

I people, specifically black people, should strive

[Art & Culture](#), [Artists](#)



I will explicate Hughes's interpretation of the Negroartist's background and identity to elucidate his analysis of how the racialmountain stands in the way of true Negro art (91).

The firstinterpretation Hughes holds regarding the Negro artists is this notion that the socioeconomic status of the black family plays a significant role in thevarying views towards the black society (91). As Hughes examines the racialmountain, the obstacles and struggles Negro artists have to climb in order tobe comfortable in their own skin and be successful as a true artist, hescrutinizes why a Negro poet would wish to be something he was not, a whiteman. In the black middle class household, where said black poet grows up, theidea of being black carries the heavy weight of several negative connotations, where sayings like " don't be like niggers" becomes a common teaching. The Negroartists Hughes critiques knows nothing but that of white culture as he is apart of the black middle class family where the black father and mother workrespectable jobs for rich white folks, the children go to mixed race schools, and the family partakes in white culture when at home by reading white papersand magazine (91). Does assimilating into white culture, going to a whiteschool and reading white based material, have an impact on the way blacks inthe middle class view being black and the culture that is expressed in art? Thepoet's desire to be a white poet rather than being a Negro poet derives fromhis upbringing, where being " white" is constantly being reinforced as somethingpeople, specifically black people, should strive towards being. When the blackcommunity instills the idea that black children should perform in a way thatwould allow them to be

acknowledged by white society, they reinforce the idea that Negro artists should not be proud to identify as being black, even if they wish to do so.

One cannot climb this racial mountain when they surround themselves with conflicting views of their own culture from other black people. Views that do not necessarily allow black people to view themselves as neither beautiful nor worthy compared to the Caucasian patterns (91). Being raised in this particular environment forms several self-hatred notions for the Negro artists about the black race. The next interpretation Hughes makes signifies the desire Negro artists subconsciously hold to be white (91).

This consists of Negro artists favoring white culture as beautiful and worthy, while being ashamed of his culture and people, which he never views in the same respect that he does the white culture. When Hughes addresses the mentality the Negro artist applies towards being black, he criticizes the notion of the artist disapproving his own identity not only as a poet but also as a black man. When being black is seen as the opposite of beauty and morality, how can the art created by Negro artists be beautiful and true (91)? Hughes speaks of an artist that seems to never have had the opportunity to comprehend how beautiful and unique every culture is, especially the black culture.

Instead he learns to be ashamed of being black and compromising creating true black art. This poet does not learn to see the beauty in him or the black race. Black children consistently observe the white race being associated with beauty, morality, and money (91). If all they, black children, observe is white people and white culture being praised for being white, why would they not

wish they were of the white race too? A Negro artist, who learns that higher value and worth is placed upon white people, will never be able to accept and value their identity as a black man. For a Negro artist, black art cannot be seen as aesthetically beautiful when black people and culture are seen as otherwise. Therefore, this racial mountain the Negro artist must climb, will continue to be an obstacle for the Negro artist if they cannot accept and be comfortable with being black. This idea of racial self-hatred because an important theme through this paragraph.