

Table of Contents

Introduction

General Overview

Primary Texts

Short Story

Selected Pieces for Performance

Essays

Edited collections and forewords

Interviews

Biographical Material

Critical Studies

Essay Collections on Two or More Morrison texts, 1980s and 1990s

Essay Collections on Two or More Morrison texts since 2000

Monographs on Two or More Morrison texts

1980s

1990s

2000s

Since 2010

Articles and chapters on Two or More Morrison texts

Essay collections and monographs on single novels

Song of Solomon

Beloved

Jazz

Paradise

A Mercy

Articles and chapters on single novels

The Bluest Eye, Song of Solomon and Tar Baby

Beloved

Jazz

Paradise

Love

A Mercy and Home

Articles and chapters on performance pieces

Scholarship that compares Morrison with other authors

With James Baldwin

With William Faulkner

With miscellaneous authors

Thematic Studies

West African Traditions

Classical (Greek and Roman) Traditions

Disability

Motherhood

Music

Native American Culture

Miscellaneous topics

Adaptations of Morrison's Work for Screen and Stage

Analysis of and Materials for Teaching Toni Morrison

Festschriften / Tributes / Retrospectives

Reference Works and Bibliographies

Introduction

Toni Morrison (b. 18th February, 1931), winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1993, is the author of eleven novels to date. Born in Lorain, Ohio to working class parents, and the first member of her family to graduate from college (Howard University in 1953), it is a striking paradox that her own life in some ways embodies the kind of "American dream" that both her novels and she herself call into question. Her best-known work is *Beloved* (1987; Pulitzer Prize 1988), but she is also acclaimed for

The Bluest Eye (1970) and *Song of Solomon* (1977), both regularly taught at high schools in the U.S.A. She has been championed in popular spheres such as Oprah's Book Club while at the same time she attracts a vast following of scholars, who are drawn to the pertinence of her political engagement, the original beauty of her language and narrative technique, and the rewarding difficulty of novels such as *Jazz* (1992) and *A Mercy* (2008). She is a noted literary critic in her own right, and her study of blackness in classic American literature by white authors, *Playing in the Dark* (1992), has had a lasting influence on the ways texts of all kinds are analysed and taught. As this article documents, she is also the author of a number of paradigm-shifting essays, a short story, several pieces for performance (both sole- and co-authored), and numerous children's books. Her Nobel Prize acceptance speech is itself a masterpiece, outlining her belief in the radical power of literature to challenge the dominant culture. Her novels, which together examine African American history through representations of individual lives that are both psychologically detailed and aesthetically experimental, epitomizes that radical power. They have been translated into around thirty languages, and she is studied across the globe from Japan to France, where she was awarded the *Legion D'Honneur* in 2010. Beloved by Barack Obama, in recent years she has become something of a celebrity public intellectual, often called upon to articulate her always-astute analysis of the realities of racial politics in the U.S.A. (and across the world). Scholars increasingly acknowledge the significance of her oeuvre as a major cultural intervention, and as a serious, enduring contribution to global intellectual thought.

General Overviews

These range from brief but useful assessments within larger studies (Hill 2011 or Mobley 2004) to more in-depth discussions of Morrison's life, work and the critical field (for example Goulimari 2011). The drawback to any overview of a living author is that it quickly becomes out of date or incomplete as Morrison continues to publish novels and non-fiction; none of the studies discussed here cover the novel *God Help the Child* (2015), for example. This does not invalidate the usefulness of relatively early studies, however, such as Matus 1998 or Kubitschek 1998. The second of these two contains a detailed summary of each plot, whereas the first, in its comparatively in-depth discussions, assumes prior knowledge of each novel. Roynon 2012 gives an overview of the critical field which Smith 2012 does not, but Smith's perspective on African American culture and her discussion of the writing for children is not replicated anywhere else. Terry 2005 invaluable positions the first 25 years of scholarship on Morrison within broader theoretical movements.

Goulimari, Pelagia. *Toni Morrison*. New York: Routledge, 2011.

Longest, most detailed overview of Morrison's novels, up to *A Mercy*, and the key non-fiction. Useful account of Morrison's life interspersed with its historical context. Includes detailed close readings of key moments in the novels alongside comparison with other writers across the cultural spectrum. Discusses selected criticism thematically and from a range of theoretical perspectives, in relation to each novel. Useful bibliography.

Hill, Michael. "Toni Morrison and the Post-Civil Rights American Novel." In *The Cambridge Companion to the American Novel*. Edited by Leonard Cassuto, 1064, 83. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Reads Morrison as the pre-eminent African American novelist since 1970. Eschews comprehensive survey in favour of invaluable analyses of the first 5 novels in relation to numerous contemporaneous black American novelists and aesthetic/political movements (such as Black Arts). Includes only one sentence on *Jazz* and nothing on the novels that postdate this.

Kubitschek, Missy Denn. *Toni Morrison: A Critical Companion*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1998.

Standard overview of the first 7 novels, including a short but clear discussion of the narrative technique and plot of each novel. Invaluable for its comprehensive list of newspaper and magazine reviews of each novel (from *The Bluest Eye* to *Paradise*) on pages 189-92.

Matus, Jill. *Toni Morrison*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998.

Clear, detailed and highly readable overview of Morrison's first 6 novels, with a postscript on *Paradise*. Chapters present a 'discussion of themes and technique without any overt summary of the plot. Chronology of Morrison's life and the bibliography are rigorous and useful up to the year of the book's publication.

Mobley McKenzie, Marilyn. "Spaces for Readers: The Novels of Toni Morrison." *The Cambridge Companion to the African American Novel*. Edited by Maryemma Graham, 221-32. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Overview of the novels from *The Bluest Eye* to *Paradise* that emphasizes the texts' insistence on an active, creative role for the reader in the collaborative construction of meaning.

Roynon, Tessa. *The Cambridge Introduction to Toni Morrison*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Clearly-written overview of novels from *The Bluest Eye* to *A Mercy*, besides discussion of non-fiction that is extensive relative to comparable works. Includes overview of the main contexts with which Morrison's work engages, and of the critical field.

Smith, Valerie. *Toni Morrison: Writing the Moral Imagination*. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

Relatively brief (136 page) but engaged survey. Around ten pages of commentary on each of the first nine novels (longer on *Beloved*); five pages as an epilogue on *Home*. No discrete section on criticism, but footnotes do cite a range of critics, particularly leading African-American scholars such as Wall and Fultz. List of further reading.

Terry, Jenny. "Reading Toni Morrison Critically." *Literature Compass* 2.1 (2005): np.

Succinct overview of critical approaches to Morrison up to the year of this article's publication, illuminating her position in relation to the shifting parameters of American African American, postcolonial and transatlantic studies. Useful for undergraduates and those new to these fields.

Primary Texts

Morrison's 11 novels (to date) are all in print and widely available in paperback. Not included in the annotated citations here, they are: *The Bluest Eye* (1970); *Sula* (1973); *Song of Solomon* (1977); *Tar Baby* (1981); *Beloved* (1987); *Jazz* (1992); *Paradise* (1988); *Love* (2003); *A Mercy* (2008); *Home* (2012) and *God Help the Child* (2015). Between 2004 and 2014 Vintage published editions of all the novels up to *Love* featuring somewhat controversial 'new forewords' by Morrison herself. In terms of non-fiction, her 1992 work of literary criticism, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* is widely available, as is her brilliant introduction to the Oxford edition of *Huckleberry Finn* (1996). The annotated selection below includes Morrison's only published short story, "Recitatif," selected performance pieces in which she worked collaboratively, and her most significant essays. It is essential to note that those essays listed here individually (for example 'Home', 1992) are ones of crucial importance that are not reprinted in the 'selected nonfiction,' *What Moves at the Margin*, published in 2008. Morrison's books for children (such as *Who's Got Game? The Ant or the Grasshopper* (2003)) are not listed here but are helpfully discussed in Smith 2012.

Short Story

"Recitatif," Morrison's only published short story, first appeared in an important collection called *Confirmation: An Anthology of African American Women*, edited by Amiri Baraka and Amina Baraka (New York: Morrow, 1983). This is now out of print. Scholarly discussion of the story is relatively rare but can be found in Fultz 2003, King and Scott 2006, and *MELUS* 36.2 (2011).

Morrison, Toni. "Recitatif." In *Leaving Home: Stories*. Edited by Hazel Rochman and Darlene Z. Campbell, 201-228. New York: HarperCollins, 1998.

The story's two young female protagonists, Twyla and Roberta, are different from each other in every way including their 'race', but Morrison never specifies these identities. The story is also about gender, memory and shame.

Selected Pieces for Performance

Morrison has written lyrics for a range of works including the little-known musical, *District Storyville* (with music by Sidney Bechet). The same lyrics were set to different music by André Previn and recorded on his album, *Honey and Rue*. Morrison also wrote a play called *Dreaming Emmett* in 1983-84. A response to the 1955 murder of Emmett Till, this was performed in Albany, N.Y. (directed by Gilbert Moses) in 1986 but was never published and the script is currently not available to the public. Annotated here are Morrison's best-known collaborative pieces for performance – the libretto for the opera *Margaret Garner*, and the script of *Desdemona*.

Morrison, Toni. Libretto for *Margaret Garner: An Opera in Two Acts*. Rev. ed., New York: Associated Music, 2004.

Morrison wrote the words (libretto) for a score by Richard Danielpour. Re-imagining the life and family of the historical woman who was the inspiration for the infanticidal Sethe in *Beloved*, it premiered in the Michigan Opera Theatre, Detroit, on May 7, 2005.

Morrison, Toni and Rokia Traoré. *Desdemona*. London: Oberon Books, 2012.

Premiered in Vienna on 15 May 2011. Collaboration between Morrison, who wrote the spoken text, the Malian singer-songwriter Rokia Traoré, who wrote the songs (and performed them as Barbary) and theater director Peter Sellars. Stages a conversation between Othello's wife, Desdemona, and Barbary, who is interpreted (from a line in the 'Willow song' scene of Shakespeare's play) as both an African slave and Desdemona's childhood nurse or nanny.

