:sarah-farooq@hotmail.com)\*\*

White saviour fiction is a genre in which “a white messianic character saves a lower- or working-class, usually urban or isolated, non-white character from a sad fate” (Hughey 1). It is assumed that coloured people need the white saviour to lead their movement for rights and freedom. Hence White Saviour Complex is an ideology that positions whites as protectors. It functions in the service of combining whiteness with spirituality, niceness, supremacy, universality, and purity. The purpose of this trope is evidenced in the continuous and even fierce resistance by whites in allowing omnipotent figures, like the Judeo-Christian saviour figure Jesus Christ or even divine mythical figures like Santa Claus, to be recognized racially as anything other than white. Moreover, it represents blacks as forever in need of white patronage; their love, sympathy, mercy, compassion, encouragement, intellect, and financial assistance. It thereby adds to the white narrative that problematizes the representation of race relations between whites and coloured communities.

It supports the notions of white morality and supremacy, thus, justifying conceptions of racial difference and white goodness. Furthermore, these narratives describe racism against blacks in an idealized and unrealistic way, thus, liberating whites of guilt and liability, thereby establishing a strong bias for prioritizing white saviours’ agency (Hughey 66). White saviour characters are prominent, open, and blatantly depicted as the hero for communities of colour, and the world is viewed from the supremacist narrative of whiteness. This focus on white privilege overshadows the marginalized experiences of non-whites. In both the fictive and real world, the white saviour trope legitimizes and validates the dangerous ideology of white innocence and black submissiveness. Hernan Vera and Andrew Gordon define white saviour as, “the great leader who saves blacks from slavery or oppression, rescues people of colour from poverty and disease, or leads Indians in battle for their dignity and survival” (33). The white saviour is a character in the white saviour narrative around which the non-whites must revolve. Kathryn Stockett’s debut novel, *The Help*, draws on this trope to draw attention to the working conditions of black females in American society. Stockett states in the afterword to her narrative, “Too little, too late”; the novel is written out of admiration, gratitude, and respect for Demetrie, her grandmother’s maid, who died when Stockett was sixteen. Stockett explains that she feels embarrassed about the naïveté of her youth and now wants to make reparation for it.

This ‘white guilt’ is represented in the novel by Skeeter Phelan, the protagonist of the novel. The novel is about black maids working in white

households in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1962. These black maids work with Skeeter to create a book detailing the injustices inflicted on them by their white female employers. The narrative is narrated by two black characters: Aibileen, Minny, as well as the white protagonist, Skeeter. In *The Help*, Eugenia “Skeeter” Phelan, the white saviour character, is an ambitious author living in Jackson, Mississippi, during the 1960s. She takes up the responsibility of compiling a book of stories told from African American maids’ point of view on how it is like to work for a white family in order to establish herself as a writer. Skeeter, one day, tells Aibileen about her publishing ambitions, and Aibileen tells her about her son, Treelore. She lost him when he was only twenty-four years old. Treelore wanted to get married and start a new life. He was also writing a book narrating his personal experiences being a black man living and working in Mississippi when tragedy happened; he slipped and got run over by a tractor-trailer. Skeeter steals the idea from him. While she thinks that writing a book about ‘the help’ is going to be both revolutionary and significant in the existing context of the African-American Civil Rights Movement, her primary motive, at the beginning of the novel, is to become a writer. The narrative shows Aibileen and Minny’s loyal mummification as they are willing to take all the risks to help Skeeter pursue her ambition. African American women, although no longer confined by legalized bigotry, still have to show loyalty to white women.

American sociologist Matthew W. Hughey, known for his work on race and racism, brings into notice the presence of a “bad White” or a scapegoat character in the white saviour narrative. The white saviour is contrasted with two other types. First, the white saviour character is contrasted with a racist, hostile, awfully brutal, and completely heartless white character. Second, it is positioned within the coloured community. Dejected and marginalized, the coloured community circumambulates the saviour and contextualizes his character development. Hughey calls the three types “the Saviour, the Bad White, and the Natives” (Hughey 47). In contrast to the dysfunctional native and the antagonistic white, the white saviour is a social outcast in his/her own society and portrayed as a humane figure on account of this difference.

