

Growing up in the midst of class and gender woes in coetzees boyhood

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



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The paper " Growing Up in the Midst of Class and Gender Woes in Coetzee's Boyhood" is a worthy example of a book review on English.

While autobiographical, Coetzee's Boyhood is written in the third-person perspective and has fictional aspects because Coetzee plays with the notion of time. The book focuses on the thirteenth to sixteenth ages of his life, the first years of his troubled teenage existence. The book reveals, not just his family history, but the intimate interaction between his racial and gender identity and the South African history.

The book explores his racial and gender identity development. Coetzee witnessed and contributed to racial division in South Africa. Because he is part of the minority, his Afrikaaner classmates made fun of him and discriminated against him. Coetzee initially thought that the Afrikaaners were indeed inferior to Europeans until Trevelyan flogged the seven-year-old colored boy, Eddie, an Afrikaaner who taught Coetzee to ride a bike. Coetzee sees passivity as his sin, and that everyone else who was passive to South African social injustices was also guilty of the promotion of social stratification. Furthermore, Coetzee experienced sexual development. He felt attracted to the handsome and tall Rob Hart and his violent behaviors. He also found pleasure in looking at the legs of the Afrikaaners whom he found as having perfect legs that express nothing. These sexual attitudes haunted him as he searched for his sexual identity. During this time, Coetzee also witnessed the extreme love and sacrifices of his mother for him. He believed her love carried a debt that he had to pay.

Boyhood is as much as about the personhood of South Africa as it is about the boyhood of Coetzee. It is a biography about human life and minority

youth in the middle of class, race, and gender conflicts. Coetzee leaves readers thinking of the hardships of a boy that his socially divided society shapes.