Essays

Morrison's nonfiction is every bit as significant as her fiction. Many of her essays on African American culture and literature and on American politics and society are collected in *What Moves at the Margin* (Morrison 2008). This anthology includes a reprinting of the Nobel Prize acceptance lecture of 1993. Key essays not collected therein are listed separately here.

Morrison, Toni. *What Moves at the Margin: Selected Nonfiction*. Edited by Carolyn Denard. Jackson, Miss.: University of Mississippi Press, 2008.

Invaluable collection of some of the most important essays. Includes pieces from 1970s, as well as "Rootedness" (1984) and "The Site of Memory" (1987). Second part contains Morrison's fascinating reviews/forewords on other writers (e.g. James Baldwin; Henry Dumas). Essential reading for any serious understanding of Morrison at advanced high school level and above.

Morrison, Toni. "City Limits, Village Values: Concepts of the Neighborhood in Black Fiction." In *Literature and the American Urban Experience: Essays on the City and Literature*. Edited by Michael C. Jayne and Ann Chalmers Watts, 35-44. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981.

Fascinating essay, not anthologized elsewhere, about black autobiography versus white, and the importance of the ancestor and the neighbourhood/community in black culture and hence black literature.

Morrison, Toni. "Unspeakable Things Unspoken: The Afro-American Presence in American Literature." In *Within the Circle: An Anthology of African American Literary Criticism from the Harlem Renaissance to the Present*. Edited by Angelyn Mitchell, 368-98. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1994.

Originally published in the *Michigan Quarterly Review* in 1989. One of Morrison's most important essays. Combines analysis of her own novels from *The Bluest Eye* to *Beloved* with incisive, paradigm-shifting observations about canonicity, intertextuality, the work of Martin Bernal and the relationship between her own work and Greek tragedy.

Morrison, Toni. "Home." In *The House that Race Built: Black Americans, U.S. Terrain*. Edited by Wahneema Lubiano, 3-12. New York: Pantheon, 1997.

Essential reading for all those interested in Morrison. Implicitly sets out a manifesto of her project as a writer – to “transform” the racist “house” of dominant American culture into a more accommodating, race-specific but non-racist “home.” Not to be confused with her 2012 novel of the same title, *Home*.

Edited Collections and/or Forewords

Morrison has been involved in editing anthologies and in writing introductions and forewords to them throughout her career. Particularly noteworthy is *The Black Book* (Harris 2009). This is a collection of historical articles, photographs, songs, slave posters and so on that Morrison helped to compile as a young editor at Random House and which left a lasting impression on her, not least for the article “A Visit to the Slave Mother who Killed her Child,” by P.S. Bassett in 1856 (10), the account of Margaret Garner which was the inspiration for *Beloved*. Equally interesting is the Van der Zee et al. 1978 project, which contains the photograph and interview which were to become the inspiration for Dorcas in *Jazz*. Morrison went on to display her acuity as a social commentator and public intellectual in her introductions to the essay collections she edited on the Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas controversy (Morrison 1992) and on the trial of O.J. Simpson (Morrison 1997). Her later introduction to *Ban this Book* (Morrison 2009) is brief but forceful.

Harris, Middleton, ed. *The Black Book*. New York: Random House, 2009.

First published in 1974, now widely available in its 35th anniversary edition, with a bespoke foreword by Morrison. Essential reading for those interested in the influence of African American material culture on Morrison’s work.

Morrison, Toni, ed. *Race-ing Justice, En-gendering Power: Essays on Anita Hill, Clarence Thomas and the Construction of Social Reality*. New York: Pantheon 1992.

Major cultural critics analyze the workings of language, representation, law and power in the confirmation of Thomas to the Supreme Court, in 1991, amid Hill’s allegations of sexual harassment. Morrison’s introduction illuminates the function of racialized discourse in these processes, and the risks of the compromises Thomas made.

Morrison, Toni, ed. *Birth of A Nation’hood: Gaze, Script, and Spectacle in the O.J. Simpson Case*. With Claudia Brodsky Lacour. New York: Pantheon, 1997.

Cultural critics examine the high-profile murder trial of American football player O.J. Simpson in 1995. Morrison’s introduction illuminates the stereotypes of white supremacy and black inferiority that characterized media coverage and legal discourse concerning these events.

Morrison, Toni, ed. *Burn this Book: PEN writers speak out on the power of the word*. New York: Harper 2009.

Morrison’s introduction to this collection of anticensorship essays by distinguished writers is a little-known but important piece, “Peril.” The essay is an impassioned defence of “art” as a response to the “chaos” of the post-9/11 world (3).

Van der Zee, James et al. *The Harlem Book of the Dead*. New York: Morgan, 1978.

A brief but fascinating foreword (1978) by Morrison to this collage of photographs, poems and an interview on funerary rites of Harlem residents in the 1920s.

Interviews

Morrison has given countless interviews throughout her career. She is an expansive and illuminating conversationalist, and the majority of her exchanges with mainstream media, the literary press and literary scholars are recorded in two anthologies: Taylor-Guthrie 1992 and Denard 2008. The former ranges from 1974 until 1992, just after the publication of *Jazz*; the latter gathers previously uncollected pieces from 1977 until 2005. Two further highly significant interviews – with the black British intellectual Paul Gilroy in 1993, and African American *New Yorker* journalist Hilton Als in 2003 – are listed here as they are not reprinted in the anthologies.

Als, Hilton. “Ghosts in the Attic.” *New Yorker* 27 October, 2003: 62-75.

A landmark interview in the *New Yorker* "Profiles" series, in which Morrison reflects on her life and its work. Not reprinted anywhere else.

Denard, Carolyn, ed. *Toni Morrison: Conversations*. Jackson, University Press of Mississippi, 2008.

Includes Morrison's reflections on Faulkner in 1985. Key interviews with Salman Rushdie (1992), A. J. Verdelle (1998) and two with Michael Silverblatt (1998 and 2004). Highlights include the much-cited "A Bench by the Road" (1988), the *Paris Review* interview with Elisa Schappell (1993), and the landmark "Blacks, Modernism and the American South" discussion with Denard herself (1998).

Gilroy, Paul. "Living Memory: An Interview with Toni Morrison." In *Small Acts: Thoughts on the Politics of Black Cultures*. By Paul Gilroy, 175-82. London: Serpent's Tail, 1993.

A historic discussion, primarily of *Beloved*; also containing some of Morrison's most significant comments on modernism.

Taylor-Guthrie, Danille, ed. *Conversations with Toni Morrison*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1994.

Highlights of this first collection include conversations with Robert Stepto (1976); Nellie McKay (1983) and Gloria Naylor (1988). Very useful index.

Biographical material

There are no authorized biographies of Morrison; she has never authorized one, nor has she written an autobiography. Snippets of autobiographical reflection are scattered throughout her essays and in the eight forewords she has written to her novels. The most accurate chronology of her key life events and publications is to be found in the second collection of interviews, Denard 2008. There are discursive overviews of her life (up to the date of each work's publication) in Goulimari 2011; Roynon 2012; and Smith 2012. There are fascinating personal recollections in Gillespie 2012 (see those by Ladd and Wilburn, and Verdelle) and Seward and Tally 2014 (by Williams).

Critical Studies

The critical field on Morrison is vast and potentially overwhelming. The MLA Bibliography records around 2000 published items on this author. The material annotated and listed here has been selected on the grounds of its quality, its influence and endurance, and its originality. The selection here begins with work that addresses two or more texts by Morrison, moves on to discussions of single texts, and after describing the four key journal special issues, turns to comparative work on Morrison and other authors. Articles that predominantly adopt a clear thematic approach such as "motherhood" or "African presences" are arranged under those headings, but other listed material, categorized differently, may well share these thematic concerns. Also included are some analyses of disparate aspects of Morrison studies such as reflections on teaching her work, or discussions of the nature of her critical reception.

Essay Collections on Two or More Morrison texts, 1980s and 1990s

The first essay collection on Toni Morrison's fiction was the still definitive McKay 1988. It was notable and is still invaluable for reprinting many of the key early articles, published in journals and hard to locate, that set the benchmark for rigorous and politicized scholarship on Morrison. Bloom 1990 feels somewhat hastily-assembled and without rationale by comparison, although many of its component essays are useful, and it helpfully reprints Morrison 1989, the essay "Unspeakable Things Unspoken." Gates and Appiah 1993 is very substantial. It reprints many reviews alongside critical essays which, as in McKay 1988, appeared earlier as seminal journal articles. There follow a series of "post-Nobel" anthologies, indicative of Morrison's newfound status as a major novelist. Peterson 1997 contains (along with reprints) some landmark pieces published for the first time. Middleton 1997 is commendable for its eclectic range and for airing perspectives that sometimes directly oppose each other, and its essays for the most part avoid the critical sentimentalism or deference to Morrison's own views expressed in interviews that sometimes plagues this field. Peach 1998 includes short excerpts from some significant monographs of the decade that precedes it, as well as a meticulous guide to further reading.

Bloom, Harold, ed. *Modern Critical Views: Toni Morrison*. New York, Chelsea House, 1990.

Useful reprints of key early essays by Davis (on "self and society"); Spillers (on *Sula*); and Miner 1990. Replicates the brilliant McDowell essay (on *Sula*) in McKay 1988. Mobley on *Beloved* (not a reprint) is a clear overview of that novel, ideal for those encountering it for the first time.

Gates, Henry Louis and K.A. Appiah, eds. *Toni Morrison: Critical Perspectives Past and Present*. New York: Amistad, 1993.

A 450-page volume of 15 reprinted essays on the first 5 novels, prefaced by all the major mainstream media reviews of the first 6. A very useful go-to resource for key articles by from Awkward (on *The Bluest Eye*), Christian (on the first two novels), Hirsch (on *Beloved*), Spillers (replicating Bloom 1990) and Willis on 'funk'. Includes 4 interviews.

McKay, Nellie, ed. *Critical Essays on Toni Morrison*. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1988.

