

Student Essay on Beloved

Beloved by Toni Morrison

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Contents

Student Essay on Beloved.....	1
Contents.....	2
Essay.....	3

Essay

When Toni Morrison makes the statement "if you are going to hold someone down, you're going to have to hold onto the other end of the chain. You are confined by your own system of repression." In the pre-civil war Negroes were physical slaves in that they were held as property by their masters, in the post civil-war they were physically free but became slaves to their memories.

In the years before the civil war all Negroes were the physical property of someone. Even when they were freed through being bought by someone they still had no rights an example of this is Baby Suggs. She was bought through the efforts of her son Halle for five years of Sundays, but when the school teacher came looking for Sethe he just went on her property and did what ever he wanted to do and there was nothing that Baby Suggs could do about it. In most cases most Negroes were whipped for just about anything that fancied his/her master. Sethe was brutally raped and had all her milk taken out of her breasts by the white boys from sweet home and nothing was ever done about that. When Paul D. makes the statement "If a Negro got legs he ought to use them. Sit down too long, somebody will figure out a way to tie them up."(10) This shows that all male slaves should run if they get a chance because if they don't someone will put the chains of slavery onto them.

In the post-civil war era Negroes became the slaves to their memories this was most evident in Paul D. he claimed that "his heart and emotions were put in a tin box that had rusted shut"