

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

White Trash (extended: poor white trash; acronym: ‘WT’) is a racial epithet usually used to describe certain low income Caucasians and also the descent of mix marriage (Indian, Cherokee, nigger etc) especially those perceive as having crude manners or abnormally low moral standards. According to Oxford English Dictionary, “White Trash” first came into common use in the 1830s as an American pejorative used by slaves of “gentlemen” (rich white Southerners, often plantation aristocrats) against poor Caucasians who work in the field. The term involves both behavioral characteristics (such as mannerisms, lifestyle) and overt racial characteristics (whiteness). The term is widely used in the American South and Midwest.http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_Trash.

But today, the use of White Trash is connected with lower - class white people and their situations, in which a lot of people often assume that the children from White Trash family are born illegitimately and closely related to incest. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_Trash) Then, White Trash are always put in the marginal side of the society, and it can be seen as an act of repression from the society towards that particular group.

However, there is nobody who knows and understands how actually White Trash live, feel, want, and hope except the White Trash themselves and this is exactly what the novel *Bastard Out of Carolina* is about. The protagonist in *Bastard Out of Carolina* tells the way she lives as a White Trash, since she was born in extreme poor condition in South Carolina. The protagonist's life represents the life of Dorothy Allison, the author of *Bastard out of Carolina*.

In analyzing this novel, I will use Post-Colonial approach. This approach is chosen because actually the term 'White Trash' is considered the impact of British colonization over America. The colonization happened in the form of obligation to pay taxes to the British Empire and they became the British subject. Under the colonization, the original settlers in America did not segregate because all puritans, pilgrims, artisans and farmers who migrated to America shared the same sentiment to be free from the British Empire.

'From the beginning, the Puritans thrived in their establishment of Massachusetts Bay Colony. New settlers continued to come, and most immigrants were part of a family unit and trained artisans and farmers. These factors provided the means to establish economically viable communities comprised of families who considered Massachusetts Bay as an opportunity to put down roots and begin a new life for themselves and their children.'
(<http://www.ceritos.edu/soliver/American%20Identities/making%20British%20america/Ne...>).

After the Independence Day, some settlers became successful people on the new land but some did not. Finally, the society were divided into two groups, the rich and the poor. This segregation is seen as the impact of colonization because it is made possible only after the independence from British rule. The term 'White Trash' is stamped on the poor group and along with the term, the stereotypes also appear. The fact that White Trash is oppressed by the white reflects the past experience

when all white Americans are still colonized by British Empire. Therefore, I can say that both the appearance of White Trash and the oppression they experience are the impact of British colonization.

Allison's effort to reveal the good values of White Trash is considered Post-Colonial's attempt to raise the position of White Trash. Allison does this action in order to make White trash regain their voice and identity.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problems which I would like to analyze are :

1. How does the author of *Bastard Out of Carolina* portray the life of White Trash?
2. To what extent are these portrayals seen as Post-Colonialist attempt to counter attack the stereotypes of White Trash?

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

I would like to show :

1. How the author of *Bastard Out of Carolina* portrays the life of White Trash.
2. To what extent these portrayals are seen as Post-Colonialist attempt to counter-attack the stereotypes of White Trash.

1.4 METHOD OF RESEARCH

The method of research used is library research. I begin my research by reading the primary text, *Bastard Out of Carolina* by Dorothy Allison. Then I continue by reading several books and works of critics that can be used to support the research. I also gather some information from internet. Then I choose the

important data that have been gathered and use them to help me in completing my research.

1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

I present this thesis in three chapter, starts with Preface, Table of Content and Abstract then followed by chapter One which is the introduction that contains Background of the Study, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research and Organization of the Thesis. In chapter Two, I present the Analysis of Portrayal of White Trash in *Bastard Out of Carolina* seen as Post-Colonialist attempts to counter-attack The Stereotypes respectively. The last one is Chapter Three, the conclusion of the thesis. And this thesis ends with the Bibliography, which presents the list of references and various sources that have been used in writing the thesis, and the Appendices, which present the synopsis of *Bastard Out of Carolina* and the biography of the author.