The first critical anthology on Morrison. Predates *Beloved* and therefore contains precious in-depth studies (mostly reprinted from journals) of the four earlier texts. Highlights include Traylor on *Tar Baby* and Fabre on *Song of Solomon*. Reprints 8 hard-to-find reviews of the first 4 novels. Not to be confused with Andrews and McKay 1999.

Middleton, David, ed. *Toni Morrison's Fiction: Contemporary Criticism*. New York: Garland, 1997.

Goldmine for those in search of a one-volume cross-section of contrasting readings. Essays are diverse in approach but consistently rigorous, well-written and meticulous. Substantial (over 300 pages), constitutes 15 essays (2 or 3 on each novel from *The Bluest Eye* to *Jazz*), 12 of which are reprinted from journals. Reprints Cowart 1997. Powell, and Gillespie and Kubitschek on *Sula* are highlights, as are the three essays on *Jazz*, by Lewis, Barnes, and Mayberry.

Peach, Linden. *Toni Morrison: Contemporary Critical Essays*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998.

Sometimes overlooked as confused with Peach's sole-authored overview of a similar title, *Toni Morrison*. All are reprints of sections from books (useful for this) or new versions of old material in previous articles, and some are replicated in other collections (e.g. Rushdy on *Beloved*, also in Andrews and McKay 1999). Contains extensive and meticulous list of further reading which benefits from Peach's overview knowledge (194-206).

Peterson, Nancy, ed. *Toni Morrison: Critical and Theoretical Approaches*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.

Primarily reprints of essays in *Modern Fiction Studies* 39.3-4 (1993), with two essays published in later issues of the same journal, this volume is essential reading for anyone with a serious interest in Morrison. Includes Peterson herself on the "reconstruction of African-American history" (201). Reprints the Nobel lecture and has a useful (relatively early) bibliography.

Since 2000

As the volume of articles published on Morrison has increased, there have been fewer anthologies published that cover more than one novel. Those discussed here for the most part either focus on a theme – Conner 2000 on the relationship between politics and aesthetics in the oeuvre, or Stave 2006 on intertextualities with Bible – or on a number of specific novels, as in Fultz 2013 on *Paradise, Love* and *A Mercy*. Only Tally 2007 aims (by definition as a Cambridge Companion) to present an overview of a range of approaches to the complete oeuvre, as many collections of the previous decades do. Montgomery 2013 takes *A Mercy* as its focus, discussing other texts' relationship with that one.

Conner, Marc C. ed. *The Aesthetics of Toni Morrison: Speaking the Unspeakable*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2000.

Highly significant anthology that both resolves and develops the contested relationship between the aesthetic and the political. The 8 essays argue that different aesthetic elements of Morrison's writing are integral to her political project. Contributors include Barbara Johnson and Michael Wood.

Introduction invaluable surveys the aesthetics/politics question in African American literature as a whole.

Fultz, Lucille P. *Toni Morrison: Paradise; Love: A Mercy*. London: Bloomsbury 2013.

Fresh, incisive collection on 3 of Morrison's later and less-discussed novels, edited by a leading Morrison scholar. The tripartite structure devotes 3 chapters to each novel in turn. Highlights include Denard's and Beavers's essays on *Love*, also Conner's on *A Mercy*.

Montgomery, Maxine L. *Contested Boundaries: New Critical Essays on the Fiction of Toni Morrison*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2013.

An arresting anthology taking the unusual and productive approach of focusing on the relationship between *A Mercy* and other novels in the oeuvre, in particular (but not exclusively) with *Beloved* on the themes of the slave narrative and motherhood.

Stave, Shirley A., ed. *Toni Morrison and the Bible: Contested Intertextualities*. New York: Peter Lang, 2006.

An anthology of 11 chapters that, in Stave's words, 'interrogate and dissect Morrison's use of the Bible, question her theological positioning, and even contest her range of source material' (1). Highlights are by Jessee on "syncretic spirituality" in the trilogy and by Terry on "creolisation and candomblé" in *Paradise*.

Tally, Justine, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Toni Morrison*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

A collection primarily by an international group of scholars rather than by U.S.-based African Americanists. One exception to this is Cheryl Wall, whose essay on "Toni Morrison, editor and teacher," covers ground untouched elsewhere in the critical field. Chronology interestingly collates Morrison's life events with key events in her novels.

Monographs on Two or More Morrison texts (by decade)

1980s

The first monograph to appear exclusively on Morrison is Holloway and Demetrakopoulos 1987. To some extent the 3 monographs of the 1980s (these include Jones and Vinson 1985, and Otten 1989) are of interest more for what they reveal about the history of Morrison scholarship and its tentative, collaborative and/or slender beginnings than for the insights they contain. Each nonetheless contains readings of value and, as with McKay 1988, the first two listed here predate *Beloved* and thus constitute a detailed focus on the earlier work. Both are indicative of the prevailing culture of identity-based politics of the late-1980s. Otten's work by contrast anticipates Stave 2006 in its paradigmatic focus on the importance of the Book of Genesis in Morrison's writing.

Holloway, Karla, and Stephanie Demetrakopoulos. *New Dimensions of Spirituality: A Biracial and Bicultural Reading of the Novels of Toni Morrison*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1987.

Appealing collaboration in that a series of paired essays, constitutes the 7 parts of this book. Essentially humanist in its approach, focuses on the first 4 novels (as its early publication date dictates). The first and last chapters exemplify early considerations of Morrison's position within existing literary traditions, both African diasporic and European.

Jones, Bessie, and Audrey Vinson. *The World of Toni Morrison*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 1985.

These 9 chapters examining the first 4 novels are replete with a sense of the pre-Nobel, pre-*Beloved* Morrison as a relatively-unstudied phenomenon. Contains two thought-provoking essays exclusively on Pilate. Includes a fascinating interview from 1981 (reprinted in Taylor-Guthrie 1994).

Otten, Terry. *The Crime of Innocence in the Fiction of Toni Morrison*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989.

A slim but significant early monograph, discussing each novel in turn from *The Bluest Eye* to *Beloved*. Argues that the Fall in the Biblical Book of Genesis is central in every novel, suggesting that the idea of *felix culpa* is an essential rite of passage when good and evil are themselves unstable concepts.

1990s

By the 1990s, monographs on Morrison are appearing thick and fast, adopting a range of contrasting approaches and exploring contrasting themes. Two books published at the start of the decade – Harris 1991 and Rigney 1991 – share a commitment to positioning Morrison within an exclusive and/or exceptional black aesthetics and politics. Harris focuses on Morrison's deployment of African American folklore, while Rigney's central concern is the novelist's articulation of a black feminist perspective. Mori 1999 extends this focus in her exploration of Morrison and womanism. Heinze 1993 by contrast shares much with Page 1995; indebted to poststructuralist theory and to Bakhtin these two books explore how Morrison critiques the contradictions of dominant American culture while upholding not an exclusively black but a culturally hybrid conception of African American agency in its place. Rice 1998 is different yet again, illuminating Morrison's ambivalent intertextual relationship with canonical white American writers, while Grewal 1998 is a pioneer in placing Morrison within a theorized postcolonial framework.

Grewal, Gurleen. *Circles of Sorrow, Lines of Struggle: the novels of Toni Morrison*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998.

Informed by Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "minority literature," a sophisticated postcolonial study of Morrison's first 6 novels. Combines this approach with black literary history, feminist theory and trauma theory, emphasizing the transformative effects of mourning. Links well with Schreiber 2010. Each chapter makes useful connections across the oeuvre.

Harris, Trudier. *Fiction and Folklore: The Novels of Toni Morrison*. Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1991.

Landmark study, by major scholar in African American studies, of the embeddedness of Morrison's first five novels in African American folklore. Devotes a detailed chapter to each novel. The illuminated black folkloric and literary intertexts within Morrison's writing emphasize the oral tradition. Some readers may perceive oversimplifications about European cultural allusions.

Heinze, Denise. *The Dilemma of "Double Consciousness": Toni Morrison's Novels*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993.

Adopting a thematic approach to all the novels from *The Bluest Eye* to *Jazz*, plus nonfiction. In 4 parts: the Morrison aesthetic; mothers and fathers; social dialectic; and the metaphysics of the supernatural. Argues that Morrison's own double-consciousness as both a canonical and minority writer gives her a Bakhtinian double-voicedness that destabilizes national ideology.

Mori, Aoi. *Toni Morrison and Womanist Discourse*. New York: Peter Lang, 1999.

150 page monograph by distinguished Japanese scholar, exemplifying widespread scholarly interest in Morrison in Japan. Reads the first 6 novels through Alice Walker's 'womanist' concept and its critique of mainstream U.S. cultures. Accessibly written, of most interest to undergraduates studying feminism, gender and African American woman's intellectual traditions.

Page, Philip. *Dangerous Freedom: Fusion and Fragmentation in Toni Morrison's Novels*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1995.

Deconstructive reading of the first 6 novels, deploying the concept of "dangerous freedom" as a risky but potentially productive predicament shared by Morrison's protagonists and her narrative form. Illuminates how Morrison's themes of fusion and fragmentation (those also at the heart of poststructuralism) explore the contradictions defining American and African American culture.

Rice, Herbert William. *Toni Morrison and the American Tradition: A Rhetorical Reading*. New York: Peter Lang, 1998.

Counterpoint to readings such as Rigney 1991. Focuses on Morrison's conflicted dialogue with the canonical Euro-American literary tradition from Emerson to Faulkner, including Melville, Thoreau and TS Eliot. Illuminates her negotiations of belonging and apartness to/from this tradition. Slim and highly readable, suitable for undergraduates seeking divergent approaches to this author.

Rigney, Barbara Hill. *The Voices of Toni Morrison*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1991.

Sophisticated and theoretically-informed discussion of the first 5 novels. Argues for Morrison's enactment of a specific black feminist aesthetic. The thematic 4 chapters examine: language and signification; self and identity; history, myth and magic; and desire and the erotic.