*The Help*, much like other white saviour novels, also openly deals with the juxtaposition of good and bad whites. Hilly Holbrook exemplifies the bad white in the narrative since she is the most racist and bigoted character of all. She treats the maids very poorly and uses her social

position to manipulate them into doing whatever she wants. She expresses disgust at the idea of using the same bathroom as “the help”. She tries to legislate separate toilets for blacks and whites in private homes in Jackson. Her rationale behind supporting an initiative to ban black servants from using the indoor toilets of white homes is based on an exclusionary politics. Hilly’s inclusion in the novel serves to make Skeeter look like an angel in comparison. By scapegoating Hilly Holbrook as the antagonistic racist housewife of Jackson, Mississippi, the author draws attention away from the fact that Skeeter’s decision to take black women’s voices in her control, under the illusion of saving them from racial subjugation, is questionable. Skeeter is then easily portrayed as a saviour who breaks free of the constraints of white racist normativity.

By keeping her focus on Hilly, Kathryn Stockett allows the readers to ignore the deep-rooted systems, institutions, and resources that bring about and regulate contemporary structures of discrimination. By criticizing only bad white people, rather than the epistemic and ideological presuppositions behind discriminatory practices, Stockett overtly ignores the danger caused by systematic racist laws and organizations. Ultimately the brutally dangerous working conditions of female domestic servants in Jackson, Mississippi, only serve as a backdrop for a tale of compassion and sacrifice of a white saviour.

Textual analysis of white saviour fiction differs strikingly from black authors’ images of African Americans’ experiences in American society. The system of representation in white saviour fiction is problematic because it does not fully allow a subaltern’s voice to be heard. Rather it positions their oppressor as their representative. Through her attempt to compensate for her past mistakes and the history of racism in US society, Stockett ultimately subjugates the people she wants to liberate. This is highlighted through the conditions set out in the novel’s primary assumption: in order to leave behind their marginalized positions, the black maids must accept white saviour’s offer to publish their stories. To liberate herself of the “white guilt”, Stockett colonizes African American maids through the appropriation of their voice.

Although some scholars like Pearl McHaney disagree that *The Help* “takes the racial terror out of the 1960s by ignoring the bombings, shootings, and beatings and replacing the Ku Klux Klan with snotty Junior Leaguers who were mean to their maids” (80) and assert that Stockett’s aim was to write a work of fiction, not a historically accurate

account of the civil rights movement (81), there are many who criticize the novel for its problematic use of language and character portrayal. According to McHaney when one of the editors attempted to introduce some changes to the dialogues in the novel, Stockett insisted that she differentiated African American characters from white characters because that is how they resonated in her memory. Stockett merely stated that she couldn't have Minny speaking like a white socialite. However, she never provides a rationale as to why the novel contains different dialects. (McHaney 82). To differentiate characters by their language is problematic. Ismail S. Talib contends that to use pidgin in a novel might illustrate a character's illiterateness, although it can also be used to create a sense of realism (140). However it is not just the question of language but also the way characters are given representation within the narratives that is problematic.

Despite Kathryn Stockett's efforts to give some agency to the black maids by giving Aibileen a more active writing role, there is no denying the fact that Skeeter has taken on the white man's or, in this particular case, white woman's burden. By giving Aibileen and Minny a chance to narrate events in the novel, Stockett leads the readers to believe that they are getting first-hand knowledge about the black maids' lived experiences. In reality, however, Aibileen's voice, in the novel, always relies on Skeeter's. Aibileen's involvement in a book, telling stories of black maids intersects with Skeeter's selfish pursuit of her dream and, therefore, her voice is audible as a narrator only. While Skeeter gives preference to her dreams, unconscious of her white privilege, she is also deeply disturbed by explicit appearances of racism in Jackson, Mississippi. Her book shows a way for Aibileen, Minny, and other maids, to fight racism, and they do so conscious of the risks they would have to take. Nevertheless, it is hard to ignore that the publication of the book in Stockett's novel is dependent upon two white women: Skeeter and Elaine Stein, senior editor at Harper & Row Publishers.

Civil Rights Movement culminated in the fifties and sixties in the United States of America. Through peaceful protest actions, it made its way through a system of discrimination to demand equal access and opportunities for African Americans. Although the black maids in *The Help* need a white saviour to protect them, real black maids have a long history of fighting for their rights. Many African American activists fought against social injustices for their fellow brothers and sisters, but their sacrifices and fight for rights are ignored in *The Help*. Stockett

