

Social Imbalance and Seclusion in Delores Phillips's *The Darkest Child*

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Abstract

This paper aims to bring out the element of 'Segregation' in *The Darkest Child* by Delores Phillips. Racial Segregation was one of the major events that happened after the emancipation of slaves in America. The black people in different parts of America who were given freedom were forced to move to certain areas that were being allotted for them to live. The American society didn't consider the black people as equals, and they made a distinction between them and the blacks in every way possible. This study focuses on the life of the black people who were demeaned and deprived of all opportunities during the time of segregation.

Keywords: segregation, discrimination, African American, Negroes, white people

Segregation in other words can be called as 'Jim Crow Laws' which were introduced as 'Black Codes in postcolonial America. The word 'Jim Crow Laws' comes from a character that was played by Thomas Dartmouth Rice in the play "Blackface Minstrelsy". The character 'Jim Crow' was represented as a buffoon, which heightened the negative stereotypes of African Americans, and the word 'Jim Crow' became a derogatory word to represent the black people. After Emancipation Proclamation the African American people were subjected to a set of codes named as the 'Black Codes'. The Black Codes were enacted to replace the social controls of slavery that had been removed by the Emancipation Proclamation. The main objective of this law was to control the African Americans and continue White supremacy. These set of rules or laws forced the black people to remain under the rule of the whites even though they were free.

Racial segregation was the main objective of Jim Crow Laws, the word "segregation" means to set something or someone apart from others. In the Southern part of the United States the African American people were forced to move to certain areas that were allotted for them to live. They were not allowed to attend the schools that the white children went to, not allowed to drink in public water fountains. They weren't allowed to get respectable jobs in the society, they were seen as less and not equal to the white people. Each and every public space from parks to transportation, restaurants and many other places had a distinction mentioned as 'for colored people'. These rules and regulations made the Black people secluded from the White people and they were discouraged and demeaned in every part of their life.

The novel *The Darkest Child* by Delores Phillips is set during the time period of segregation in Pakersfield, Georgia in 1958. The novel traces the social condition of the African Americans during the time of segregation. The novel revolves around the family of Rozelle Quinn and her children and about their social condition and how they are affected by