2000s

The monographs of this decade are for the most part characterized by their sophistication and complexity. Bouson 2002, Fultz 2003 and Heinert 2009 adopt differing approaches in their readings of race and the effects of racism in the oeuvre. Mbalia 2004 is a pioneer in Marxist readings of Morrison, while Simpson 2007, in her focus on black language, develops the perspectives of Harris 1991 and Hill 1991. Mayberry 2007 is valuable for its unusual and productive focus on masculinity in Morrison, while Ferguson 2007 constitutes, through its close readings of politicized aesthetics, a high-level overview of the oeuvre.

Bouson, J. Brooks. *Quiet as it's kept: Shame, Trauma, and Race in the Novels of Toni Morrison*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2002.

Deploys psychoanalytic and psychiatric theories of shame and trauma to illuminate the representations of race and the effects of racism and intra-racial shaming in the first 7 novels, devoting one chapter to each. Closely reads passages in which Morrison explores that which is uncomfortable and discomfiting. Thematic overlap with Schreiber 2010.

Ferguson, Rebecca. *Rewriting Black Identities: Transition and Exchange in the Novels of Toni Morrison*. New York: Peter Lang, 2007.

A detailed, rigorous and clearly-written monograph comprising a chapter each of the first 8 novels. Focuses on Morrison's concern with the multiplicity of African American identities, selfhood and experience. Organizing themes are Morrison's representations of historical transition or change, and her commitment to interconnectedness.

Fultz, Lucille. *Toni Morrison: Playing with Difference*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2003.

A slim but highly-accomplished and significant poststructuralist reading of Morrison's first 6 novels, as well as of the story, "Recitatif." Here "playing" (derived in part from Morrison's own *Playing in the Dark*) means both "staging" and "critiquing" (18). Chapters focus on a series of key textual moments in which Morrison "signs difference" (18).

Heinert, Jennifer Lee Jordan. *Narrative Conventions and Race in the Novels of Toni Morrison*. New York: Routledge 2009.

Sophisticated mediation between readings of Morrison exclusively as a critique of mainstream American tradition readings that situate her within it. Focuses on the relationship between genre, narrative conventions and discourses of race. Centring on *The Bluest Eye*, *Tar Baby*, *Jazz* and *Beloved* creates an intricate level of discussion. Thematic overlap with Conner 2000 on aesthetics/politics.

Mayberry, Susan Neal. *Can't I Love What I Criticize? The Masculine and Morrison*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2007.

The only book-length study on this rich and important approach to Morrison. Interprets the first 8 novels alongside sociological and psychological theories of black masculinity; examines black male resistance to white power in the oeuvre as well as Morrison's depictions of the role of black masculinity in tempering exclusionary feminism.

Mbalia, Dorothea Drummond. *Toni Morrison's Developing Class Consciousness*. Rev. ed. Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2004.

Useful as the earliest Marxist and/or class-focused reading of Morrison. Devotes 1 chapter to each of the first 8 novels, arguing that the author's materialist / anti-capitalist consciousness evolves with each publication. Lacks nuance in places.

Simpson, Ritashona. *Black Looks and Black Acts: The Language of Toni Morrison in The Bluest Eye and Beloved*. New York: Peter Lang, 2007.

Published doctoral dissertation on Morrison's language. Building on bell hooks' concept of "black looks" it examines how Morrison's language functions as black, despite its eschewal of "eye dialect" or nonstandard grammar and spelling. Exceptional level of detail and close scrutiny render it invaluable to readers interested in "Black English" and a black aesthetic.

Since 2010

Monographs of this decade are characterized by boldness and rigor, and a willingness to position Morrison as combining elements such as black/African and white/European traditions that were previously perceived as incompatible binaries. Baillie 2013 exemplifies this perfectly. The emphasis during these years shifts slightly onto Morrison's contribution to broad intellectual movements and concepts. For example, Duvall 2010 uses Morrison to rethink modernism and postmodernism as much as vice versa, while Christiansë 2012 uses Morrison to rethink language and poetics. Schreiber 2010 combines a range of theoretical approaches to argue that the Morrisonian oeuvre posits the restorative, healing power of conceptions of "home" on those suffering from ongoing trauma caused by slavery. Finally, Mueller 2013 is a substantial advanced study of Morrison's reformulations of the past, often overlooked by U.S.-based scholars due to its publication in Germany. To miss her work is to miss among other things its provocative, closing discussion of Morrison's ambivalent position within literary and intellectual culture.

Baillie, Justine. *Toni Morrison and Literary Tradition: The Invention of an Aesthetic*. London: Bloomsbury, 2013.

Meticulously-theorized reading of *The Bluest Eye* to *Home*, arguing that the work constructs an aesthetic that is simultaneously "black," in dialogue with "Western" tradition, and that is always and already political. Useful to advanced undergraduates and beyond; sets out many of the theoretical contexts in which Morrison's corpus operates.

Christiansë, Yvette. *Toni Morrison: An Ethical Poetics*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2012.

Thematic in approach and theoretically rigorous, examines all the novels up to and including *Home* in its concern with Morrison's focus on the nature of writing, language and communication themselves.

Duvall, John. *The Identifying Fictions of Toni Morrison: Modernist Authenticity and Postmodern Blackness*. 2nd ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Argues that Morrison's novels (up to and including *A Mercy*) constitute an opposition between a modernist concern with authenticity and postmodern fictional practices. Interprets the fiction in terms of Morrison's own biography and self-fashioning. Chapter 2, on *The Bluest Eye* and Ellison, and Chapter 5 on rape in *Tar Baby* are particularly original and significant.

Mueller, Stefanie. *The Presence of the Past in the Novels of Toni Morrison*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter GmbH Heidelberg, 2013.

Developed from doctoral dissertation; suitable for graduate students and advanced scholars. Informed by Bourdieu and Elias, expounds an original argument about the presence of the past that but that “survives and actualizes itself in [Morrison’s] protagonists’ social environment as well as in their minds and actions” (9). Focuses primarily on 4 novels: *Paradise*, *Love*, *A Mercy* and *Beloved*.

Schreiber, Evelyn. *Race, trauma and home in the novels of Toni Morrison*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010.

Deploys neuroscientific and psychoanalytical theories to illuminate the ongoing personal and communal trauma of slavery, arguing that conceptions of “home” are instrumental in the recovery of subjectivity and selfhood.

Articles and chapters on Two or More Morrison texts

The selection here indicates the diversity of approaches to pairing Morrison’s novels across the decades. Christian 1980 is the starting point for those interested in the history of the reception of Morrison. Rice 1999 exemplifies one scholar transferring the paradigm of another (in this case of Susan Willis on *Sula*) to enact new readings of new texts. Rice examines the verbal models which mirror patterns in jazz and blues, and also explores the political effects of Morrison’s widespread “Signifyin(g),” as defined by Gates, in the unusual pairing of *Tar Baby* and *The Bluest Eye*. Cutter 2000 asks a rarely-heard question – is *Beloved* really the ghost of the baby Sethe killed? And Peterson 2001 brings her vast knowledge and profound understanding of Morrison to explore the trilogy and *The Black Book* in the context of contemporary women writers’ reconstructions of historical memory.

Christian, Barbara. “The Contemporary Fables of Toni Morrison.” In *Black Women Novelists: The Development of a Tradition, 1892-1976*. By Barbara Christian, 137-179. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1980.

Earliest published scholarly discussion of Morrison. Chapter focuses on *The Bluest Eye* and *Sula* within a groundbreaking book on black American women writers from Frances Ellen Watkins Harper to Alice Walker. Accomplished and detailed introductory overview, written with the tone of someone explaining something new or for the first time.

Cutter, Martha J. “The Story Must Go On: The Fantastic, Narration and Intertextuality in Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* and *Jazz*.” *African American Review* 34.1 (2000): 61-75.

Deploys poststructuralist and reader-response theory to argue that the intertextual relationship between *Beloved* and *Jazz* “is a story that resists closure through its very awareness of a reader’s need for closure” (62). Examines how *Jazz* challenges the reader’s assumption that *Beloved* is indeed the ghost that Denver and Sethe believe her to be.

Peterson, Nancy. “Toni Morrison and the Desire for a ‘Genuine Black History Book.’” In *Against Amnesia: Contemporary Women Writers and the Crises of Historical Memory*. By Nancy Peterson, 51-97. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001.

Innovative, sophisticated and very well-informed discussion of *Beloved*, *Jazz* and *Paradise* in relation to *The Black Book*, focusing on themes of historical recovery and collective memory.

Rice, Alan. “Erupting Funk: The Political Style of Toni Morrison’s *Tar Baby* and *The Bluest Eye*.” In *Post-Colonial Literatures: Expanding the Canon*. Ed. Deborah L. Madsen, 133-147. London: Pluto Press, 1999.

Builds on Willis’s theorization of “funk” (see Gates and Appiah 1993) to enact an illuminating close reading of jazz and blues these two rarely-paired novels. Published here for the first time. Exemplary analysis of the politics of Morrison’s form, suitable for undergraduate level and above.

Essay collections and monographs on single novels

The novels which have given rise to essay collections and monographs with an exclusive single-novel focus are: *Song of Solomon*; *Beloved*, *Jazz*, *Paradise* and *A Mercy*. The selection here examines work on those novels in that order, which is their order of publication.

Song of Solomon

In Smith 1995, each of the five gem-like essays, written by a leading scholars of the 1990s, is specially commissioned. By contrast, Furman 2003 (also very useful) consists entirely of reprints of articles on *Song of Solomon*, previously appearing in journals. It therefore constitutes a useful overview of key approaches to this novel, if not already encountered elsewhere.

Furman, Jan. *Toni Morrison' s Song of Solomon: A Casebook*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Highlights of this collection of reprints include the essays by Awkward (on *Song of Solomon*), Duvall (on *Song of Solomon* and *Go Down, Moses*) and Wilentz 1993. Reprints the *Paris Review* interview of 1993 (also in Denard 2008).