attempts to whitewash the civil rights history and ignores the real horrors that African Americans faced at that time. While the novel focuses on white racist characters like Hilly and her friends, many significant events, like the assassination of prominent black NAACP leader Medgar Evers, are entirely overlooked. Aibileen goes to Minny's house and sees that her family is all gathered around a radio where the announcer says that Medgar Evers, field Secretary for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, has been taken to the hospital after a Ku Klux Klan member shot him in front of his own house. As they listen, the announcer says that Evers is dead. Minny turns to her children and quietly tells them to go to the back bedroom and stay there. The incident is more a radio news than a felt tragedy. In this way, Stockett ignores what truly went on in history. Writing from the perspective of a white character, Stockett lessens the impact of the reality of the civil rights era. Instead, she depicts a white character becoming a saviour and fighting for the rights of blacks, failing to realize that it is not their fight he fights. Black women are also presented as weak at times as they refuse to take ownership of their own stories. They feel they "need" and even ask for a white saviour. After the murder of Medgar Evers, ten other maids agree to contribute to Skeeter's book because they want her help. The reasons for them contributing have nothing to do with their personal frustration or dissatisfaction with how they are treated; the text once again ignoring the historical activism initiated by black women after Evers's death. Worst of all, *The Help* implies that black women relied on white women when it came to having a voice during the Civil Rights Revolution.

Many of the racist crimes committed by white are either made light off or completely erased in the telling of the narrative. Aibileen, laughing, tells of a child who kept wondering why she was so black and told that it was because she drank too much coffee. Minny shares how she became known as the best cook in Mississippi and shares funny stories about irrational (and harmless) white women. Cora briefly talks about working for the French family and knowing Mrs. French's daughters, Ms. Nancy and Ms. Jolene. Upon Mrs. French's death, Ms. Nancy wanted Cora to work for her. Cora accepted but ultimately had to work for Ms. Jolene, who Cora said was mean, because of a clause in the mother's will. In one instance of pain, Cora says that the French family owned her. None, not one, of the twelve domestic workers interviewed in *The Help* for Skeeter's book discuss being overworked, not paid, beaten, raped, or narrate other tragic realities faced by the ninety percent of black women in the South who

worked as domestics. And consequently, these acts of violence do not exist in the world created by *The Help*.

At the time of the Civil Rights era, racial discrimination forced majority of working black women in the South to labour as domestic servants in white homes. They had very few employment opportunities. Although much has been written in *The Help*, portraying the brutalizing and manipulative circumstances in which they lived, their contributions to human rights gathered from their subtle acts of resistance, particularly their participation in the Civil Rights Movement, has either been unrecorded or recorded quite negligibly. Despite their historical roles and socioeconomic difficulties, they fought for human agency to bring reforms to their society. Yule May's arrest in the novel reminds readers of the famous arrest of Rosa Parks, a civil rights activist who refused to give up her seat to a white man in Montgomery, Alabama. It is also recalled when Mae Mobley plays "Back-a-the-Bus" with her little brother Ross. Mr. Leefolt asks his daughter where she learned these games. She looks up and stares directly at Aibileen; then she tells him it was Miss Taylor, her school teacher. Mr. Leefolt goes straight to his wife, Elizabeth, and tells her to change their daughter's teacher first thing Monday morning. This incident exposes the racial hierarchy in America, specifically Jackson, Mississippi. However, in reality, this is not the only important incident of racial injustice, nor is it the most remarkable.

Kathryn Stockett also fails to depict the sexual harassment of black domestic women in the novel. Many of the real-life racial crimes of the times, like rape, are not discussed. Sexual victims, like twenty-four-year-old sharecropper Recy Taylor who was gang-raped at the age of eighteen, and Rosa Parks who was raped at the age of eighteen when she was working in the home of a white neighbour, are not given any narrative space. Slavery and sexual assault of black women by white men was as much a part of continuing white power, control, and dominance in the South as racial killing or apartheid. The only case where a black central character becomes a victim of physical violence is of Leroy, Minny's black husband, beating her almost every day. Certainly, black women were abused by their husbands at home, but Stockett fails to acknowledge the fact that black women also faced violence at the hands of white men who routinely harassed, humiliated, sexually assaulted, and abused black domestic servants who worked in white homes in the 1960s. The black maids in the novel are beaten by their husbands but never by the white men for whom they are working. *The Help* creates a utopian version of

the 1960s where domestic work is simply not that dangerous for black women. While the white employers are depicted as mean and generally irrational at times, none are physically abusive. White men never rape or never physically attack black women. In the case of Johnny and Celia, they are unequivocally friendly to Minny. The relationship between Celia and Minny is the closest thing to legitimate the idea of sisterhood in *The Help*.

