

”crick crack monkey” by merle hodge essay sample

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



Merle Hodge was born in the year 1944 in Calcutta Settlement, Trinidad.. She attended both Primary and High School in Trinidad. As a student of Bishop Anstey's High School, where she earned a Trinidad and Tobago Girls island scholarship in the year 1962. Having the scholarship allowed to go to University College, London, where she studied French. Merle spent a lot of time traveling spending most of her time in France and Denmark also visiting many countries on the eastern and western part of Europe. She returned to Trinidad in the 1970's where she taught French at a junior secondary level. She also earned a lecturing spot in the French Department at the University of the West Indies, Jamaica. There she began to work at earning a PhD in French Caribbean Literature. She is now at the time working in the field of Women and Development studies at the University of the West Indies, Trinidad. She has also written two where novels, the first 'Crick Crack Monkey' (1970) and the second 'The life of Laetitia' (1993).

Book Summary

Crick Crack Monkey is a book based on a girl named Tee who experiences two different classes of life. The first a low class life with her Tantie and the second a middle class life with her Aunt Beatrice. It tells of the struggles she encountered in trying to remember and balance the foundational values and cultural beliefs of her low class with her new middle class values and beliefs.

Setting

The story is set in the country Trinidad where Tee grows up on the country side, (low class society). Tee and her family are not rich but live in a house where beds have to be shared and the food is not fancy. There is also the middle class society around.

Major Characters and Description

TEE

Tee was a young black girl from African Descendants. Tee was always filled with thought and curiosity as she observed the people and their ways in her environment. She was a girl filled with joy and was always full of anticipation for things to happen in the future. Tee loved her family and those around her especially her Tantie, whatever challenge Tee had to face she always stuck through it and pursued her goal.

Tantie

Tantie was an aggressive and boisterous woman who knew who she was and stood up for what she believed in. Tantie was not afraid to speak her mind and was not ashamed of her cultural beliefs and values. Most people feared Tantie because her behavior was unpredictable. For those who Tantie well will know that deep inside she was a woman of care and love for everybody.

Aunt Beatrice

Aunt Beatrice was a woman of class, very pompous and believed in a life where everything should be done perfectly and foreign like. Aunt Beatrice was a slight racial woman in how she criticized the lower class blacks in their way of life. She herself was a fair skinned woman who did not have much control over her family, and when things did not go right she would easily get upset or frustrated.

Plot

The major conflict of the whole story was basically how Aunt Beatrice and Tantie battle to gain authorization to take care of Tee and Toddan. Tee in the story experiences two different worlds of life and coming from a low class society, she struggles to fit in a middle class society. In the end both she and her brother end up traveling to England to live with their father.

Major Theme

A comparison between the lower class and middle class is seen through the eyes of a child. She compared schools, with the situation with Sir and also the one with Mrs. Wattman. She also compared the families and how Tee's family interacted nicely as opposed from Aunt Beatrice who she couldn't handle. Then she compared how the people interacted. Tantie's friends will come over to drink but with Aunt Beatrice, friends will come for tea to interact.