Smith, Valerie, ed. *New Essays on Song of Solomon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

The 5 brilliant essays in this slim volume are by Smith (introduction); Middleton (on oral memory); Mobley (on call and response/ dialogic structure); Hirsch (on themes of paternity and its relationship to other familial relationships); and Lubiano (on the novel as a politicized postmodern text). Useful selected bibliography on this novel and its African American literary contexts.

Beloved

Andrews and McKay 1999 is in many ways the definitive essay collection on *Beloved*. Very strong on historical context, it reprints Frances Ellen Watkins Harper' s poem "The Slave Mother" (first published in 1857) about Margaret Garner, while Samuel J May discusses the woman who was the historical inspiration for Sethe in the second chapter. Solomon 1998 is an excellent complement to Andrews and McKay 1999 as a reliable port of call for solid 1990s scholarship on *Beloved*. Of its 15 essays, only one (by Harris) is replicated in the later collection (Andrews and McKay 1999). Among the monographs, Marks 2002 is a clearly-written and unconventional reading, focusing on what the author calls its "sites of the apotropaic" in the novel, that is to say on its "gestures aimed at warding off, or resisting, a danger, a threat or an imperative" (2). Tally 2009 enacts a kind of literary and intellectual archaeology, arguing for acknowledgement of key foundations to or influences on *Beloved*. These influences in turn illuminate Morrison' s engagement with broad intellectual questions of the twentieth century: "questions of 'ontology' ," "the linguistic turn," and the "production of history" (xiv). Implicitly emphasizes Morrison' s position as a global intellectual as well as novelist. Finally, Plasa 2000 is an extraordinarily useful guide to and resource book for the novel.

Andrews, William, and Nellie McKay, eds. *Toni Morrison' s Beloved: A Casebook*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Wide range of approaches. 6 essays (by Askeland, Harris, Henderson, Holloway, Krumholz, and Rushdy) reprinted from journals and/or their authors' original books, making this an economical first port of call. Fabulous "conversation" between Christian, McDowell and McKay is printed here for the first time, as is Pérez-Torres on postmodernism in the novel.

Marks, Kathleen. *Toni Morrison' s Beloved and the Apotropaic Imagination*. Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 2002.

First chapter lays out historical context of the "apotropaic" in the Greeks, Freud, and Woolf among others. Next 3 chapters focus on Sethe, the character of *Beloved*, and the clearing, respectively. The fourth chapter focuses on memory and the final reads *Jazz* and *Paradise* in light of this interpretation of *Beloved*.

Plasa, Carl, ed. *Toni Morrison, Beloved: A reader' s guide to the essential criticism*. Duxford: Icon 2000.

Reprints and comments on key contemporaneous reviews of *Beloved* as well as the eyewitness account of the Margaret Garner incident by P.S. Bassett (also in *The Black Book*, Harris 2009). Synthesizes Morrison's relevant non-fiction with snippets from slave narratives. Survey of scholarship (up to 2000). Useful for high school teachers and students, and beyond.

Solomon, Barbara. *Critical Essays on Toni Morrison's Beloved*. New York: G.K. Hall, 1998.

Part I is invaluable collection of 10 contemporaneous reviews of *Beloved* (probably the most comprehensive collation available). Part II is 12 reprinted essays prefaced by Morrison's own words on *Beloved's* opening, reprinted from Morrison 1994. Part III is 4 original essays.

Tally, Justine. *Toni Morrison's Beloved: Origins*. New York: Routledge, 2009.

Study of influences /pretexts to *Beloved*, engaging Foucault throughout. Ranges widely, for example, across Egyptian and Greek mythology and culture, demonstrating the novel's "palimpsest"-like nature. Bold and rigorous; useful for graduate students and scholars.

Jazz

Tally 2001 is, somewhat surprisingly, the only book to date to focus exclusively on *Jazz*. There is surely scope for an edited anthology on this rich and much-discussed novel.

Tally, Justine. *The Story of Jazz: Toni Morrison's Dialogic Imagination*. Hamburg: LIT Verlag, 2001.

A Bakhtinian reading, understanding jazz music as a metaphor for language. Sets out its theoretical hypothesis about storytelling, the dialogic and carnival in the first part, and performing close reading of each chapter in turn in the second. Makes rigorous use of prior scholarship on the novel.

Paradise

Tally 1999 is the only book to date to focus exclusively on *Paradise*.

Tally, Justine. *Paradise Reconsidered: Toni Morrison's (Hi)stories and Truths*. Hamburg: LIT Verlag, 1999.

This 90-page study interprets the novel in terms of its thematic connections to the rest of the oeuvre, particularly to *Beloved* and *Jazz*, on the themes of memory, story and history. Context for discussion is theoretical debates about the production of history and the production of knowledge.

A Mercy

Stave and Tally 2011 is to date the only book exclusively on *A Mercy*. See also Fultz 2013 and MELUS 36.2 (2011) for additional excellent scholarship on this novel; note there is no replication between these three sources. Stave and Tally 2011 is a strong and wide-ranging collection, comprising 8 chapters by established Morrison scholars, not previously published elsewhere.

Stave, Shirley A. And Justine Tally, eds. *Toni Morrison's A Mercy: Critical Approaches*. Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011.

Part I is on "Racially constructed space" (which takes primarily an ecocritical approach), Part II on "Intertextual Resonances," and Part III on "Psychological Explorations." Essays are for the most part accessibly written but sophisticated in argument, an essential starting point suited to readers at all levels of interest in the novel and the author.

Articles and chapters on single novels

While every novel has attracted exclusive focus in articles and/or book chapters, those listed here are selected because they are not reprinted in any of the key anthologies such as Bloom 1990, Gates and Appiah 1993, McKay 1988 or Middleton 1997. So for important essays on *Sula* for example, it is necessary to consult those anthologies. The anthologies should also be the first port of call for early scholarship on all of Morrison's earlier novels. In the list here, there are in general more entries for

the later novels as far less material on these has been reprinted in anthologies. The list here is arranged by novel, grouped in order of the novels' publication.

The Bluest Eye, Song of Solomon and Tar Baby

The selected articles here represent rich materials in journals that either postdate or slipped under the radar of the major anthologizing projects on Morrison. They are chosen for their unconventional thematic approaches: Midwesternism in *The Bluest Eye*; the retention of Islam in slave culture in *Song of Solomon*; a black identity hiding beneath classical allusions in the same novel (Benston 1991); and the revisionary dialogue with *The Tempest* in *Tar Baby*.

Benston, Kimberly W. "Re-Weaving the 'Ulysses Scene': Enchantment, Post-Oedipal Identity, and the Buried Text of Blackness in Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*." In *Comparative American Identities: Race, Sex and Nationality in the Modern Text*. Edited by Hortense Spillers, 87-109. New York: Routledge, 1991.

Combines a psychoanalytic approach with analysis of classical allusiveness in the text and its relationship with Ellison's *Invisible Man*. Argues that Morrison creates a "communal protagonist" through which the "Ulysses scene" of the search for a buried name, identity or "text of blackness" is re-woven and performed.

Elia, Nada. "'Kum Buba Yali Kum Buba Tambe, Ameen, Ameen, Ameen.' Did Some Flying Africans Bow to Allah?" *Callaloo: A Journal of African-American and African Arts and Letters* 26:1 (2003): 182-202.

Fascinating excavation of history of the retention of Islamic religious and cultural practices among the nineteenth-century African diaspora. Resonates in Morrison's myth of the flying African, in a fusion with Igbo traditions. Discussion includes other novels such as Alex Haley's *Roots*.

Long, Lisa A. "A New Midwesternism in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*." *Twentieth-Century Literature* 59.1 (2013): 104-25.

Fresh assessment of this novel and implicitly of the Morrisonian oeuvre. Argues that attention to the specificities of Morrison's regional formations yields a new Midwesternism, and that her attention to ethnic identities in the region rejects "traditional, colonialist notions of the Midwest" (105). Builds on both regional studies and prior scholarship on this text.

Walter, Malin LaVon. "Toni Morrison's *Tar Baby*: Re-Figuring the Colonizer's Aesthetics." In *Cross-Cultural Performances: Differences in Women's Re-Visions of Shakespeare*. Edited by Marianne Novy, 137-149. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993.

Persuasive reading of this novel, arguing that Morrison's exploration of aesthetics in the novel constitute "a corrective counterpoint to Shakespeare's *Tempest*" (137). Balanced and informed by recent theories of Shakespearean adaptation, set within a context of wider postcolonial responses to the play.

Beloved

Beloved has attracted more critical attention than any other Morrison novel. As the selection here shows (for example Bhaba 2003, Mohanty 1993) this is in part due to its richness as itself a site of theoretical exploration, whether about sociology, ethics, the postcolonial condition or more. Ferguson 1998 is a very clear exegesis of the central themes, narrative technique, and complex ideas within *Beloved*. Raynaud 1999 is an invaluable close reading, informed by Kristeva's concept of "abjection," of the infamous (because difficult) "Middle passage" sections of the text. The discussion of *Beloved* in Bhaba 2003 is not extensive but is of huge import in the depth and breadth of its claims, and is indicative of Morrison's role in accounts and reassessments of evolving cultural history. While Henderson 1991 combines historiography with psychoanalysis, Mohanty 1993 (on theories of identity) and Phelan 2009 (on rhetorical theory) exemplify the capacity of Morrison's fiction itself to do theoretical work. Ryan 1998 (on Baby Suggs as preacher and spiritual healer) and Stone 2002 (on

ethics and aesthetics) both appear in unusual (not conventionally literary critical) contexts, and are therefore little-known and undervalued readings of great worth. See also Hirsch 1994.

Bhaba, Homi. "The World and the Home." In *Close Reading: The Reader*. Edited by Frank Lentricchia and Andrew Dubois, 366-387. Duke University Press, Durham and London 2003.

Bhaba's famous essay on the *unheimlich* or 'unhomely' in postcolonial fiction, and the process of the "worlding" of literature, begins and ends with consideration of *Beloved*. First published as an article in *Social Text* in 1992, it has been reprinted in many places.

Ferguson, Rebecca. "History, Memory and Language in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*." In *Contemporary Women Writers: Gender, Class, Ethnicity*. Edited by Lois Parkinson Zamora, 154-174. London and New York: Longman, 1998.