Historians, in the past, have inaccurately depicted the life experiences of African American domestic workers. The atrocities of abuse and racial injustice that they had to face, as well as their acts of resistance, all have been minimally reported. ABWH objects to *The Help* on the grounds that it “distorts, ignores, and trivializes the experiences of black domestic workers” (1). African American women across Mississippi were fighting for their rights to vote and for political change. In other words, they were helping themselves in the 1960s America, the time in which the novel is set. Trena Easley Armstrong argues that Stockett’s representation of black domestic workers during the civil rights era is not surprisingly new: “Research on black domestic workers is limited and tends to focus on either the oppressive environments in which they worked or the stereotype of the happy benevolent Mammy. Both these images reflect strained relationships between the oppressed and the oppressor, and little agency to the black women”. (2)

Stockett’s portrayal of black women in *The Help* is an upsetting revival of Mammy – a mythical stereotype portraying a female black domestic worker whose job is to take care of white children. They are portrayed as strong, kind, and loyal caretakers of whites. This misrepresentation of Mammy allows the majority of America to ignore the institutional racism that confined black women to exhausting, low-paying jobs where they were regularly abused by their employers.

Instead of offering an exclusive insight into difficulties black domestic workers faced during the Pre-Civil Rights era, *The Help* unveils the intricacies of new types of white female racist paternalism. Though Stockett’s thematic viewpoint in the novel is obviously feminist, her exploitative interpretation of black women’s morality and commemoration of middle-class Victorian forms of motherhood through the myths of white innocence and updated mammy myths eventually ruins the novel. Stockett also stresses the significance of fostering white motherhood and to complete this deed, she makes Aibileen irrationally



self-sacrificing and Mae Mobley, the last child that Aibileen raised, a symbol of white innocence. Rather than showing rage, distress, or even sorrow about Mae Mobley's hostile behaviour towards her, which causes her ear to smart, Aibileen is glad that she hit her instead of her mama. Stockett creates empathy for Mae Mobley through Aibileen's distraction of the reader's gaze from her painful ear to the wounds on Mae Mobley's legs. Aibileen is portrayed as a heroic figure, not only because she sacrifices to save Mae Mobley, but because she exemplifies what white mothering is supposed to be. This urges the reader to see Mae Mobley as the only victim of violence and her violent act against Aibileen as traumatic for Mae Mobley. The innocence of Mae Mobley is Stockett's conscious white blindness to the predicament of black women. In this way, Stockett also idealizes characteristics of black domestic workers that aid the myth of white innocence. She literally praises Aibileen in the novel for being able to take a white punch from an infant with a smile. Another reason why ABWH repudiates the novel is its false depiction of black men as either abusive or absent. "We do not recognize the black community described in *The Help* where most of the black male characters are depicted as drunkards, abusive, or absent. Such distorted images are misleading and do not represent the historical realities of black masculinity and manhood." (Jones, Ida E. et al. 1)

In *The Help*, black men are shown in insignificant, non-threatening, submissive roles, and none of them are interviewed for Skeeter's project. Even the novel's brief mentions of Medgar Evers and Martin Luther King are completely insignificant in the actual story told. Additionally, these invisibilized and silenced men have limited existences, little-to-no speaking lines, one-sided and undeveloped characters, and could easily be deleted without directly affecting the plot, at least on the surface. Of course, the novel primarily focuses on women, and because black men are not the focus, existing representations are all the more important. Ultimately, black men in *The Help*, serve the purpose of perpetuating stereotypes, undermining black agency, and perpetuating white saviour figures. Stockett's contemptible portrayal of black male characters is in sharp contrast with the white male characters in the novel. Minny's husband Leroy Jackson beats her up often when he has been drinking. When Hilly's husband William Holbrook tells Leroy's boss to fire him, Leroy comes home and nearly strangles Minny with his bare hands. He throws the children in the yard, locks her in the bathroom, and threatens to set the house on fire. Stockett based Leroy's character on Clyde, Demetrie's husband. Leroy is a drunkard, abusive husband who abuses

his wife and kids every day. Minny thinks that he is very selfish but is “no fool. He knows if I’m dead, that pay check won ‘t be showing up on its own” (Stockett 130). Throughout the narrative, Stockett delineates hostile black male characters in sharp contrast with the admirable and kind white male characters who respect and love their wives. White male characters are portrayed as loyal husbands who respect their wives and never abuse their wives, verbally or physically.

