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“The Source of Their Personal Misfortune”: How the Dangerously Free Character Is a Repercussion of Conformity in *Sula*

This capstone project analyzes the dangerously free character in Toni Morrison’s *Sula* and how the character is a result of societal conformity. The dangerously free character is a character created by Morrison who experiences no repercussions for their actions and is a result of a lack of love and nurturing during their childhood after suffering traumatic events. Morrison creates the character to demonstrate how societal pressure can turn a community against someone who needs the community’s help. In *Sula*, the titular character Sula develops into a dangerously free character after a traumatic experience in her childhood and a lack of familial or community support after that experience, because of societal pressure for women to repress emotions. Discussing the dangerously free character is opening a conversation about Morrison’s works to include another aspect of how society could improve. By using black feminist theorists including Barbara Smith and Audre Lorde, as well as postmodern theorist Michel Foucault, the project examines the dangerously free character by looking at the power structure of society and how that harms a dangerous individual within Morrison’s literature.