Ideal first stop for able undergraduate students, and/or those needing encouragement in comprehending the more sophisticated elements of the novel. Focuses on Morrison's concept of "rememory" as embodied storytelling. Draws on Bakhtin in its exploration of Morrison reconciling postmodernism with specific politics and history.

Henderson, Mae G. "Toni Morrison's *Beloved*: Re-Membering the Body as Historical Text." *Comparative American Identities: Race, Sex and Nationality in the Modern Text*. Edited by Hortense Spillers, 40-61. New York: Routledge, 1991.

Links historiography and psychoanalysis, informed by Morrison's own statements in "The Site of Memory" essay (see Morrison 2008) and by Ricoeur. Explores the process of re-memory in recreating history, undoing processes of dismemberment, and reconstituting the interiority of individuals of African descent in the nineteenth century.

Mohanty, Satya P. "The Epistemic Status of Cultural Identity: On *Beloved* and The Postcolonial Condition." *Cultural Critique* 24 (1993): 41-80.

Sociological essay on theories of identity. Reads *Beloved* closely, in its central section, in order to illuminate that text's concern with "the relationships between personal experience, social meanings, and cultural identities" (42).

Phelan, James. "The Beginning of *Beloved*: A Rhetorical Approach." *Narrative Beginnings: Theories and Practices*. Edited Brian Richardson, 195-212. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009.

Deploys rhetorical theory to perform an extended reading of the first "chapter" of *Beloved* (up to Denver eating the bread). Exemplifies the usefulness of Morrison's writing to narratology. Argues that Morrison's writing both yields riches and remains indeterminate in a rhetorical approach.

Raynaud, Claudine. "The Poetics of Abjection in *Beloved*." In *Black Imagination and the Middle Passage*. Ed. Maria Diedrich et al, 70-85. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Makes useful and illuminating links between the difficult "Middle Passage" section of the novel (read very closely), other relevant reference points within the text, Morrison's own observations, and other scholars' work. Invaluable to students and teachers needing illumination of this section.

Ryan, Judylyn S. "Spirituality and/as Ideology in Black Women's Literature: The Preaching of Maria W. Stewart and Baby Suggs, Holy." In *Women Preachers and Prophets through Two Millennia of Christianity*. Edited by Beverly Mayne Kienzle and Pamela J. Walker, 267-87. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Compares the fictional character to the nineteenth-century public speaker, preacher and activist Maria W. Stewart. Invaluable contextualization within an overview of African American syncretized religion and the role of women within this. Evidences Morrison's importance within theology, history and women's studies.

Stone, Marjorie. "Between Ethics and Anguish: Feminist Ethics, Feminist Aesthetics, and Representations of Infanticide in 'The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point' and *Beloved*." In *Between Ethics and Aesthetics: Crossing the Boundaries*. Edited by Dorota Glowacka and Stephen Boos, 131-158. Albany: SUNY Press, 2002.

Valuable comparison of *Beloved* with Barrett Browning's poem of 1848. Informed by the fields of ethics and aesthetics. Discussion takes in Hiram Powers's "The Greek Slave" and the subsequent *Punch* cartoon. Excellent complement to Conner 2002 on aesthetics, and Ryan 1998 or Brickhouse 2012 on Morrison and nineteenth-century culture.

Jazz

The selection here indicates the eclectic diversity that characterizes readings of this novel. Ginsburg and Rimmon-Kenan 1999 is a narratological reading which critiques the absolutism of Barthes's "Death of the Author" concept through arguing for Morrison's creation of "author-versions," defined as a series of changed and always-evolving relationships between "author, narrators, character, and readers" that reformulate authority and knowledge (66). Conner 2000 is an original and persuasive reading of *Jazz* as a romance or quest, drawing attention to its interplay with Shakespeare's late romance play, *The Winter's Tale*. Hardack 1995 is one of many explorations of the importance of jazz in *Jazz* (see also Rice 2000 on this topic); this importance is somewhat controversially refuted in Munton 1997. Pryse 2008, meanwhile, discusses the novel's representation of reading itself as a site of therapy and restoration.

Conner, Marc. "Wild Women and Graceful Girls: Toni Morrison's *Winter's Tale*." In *Nature, Woman, and the Art of Politics*. Edited by Eduardo A. Velásquez, 341-369. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield: 2000.

Illuminates the intertextual relationship (suggested in part by the name Dorcas), in terms of suffering followed by restoration and reconciliation, with Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*, and with the romance genre. Emphasizes the restorative role of music. Analysis of narrator informed by Benjamin, Nietzsche and others.

Ginsburg, Ruth, and Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan. "Is There a Life after Death? Theorizing Authors and Reading *Jazz*." In *Narratologies: New Perspectives on Narrative Analysis*. Edited by David Herman, 66-87. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1999.

Useful abstract at the beginning. The first 4 parts of the chapter outline the theory of "author-versions" and the critique of Barthes; the fifth is a close reading of *Jazz* itself. Useful for those interested in Morrison's role within literary theory; suitable for advanced undergraduates and beyond.

Hardack, Richard. "'A Music Seeking its Words': Double-Timing and Double-Consciousness in Toni Morrison's *Jazz*." *Callaloo* 18.2 (1995): 451-71.

Intricately-argued close reading. Argues that "Dionysian" jazz music functions as a kind of double-consciousness in the text (8), but that in exploring self-determination and its limits, Morrison "recontextualizes the use of violence to oppose violence, fragmentation to transcend fragmentation, and double-consciousness to undo double-consciousness" (7).

Munton, Alan. "Misreading Morrison, Mishearing Jazz: A Response to Toni Morrison's Jazz Critics". *Journal of American Studies* 31.2 (1997): 235-51.

Provocative refutation of the many scholars on the primacy of jazz paradigms in this novel. Objects to the way these prior critics ignore structure, harmony and melody. Suggests this focus falsely privileges an ideology of authenticity, and Afrocentric readings of both jazz and Morrison's fiction.

Pryse, Marjorie. "Signifyin(g) on Reparations in Toni Morrison's *Jazz*." *American Literature* 80.3 (2008): 583-609.

A multi-disciplinary approach deploying Freud, Klein, and Derrida, and also Gates's theory of "Signifyin(g)," to illuminate the ways in which the novel advances reading itself as "a site within which to work through 'paranoid' feelings and to arrive at reparation" (583). Useful as a detailed focus on the role of the narrator in this text, which is often one subject among many.

Paradise

The selection here combines two highly accomplished conventional interpretations of the text (Dalsgård 2001 and Jessee 2006) with two highly unconventional readings (Atieh 2009 and Osucha 2015). Dalsgård 2001 is a clearly-written and thorough exegesis of Morrison's explorations of both American and African American exceptionalist ideology. Jessee 2006 excavates the history of nineteenth-century all-black towns in Oklahoma and illuminates the novel's interplay with that history. Atieh 2009 persuasively argues for an intertextual relationship between the innovative and self-adapting frame narrative in the novel and the same kind of frame narrative in *Alf Layla Wa Laylah* (The Arabian Nights). Osucha 2015, meanwhile, brilliantly argues that *Paradise* critiques both the notorious Moynihan Report of 1965 and the subsequent Supreme Court decision, *Griswold vs Connecticut*.

Atieh, Majda R. "Another Night, Another Story: The Frame Narrative in Toni Morrison's *Paradise* and *Alf Layla Wa Laylah* [The Arabian Nights]." In *Contemporary African American Fiction: New Critical Essays*. Edited by Dana A. Williams, 119-135. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2009.

This comparison with the story cycle, *The Arabian Nights*, constitutes a little-known but wonderfully fresh approach to and context in which to read the novel. Welcome and unusual for its focus on the form and technique of *Paradise*, which have attracted little attention.

Dalsgård, Katrine. "The One All-Black Town Worth the Pain: (African) American Exceptionalism, Historical Narration, and the Critique of Nationhood in Toni Morrison's *Paradise*." *African American Review* 35.2 (2001): 233-48.

Definitively explains Morrison's exploration of flawed concepts of exceptional nationhood or group identity based on exclusion. Ideal for undergraduates seeking an explanation of one of this novel's central thematic concerns. Posits the convent not as a binary opposite to Ruby but as an alternative, "transitional" social reality (243).

Jessee, Sharon. "The Contrapuntal Historiography of Toni Morrison's *Paradise*: Unpacking the Legacies of the Kansas and Oklahoma All-Black Towns." *American Studies* 47.1 (2006): 81-112.

Illuminating excavation of the relationship between *Paradise* and the documented history of all-black towns founded in the nineteenth century such as Nicodemus, Kansas, Langston City in Oklahoma Territory and Boley in Indian Territory. Discusses why Morrison situates her own story in the 1970s.

Osucha, Eden. "Race and The Regulation of Intimacy in the Moynihan Report, the *Griswold* Decision, and Morrison's *Paradise*." *American Literary History* 27.2 (2015): 256-84.

A rigorous, original reading of *Paradise* as critique of the Moynihan Report of 1965 and of the subsequent Supreme Court decision, *Griswold vs Connecticut*. Argues that the novel's explorations of the relationship between whiteness and privacy, the sexual politics of nationhood and the meanings of home constitute "a forceful rejoinder to the report's legacies" (257).

Love

The two articles here indicate the role of Morrison's fiction in theory and in intellectual thought, rather than vice versa. Mellard 2009 both adopts and critiques a psychoanalytical perspective in his discussion of narcissistic identification in the text. Wallace 2014 argues that *Love* plays an important role in recent debates about postmodernism, ethics and racial politics.

Mellard, James M. "Families Make the Best Enemies: Paradoxes of Narcissistic Identification in Toni Morrison's *Love*." *African American Review* 43.3 (2009): 699-712.

A psychoanalytical reading, informed by Freud and Lacan, and also, unusually, Žižek, exploring the novel's concern with the psychological phenomenon of identification. Takes account of scepticism regarding the validity of psychoanalytical approaches in the field of African American studies.