Since the Civil Rights Movement, African Americans have been struggling to have equal rights and eliminate racial discrimination. The black men were underpaid and abused both verbally and physically. Stockett denies the allegiance of white males with Ku Klux Klan groups and portrays the majority of white male characters as kind-hearted, considerate, and ashamed of the white racists. She portrays Jonny Foote in a positive light, as a kind-hearted husband who loves his wife and is also kind towards his new black maid, Minny. On the other hand, the only black male character in the novel, Minny’s husband, is abusive towards his wife and beats her and the children. Stockett ignores black men’s fight for rights and the role they played in the civil rights movement. Throughout the narrative, the negative, hostile and offensive portrayal of black males is in sharp contrast to the pleasing, lovely, and praiseworthy portrayal of white males. Stockett’s depiction of the latter elicits admiration for courteous, hard-working, and faithful husbands who never abuse their wives, verbally or physically.

Johnny Foote, Celia’s husband, is portrayed as compassionate, caring, and friendly. In their work on a critical theory of race issues, Shelly P. Harrell and Ani Pezeshkian suggest that reliability, intellect, management, and idealistic appeal are among the characteristics that are credited to white men when put in contrast with people of color (2). Stockett completely ignores the fact that during the period, white males publicly stated their dominative racism, their allegiance with the Ku Klux Klan groups, and their staunch segregationist role in the Jim Crow era. She also overlooks the black men’s struggle for equality, education, a better life for their families, and the role they played in the civil rights movement. The only black male character portrayed in a positive light is Aibileen’s late son, Trelore Clark. He was writing a book narrating his personal experiences being a black man living and working in Mississippi when the tragic incident happened at work, and he died. He is the only black male character who was trying to raise his voice through his book. This could possibly be the reason for his early death because a person

with such talents and capabilities threatens the stability of the whites' hierarchical system and is a cause of concern for the whites with his subversive ideas. Ironically, the positive portrayal of Treelore turns out to be beneficial for the white protagonist of the novel, rather than the African Americans, as she steals his idea for her personal advantage. Talented black male characters with latent qualities and abilities, who can threaten white supremacy and challenge the status quo, are absent in white saviour fiction.

Though Stockett in *The Help* introduces three first-person narrators: Aibileen, Minny, and Skeeter, Wallace-Sanders argues that "the chapters written from Aibileen's or Minny's points of view reflect little of their own inner lives as black women or as working mothers" (69). *The Help* demonstrates precisely the same conventional image of black motherhood that is observed in many of the southern plantation novels from the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth-century, that idealize the relationship between black women and white children. In them, black mothers are so devoted to the white children that their own kids subside to a point where they are almost invisible. This is evident in *The Help*, where Aibileen is so strongly in love with Mae Mobley that her own son Treelore diminishes into the background. There are only nine references to Treelore and seventy-nine references to Mae Mobley, whom Aibileen calls "my baby". The novel begins with Aibileen's lengthy recollection of her first days with Mae Mobley. She loves Mae Mobley, the newest child in the Leefolt's family, as the reader can see by the kindness with which she speaks to her and all the extra care and time she gives to her.

But Aibileen had a child of her own once. It is not until after seven paragraphs that Aibileen discusses the loss of Treelore. However, it is interesting to note that Treelore is only given one paragraph to Mae Mobley's seven— foregrounding Aibileen's role as a servant to white families, all the while diminishing her role in her own family. There are seventy-nine references to Mae Mobley in the novel and just nine references to Treelore. Minny is also seen mentoring and looking after Celia Foote but never kids of her own: Leroy Junior, Benny, Felicia, Sugar, and Kindra. Sugar is a maid, just like her mother. When Sugar makes fun of Celia the day after Benefit at home, Minny smacks her, yanks her into a corner, and tells her she is never to speak ill about the lady who helps provide her with food and clothes. Sugar nods and goes back to work, muttering that Minny does it all the time. The only time Kindra is mentioned in the novel is when there is news about a sit-in, and

the children begin to have a conversation about it. Kindra, is upset and openly expresses her anger and frustration. Leroy hits her and instructs all the children to keep their mouths shut outside the house, or it might land them into trouble. Minny is depicted as not being very maternal to her own children, but she is extremely maternal to Celia. Unlike Aibileen, Minny has a family of her own to look after but is only seen cooking and cleaning for many different white families outside her home every day while details of her inner life as a black working woman/mother remain missing.

