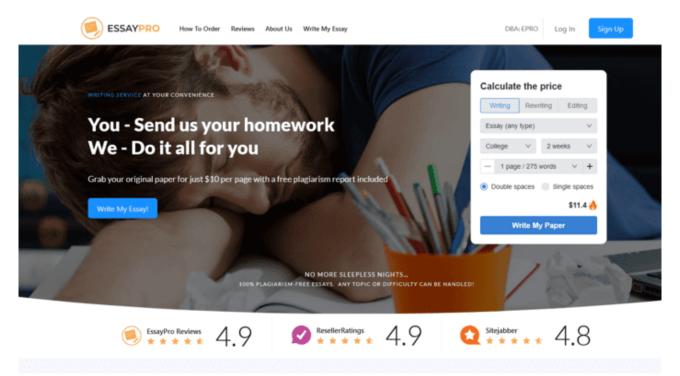
On the Backs of Blacks and Sorrowful Black Death Is Not a Hot Ticket



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On the Backs of Blacks and Sorrowful Black Death Is Not a Hot Ticket
In both Toni Morrison's "On the backs of blacks" and bell hooks' "Sorrowful Black Death Is Not a Hot Ticket" the authors attempt to analyze the role and treatment of blacks in motion pictures. Morrison's essay deals with what she calls "race talk", and defines as "the explicit insertion into everyday life of racial signs and symbols that have no meaning other than pressing African Americans to the lowest level racial hierarchy" (Morrison, 1993). Hooks' essay similarly analyses the issue of death for blacks in movies to which she concludes "that there can be no serious representation of death and dying when the characters are African-Americans." (hooks) In both these essays there are huge errors made in their thinking, and their analyzation.
Hooks, in her opening <u>paragraphs</u> attempts to compare the portrayal of black vs. white death in films. In her comparison she blows all future credibility with critical readers by using examples that obviously don't have any baring on the point she is trying to make. The example she gives for a white death is that of Tom <u>Hank</u> 's character in Philadelphia, a

homosexual lawyer with AIDS who had taken his firm to court because of their bad treatment towards him because of his disease. For this case she points out that "even before tickets are brought and seats are taken, everyone knows that tears are in order." (hooks) Hooks then goes on to explain that "There is no grief, no remembrance" for the deaths of blacks. She uses the film The bodyguard for her example of black death, citing the scene where "the sister of Rachel Marron (Whitney Houston) is accidentally assassinated by the killer she has hired" to kill her own sister (Hooks). These two examples have nothing in common. The character in Philadelphia deserved sympathy when he died because he was treated unfairly for a condition he had no control of. The character in The Bodyguard neither deserved nor received recognition for one reason. It had nothing to do with her blackness, that was a non-issue, it was because she was a murderer who in an ironic twist was murdered by the assassin she had hired.

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