Wallace, Cynthia R. "L as Language: Love and Ethics." *African American Review* 47.2-3 (2014): 375-390.

Illuminates the ways that *Love* engages with debates about the "ethical turn" and racial politics in recent literary and cultural theory. Links close readings of the novel with Morrison's non-fiction and prior scholarly interpretations of this text.

A Mercy and Home

Much of the best scholarship on *A Mercy* is collected in Stave and Tally 2011, Fultz 2013 and MELUS 36.2. In the additional selection here, Roynon 2011 argues for the importance of the intertextual dialogue with John Milton in the novel, while Wyatt shows that as with all Morrison's novels, this text interestingly rewards psychoanalytical readings. Brickhouse 2012 is included here for the surprising and persuasive nature of its thesis. Indicative of Morrison's contribution to intellectual history, in this case to the evolving conceptualization of American studies and American literature, it argues that *A Mercy* meditates significantly on nineteenth-century American literary history and on our (mis)readings therein. On *Home*, Darda 2015 is included here for the originality of its approach in situating the novel, and implicitly its author, alongside other literary responses to the Korean War: Ha Jin's novel *War Trash*, Philip Roth's *Indignation*; and Chang-rae Lee's *The Surrendered*.

Brickhouse, Anna. "Transatlantic vs Hemispheric: Toni Morrison's Long Nineteenth Century." In *The Oxford Handbook of Nineteenth-Century American Literature*. Edited by Russ Castronovo, 137-162. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Brilliant counter-intuitive argument. Reads *A Mercy* as a "reconceptualising of nineteenth-century American writing." References *Beloved*, *Paradise*, *Jazz* and *Playing in the Dark*, although regrettably does not make use of prior scholarship on Morrison and/or *A Mercy*.

Darda, Joseph. "The Literary Afterlife of the Korean War." *American Literature: A Journal of Literary History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 87:1 (2015): 79-105.

Examines *Home* alongside three other recent American novels that excavate the neglected memory of the Korean War: Illuminates the relationship between the legacy of this war and the war on terror in Morrison's text. The last 10 pages focus exclusively on *Home* and Morrison is referenced throughout the argument.

Roynon, Tessa. "Her Dark Materials: John Milton, Toni Morrison, and Concepts of 'Dominion' in *A Mercy*." *African American Review* 44.4 (2011): 593-606.

Explores the complex engagement with John Milton's *Paradise Lost* in this novel's representations of order and chaos, reason and desire, and the divine and the human, and in its deployments of the heavily-invested term, "dominion."

Wyatt, Jean. "Failed Messages, Maternal Loss, and Narrative Form in Toni Morrison's *A Mercy*." *Modern Fiction Studies* 58.1 (2012): 128-151.

A psychoanalytic reading of the novel, informed by Jean Laplanche. Focuses on enigmatic or failed messages between Florens's mother and her daughter, and on the traumatic effects of the early separation.

Articles and Chapters on Performance Pieces

There is, to date, little published analysis of Morrison's collaborative works for performance. In the pair selected here, Kitts 2014 finds *Desdemona* ripe for interpretation and discussion, while Kodat is troubled by many aspects of the opera, *Margaret Garner*.

Kitts, Lenore. "The Sound of Change: A Musical Transit through the Wounded Modernity of *Desdemona*." In *Toni Morrison: Memory and Meaning*. Edited by Adrienne Lanier Seward and Justine Tally, 255-68. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2014.

The first scholarly analysis of *Desdemona*. Outlines the nature of the work and its genesis. Explores its postcolonial and feminist concerns, its themes of naming, and its cross-cultural dialogue. Includes material from interviews with singer-songwriter Rokia Traoré, and discusses the rise of Islamic extremist violence in her homeland of Mali.

Kodat, Catherine Gunter. "Margaret Garner and the Second Tear." *American Quarterly* 60.1 (2008): 159-71.

Rigorous critique of the opera (score by Richard Danielpour, premiere 2005) for which Morrison wrote the libretto. While giving an invaluable account of the creation and production history of the opera, Kodat argues that it is an "unfortunate" project, "thoughtless ... in its approach to the central ethical problem of ventriloquizing its subject" (161).

Scholarship that Compares Morrison with Other Authors

Comparative work on Morrison really took off in the late 1990s, with William Faulkner clearly emerging as the author to whom she is most frequently compared. The material listed here is grouped by the author(s) Morrison is paired with: James Baldwin and then William Faulkner, together with a section on a host of other authors (Edwidge Danticat, Ralph Ellison, Wilson Harris, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Thomas Pynchon, Philip Roth, Margaret Walker, Virginia Woolf, and numerous further African American and Caribbean writers).

James Baldwin

King and Scott 2006 is a landmark in comparative Morrison scholarship. A substantial anthology (280 dense pages), it comprises 14 essays by different scholars, each making a direct comparison between aspects of Morrison's and Baldwin's work. It is essential reading for anyone interested in this pairing. King's introduction is an invaluable overview of the personal and literary relationship between the two writers, and of its significance. James 2013 is a sophisticated and original comparison of Baldwin's *Another Country* with Morrison's *Jazz*. It is invaluable to any consideration of the urban and/or modernism in Morrison.

James, David. "'Seeing beneath the formlessness': James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, and Restorative Urbanism." In *Utopianism, Modernism and Literature in the Twentieth Century*. By David James, 168-81. New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Argues that representing New York City both authors reject radical reconfigurations of the urban environment, constructing glimpses of utopia instead through the quotidian. Close readings demonstrate how they "extend the conversation between modernist aesthetics and urban literary utopias into the post-war era" (171).

King, Lovalerie, and Lynn Orilla Scott, eds. *James Baldwin and Toni Morrison: Comparative and Critical and Theoretical Essays*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.

Contributors include veterans of the field such as Trudier Harris and Keith Byerman as well as younger experts. The broad scope includes consideration of "Sonny's Blues" and "Recitatif" (Harris) or the nonfiction (Richard Schur). All essays are published here for the first time.

William Faulkner

Weinstein 1996 is the earliest monograph on Morrison and Faulkner. It is organized thematically, discussing concepts such as "mammies and mothers," "slavery," "manhood," "fathering" and "miscegenation" (x). Cowart 1997 continues to cause controversy in its compelling questioning of Morrison's statement that she is "not like" Faulkner or Joyce. Kolmerten 1997 is the "go to" and definitive essay collection on the now much-discussed dialogues between these two authors. McKee 1999 unusually positions Morrison and Faulkner alongside Henry James in her examination of racial constructions. Like Schreiber 2005, which is a Lacanian reading of the authors, McKee deals with the

writers separately in sequential sections, rather than in direct pairings. Dussere 2003 is a concise monograph that builds on prior scholarship comparing Faulkner and Morrison to advance a relatively-little-explored angle on the relationship: economic themes and figures (such as the concepts of debt and repayment, exchange and accounting, property and the market) in the history of slavery. Hamblin and Rieger 2013 is a neglected collection of essays arising from a conference at Southwest Missouri State University in October 2010.

Cowart, David. "Faulkner and Joyce in Morrison's *Song of Solomon*." In *Toni Morrison's Fiction: Contemporary Criticism*. Edited by David Middleton, 95-108. New York: Garland, 1997.

Controversially claims that studies of black literature overemphasize "black" and underemphasize literariness, but is insightful and persuasive on the formal and thematic commonalities between Morrison, Faulkner and Joyce. Originally published in 1990.

Dussere, Erik. *Balancing the books: Faulkner, Morrison, and the economies of slavery*. New York and London: Routledge, 2003.

Contains some striking and original comparisons in the 4 chapters, for example of *Intruder in the Dust*, *Song of Solomon* and *Tar Baby* in Chapter 3.

Hamblin, Robert W. and Christopher Rieger, eds. *Faulkner and Morrison*. Cape Girardeau, MO: Southeast Missouri State UP, 2013.

16 chapters including contributions by longstanding Faulkner /Morrison scholars such as Duvall and Towner, but also important newcomers such as Jincai Yang, who writes on "Toni Morrison's Critical Reception in China."

Kolmerten, Ross et al, eds. *Unflinching Gaze: Faulkner and Morrison Re-envisioned*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1997.

15 chapters (covering texts up to and including *Jazz*) perform brilliant close readings of a range of pairings and themes. Duvall's introductory essay, "The Anxiety of Faulknerian Influence," is essential reading for anyone interested in the risks and benefits of this comparative approach to Morrison.

McKee, Patricia. *Producing American Races: Henry James, William Faulkner, Toni Morrison*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1999.

The final 2 chapters in this sophisticated comparative work examine *Sula* and *Jazz* respectively, closely analysing their formation of black identities primarily through oral and aural media. Suitable for advanced undergraduates and beyond.

Schreiber, Evelyn. *Subversive Voices: Eroticizing the Other in William Faulkner and Toni Morrison*. Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press 2005.

The last 4 chapters discuss in this Lacanian approach discuss *The Bluest Eye*, *Song of Solomon*, *Beloved* and *Paradise*, while the first 3 treat Faulkner.

Weinstein, Philip. *What Else but Love? The Ordeal of Race in Faulkner and Morrison*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

Clearly written, persuasively argued with an appealing thematic structure. Organizing themes include how the legacies of slavery shape contrasting meanings of "Americanness." Accessible to undergraduates and beyond, despite high level of detailed close reading.

Comparisons of Morrison with miscellaneous authors (books)

Book-length studies positioning Morrison in a comparative context began to appear from around 2000 onwards. Williams 2000 is a monograph that discusses the artist as outsider in Morrison and Virginia Woolf (for other comparisons of Morrison and Woolf see Christian in Peterson 1997, and Duvall 2000). In an unexpected pairing, Patell 2001 compares the critique of liberal ideology in Morrison and

Pynchon. Developed from a doctoral thesis, it holds both writers in play throughout its 4 extensive, sometimes dense but readable chapters, and is illuminating on the position of Morrison within American thought, literature and postmodernism. In a slightly later monograph, meanwhile, Durrant 2004 positions Morrison in a postcolonial context alongside Coetzee and Wilson Harris. In one long chapter each on Coetzee, Harrison and Morrison, he posits that together these authors argue for the creation of a collective community. Wall 2005 includes extensive discussion of Morrison, comparing her to Lorde and to Naylor, in her brilliant reassessment of African American women's writing, while Terry 2013 situates Morrison within an innovative paradigm of African American and Caribbean writers. This is a very important context in which to consider Morrison and the book is therefore invaluable to those with an advanced interest in the field and Morrison's position within it. Finally, Fishkin 2014 is an anthology that includes essays pairing Morrison with Margaret Walker and with Edwidge Danticat.