Near the end of the novel, Skeeter recalls her own relationship with Constantine Jefferson, Skeeter's maid, who raised her in her childhood. Skeeter begins to wonder why Constantine left their family and doubts the veracity of the story her mother Charlotte Phelan told her that Constantine chose to go live with her family in Chicago. Instead, Skeeter discovers that her mother fired Constantine after she failed to send her daughter Lulabelle Bates, a Negro pretending to be white, to the back door during Charlotte's important meeting with the all-white Daughters of the American Revolution. Charlotte forbids Constantine to have her daughter in the house of which Mister Phelan is paying rent. Constantine had to choose, and she chose her daughter. Skeeter now knows there is no redemption for her mother in this story. Charlotte Phelan never wanted Constantine to leave and never thought she would go, but she did. Three weeks after moving to Chicago, she died. Charlotte Phelan did not tell Skeeter because she knew Skeeter would blame her when it was not her fault. This indicates how the white saviour is presented as the one who fights for blacks' survival and agency. Black characters are portrayed as always in need of this saviour as they may simply shrivel up and die in his absence.

Tikenya Foster-Singletary critically analyses all the problems in *The Help* and asserts that it is the representation of a number of events and stereotyping of black characters that makes the division between black and white people even bigger (99). For instance, Minny is described in the book as a symbol of wild blackness. She has a reputation for having a big mouth. "She is too much – too much woman to be a lady, too much mouth for a maid, too black for her own good" (Stockett 100). Her opinionated and outspoken manner has gotten her fired from several jobs. This stereotypical description makes her different from Skeeter and other white characters in the novel. Stockett writes from an ethnocentric

viewpoint, which can be seen in her portrayals of Minny and Aibileen, as well as in her choice of Skeeter as heroine.

In short, the novel, on the surface level, is a critique of the imperialist nature of white society. However, in attempting to subvert the status quo, it ends up recapitulating the superiority of Whites as ultimate saviours. The formula, commonly described as “white man enters into scene and saves ‘savages’ from exterior threat through intelligence or strength granted to him seemingly by virtue of his whiteness,” is undoubtedly present within *The Help* and much of American fiction (Fitzgerald 82.) Instead of questioning and objecting to the racial hierarchy that honours whites and white narratives about the civil rights movement, *The Help* functions to conceal the violent nature of race relations in the 1960s and overlooks the bitterness and hatred that the black women had to face from their white counterparts despite their genuine concern. Assuming that the racial chaos happening in schools, on busses, and in the streets of Jackson did not pervade the homes and relationships of black domestics is problematic. *The Help* as an all-embracing narrative, in which black women and a white woman work together to expose the racist community of Jackson and the stories of black maids, only serves as a background for recreating white supremacy and black submission.

### Works Cited

- Armstrong, Trena Easley. "The Hidden Help: Black Domestic Workers in the Civil Rights Movement." ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository 46 (2012):1-134. JSTOR.
- Fitzgerald, Michael Ray. "The White Savior and His Junior Partner: The Lone Ranger and Tonto on Cold War Television (1949-1957)." *The Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 46, no. 1, 2013, pp. 79–108, doi:10.1111/jpcu.12017.
- Foster-Singletary, Tikenya. "Dirty South: The Help and the Problem of Black Bodies." *Southern Quarterly* 49.4 (2012): 95-107.
- Harrell, Shelly P. and Ani Pezeshkian. "Critical Race Theory." *Encyclopedia of Counseling*. Ed.
- Frederick T. Leong. Vol. 1. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.,2008. 1072-1078. SAGE Knowledge, doi: 10.4135/9781412963978.n347.
- Hughey, Matthew W. *The White Savior Film: Content, Critics, and Consumption*. Temple University Press, 2014.
- Jones, Ida E. et al. "An Open Statement to the Fans of The Help." Association of Black Women Historians, 14 Oct. 2017, [truth.abwh.org/2011/08/12/an-open-statement-to-the-fans-of-the-help/](http://truth.abwh.org/2011/08/12/an-open-statement-to-the-fans-of-the-help/).
- Mchaney, Pearl. "Kathryn Stockett's Postmodern First Novel." *Southern Cultures*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2014, pp. 77–92, doi:10.1353/scu.2014.0005.
- Stockett, Kathryn. *The Help*. Penguin Essentials, 2016.
- Talib, Ismail S. *The Language of Postcolonial Literatures an Introduction*. New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Vera, Hernan, and Andrew Gordon. *Screen Saviors: Hollywood Fictions of Whiteness*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003.
- Wallace-Sanders, Kimberly. "Every Child Left Behind: The Many Invisible Children in The Help." *Southern Cultures*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2014, pp. 65–76, doi:10.1353/scu.2014.0004.
- Weedon, Chris. *Identity and Culture. Narratives of Difference and Belonging*. London: MPG books Ltd, 2004.