Durrant, Sam. *Postcolonial Narrative and the Work of Mourning: J.M. Coetzee, Wilson Harris and Toni Morrison*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2004.

Based on a PhD thesis, valuable for its transnational comparison of "three modes of bearing witness to histories of racial oppression" (1). Introduction places Morrison within postcolonial and black diasporic theoretical paradigms. The Morrison chapter, informed by psychoanalytical approaches, focuses on *Beloved* and *The Bluest Eye*.

Fishkin, Benjamin Hart et al. eds. *Outward Evil Inward Battle: Human Memory in Literature*. Bamenda, Cameroon: Langaa RPCIG, 2014.

Included in this anthology from a West African press are two unusual comparative essays on Morrison: Eleanor Blount's on Morrison and Margaret Walker; and Rhonda Collier's on *Tar Baby* and Edwidge Danticat's *Breath, Eyes, Memory* (1994).

Patell, Cyrys R.K. *Negative Liberties: Morrison, Pynchon, and the problem of liberal ideology*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001.

Identifies Morrison and Pynchon as sharing an ambivalent critique of liberal ideology, in particular that characterizing Emersonian individualism and also the continuities and discontinuities of that philosophy in the Reagan era. Useful to graduate students and academics.

Terry, Jennifer. *"Shuttles in the Rocking Loom": Mapping the Black Diaspora in African American and Caribbean fiction*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013.

Rigorous and wide-ranging comparative study of a huge range of black diasporic novelists and theorists. There are only about 30 pages of discussion exclusively on Morrison but these are embedded in a sophisticated argument about the relationship between the representation of symbolic geographies and black diaspora identity / cultural formation.

Wall, Cheryl. *Worrying the Line: Black Women Writers, Lineage, and Literary Tradition*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005.

Definitive study of the field that deploys paradigms from the Blues in order to develop understanding of the relationship between lineage and literary tradition in Lucille Clifton, Gayl Jones, Audre Lorde, Paule Marshall, Toni Morrison (featured in 3 of the chapters), Gloria Naylor, and Alice Walker.

Comparisons of Morrison with other authors (articles and chapters)

Placing Morrison in comparative context much earlier than most, Stryz 2000 (reprinted from an issue of *Genre* in 1991) compares *Beloved* with Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. In a different kind of comparison with a nineteenth-century novel, Russell 2009 amplifies the significance for postcolonial studies of Gilbert and Gubar's landmark 1979 text through detailed illumination of the "startling parallels" between Bronte's and Morrison's novels, with an emphasis on domestic spaces (for example between the Red Room and the Keeping Room). While Parrish 1997 is a surprisingly rare comparison of Morrison with Charles Johnson, Schur 2005 is an unusual discussion of Morrison and Roth, focusing on the trilogies that both examine American experience. His particular focus is on

American Pastoral and *Paradise*. Vint 2007 situates *Beloved* in an Afrofuturist context through comparison with Octavia Butler's *Kindred*.

Parrish, Timothy. "Imagining Slavery: Toni Morrison and Charles Johnson." *Studies in American Fiction* 25.1 (1997): 81-100.

Compares *Beloved* with Johnson's *Oxherding Tale* (1982), arguing through close reading that while Morrison and Johnson's representations of slavery contrast in some obvious ways, they also have more in common than might immediately meet the eye.

Russell, Danielle. "Revisiting the Attic: Recognizing the Shared Spaces of *Jane Eyre* and *Beloved*." Edited by Annette R. Federico, 127-48. In *Gilbert and Gubar's The Madwoman in the Attic After Thirty Years*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2009.

Unusual and useful for bringing Morrison's *Playing in the Dark* into the discussion as an invaluable and persuasive bridge between the Gilbert and Gubar and the intertextual workings of *Beloved* and Bronte's novel.

Schur, Richard. "Dream or Nightmare? Roth, Morrison and America." *Philip Roth Studies* 1:1 (2005): 19-36.

Reads these novels against each other within the framework of recent conflicts between African Americans and Jews. Suggests that Roth depicts contemporary America as a nightmare, Morrison as a yet-to-be-fulfilled dream.

Stryz, Jan. "The Other Ghost in *Beloved*: The Specter of *The Scarlet Letter*." In *The New Romanticism: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Edited by Eberhard Alsen, 137-58. New York: Garland 2000.

Positioned within a careful consideration of the politics of different intertextual placements and assessments of Morrison. Includes detailed close readings alongside claims for broad thematic dialogue. Particular comparison of the texts' treatment of the romance genre.

Vint, Sherryl. "'Only by Experience': Embodiment and the Limitations of Realism in Neo-Slave Narratives." *Science Fiction Studies* 34.2 (2007) 241-61.

Comparison between *Beloved* and Octavia Butler's *Kindred* (1979), reading both in an Afrofuturist /speculative context. Useful but unusual perspective on Morrison, by a leading figure in this field.

Special Issues of Journals

Modern Fiction Studies 39.3/39.4, edited by Nancy Peterson, is a special double issue on the theme of "canonizing Toni Morrison." Many of its essays are reprinted in Peterson 1997. *Modern Fiction Studies* 52.2, edited by Nancy Peterson and John Duvall, includes an invaluable list of abstracts in its online table of contents. The articles in *EurAmerica* 36.4 are written by a range of international scholars, many from China. *MELUS* 36.2 is subtitled "Toni Morrison: New Directions." Edited by Jennifer Terry and Kathryn Nicol, it is an essential reference point for those in search of recent sophisticated readings of Morrison's later work.

Modern Fiction Studies 39.3/39.4 (1993)

13 essays. Includes Christian on Woolf and Morrison, Moreland's comparison of *Beloved* and Twain, Woidat on *Beloved* and Hawthorne. Then 4 grouped under the theme of 'nihilism', 3 on *Beloved*, and two on "the vitality of language." Contains bibliographical materials at the end.

Modern Fiction Studies 52.2 (2006)

11 essays in 3 parts: "Reaching Towards Paradise," "Negotiating Gender and Justice in Morrison," and the highlight, "Music and Memory." In addition to Kitts 2006, this includes Schreiber on the

ideological freighting of blues and jazz in *Jazz*, and Fallon on the allegory of memory in Margaret Garner.

EurAmerica 36.4 (2006)

Articles are written in English; their abstracts are in Chinese. Includes Chia-yen Ku on Toni Morrison's books for children.

MELUS 36.2 (2011)

Of the 9 essays, 3 address *Paradise*, 3 *A Mercy*, 1 *Beloved*, 1 the Aesop adaptations and 1 "Recitatif." The most cited since is Babb's outstanding reading of *A Mercy* in relation to Early American texts. Also contains 10 reviews of recent books on Morrison.

Thematic Studies

For the most part, it is difficult to organize the scholarship on thematic lines, as so much of it treats several themes at once. Material listed in this thematic section centres closely on one specific idea, and the themes are arranged alphabetically: West African Traditions, Classical (Greek and Roman) Traditions, Disability, Motherhood, Music, and Native American Culture. There is also a list of "Miscellaneous Topics."

West African Traditions

Lewis 1990 is notable as early exploration of the range of allusions to West African cultural practice in *Sula*, anticipating later oeuvre-wide studies of the topic. Wilentz also discusses African traditions in *Sula* in Earle and McKay 1997. Wilentz 1993 argues that an "Afrocentric discourse" is central in *Song of Solomon* (138). Jennings 2008, a detailed and highly scholarly monograph, is the definitive study of the presence and reformulations of African diasporic traditions in the oeuvre up to and including *Paradise*. The works listed here share a commitment to emphasizing Morrison's aesthetic and politics as specifically "black," to which her deployment of African traditions is central, and which diminishes the importance of European cultural references in her work.

Jennings, LaVinia Delois. *Toni Morrison and the Idea of Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Sophisticated thematic structure: discusses *bandoki* (witches); *kanda* (living elders); and *banganga* (the specialists) in turn. Essential reading for advanced undergraduates and beyond.

Lewis, Vashti Crutcher. "African Tradition in Toni Morrison's *Sula*." In *Wild Women in the Whirlwind: Afro-American Culture and the Contemporary Literary Renaissance*. Edited by Joanne Braxton and Andree McLaughlin, 316-25. London: Serpent's Tale, 1990.

Lewis uses the presence of references to West African culture and traditions to assert an (implicitly exclusive) black, non-European context in which to interpret Morrison. The anthology in which the essay is placed is invaluable for a sense of Morrison's position in the 1970s and early 1980s.

Wilentz, Gay. "Civilizations Underneath: African Heritage as Cultural Discourse in Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*." In *Toni Morrison's Song of Solomon: A Casebook*. Edited by Jan Furman, 137-165. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Discusses the oral tradition, breastfeeding, naming and the myth of flying Africans.

Classical (Greek and Roman) Traditions

On first glance studies of the Greek and Roman tradition in Morrison's work appear to directly oppose, or be in binary opposition, to studies that emphasize the primacy of West African traditions in her work (such as Wilentz 1993 or Jennings 2008). Miner 1995 is a pioneer in illuminating the classical allusiveness in Morrison's work, in her article on *The Bluest Eye*. Walters 2007 builds on work by Classicists such as Patrice Rankine, whose book on classical allusiveness in Ralph Ellison, *Ulysses in Black* (2006), which includes some discussion of *Song of Solomon*, became a foundational text in the field of black classicism. Walters positions Morrison in a genealogy of African American women

writers who engage with Greek and Roman tradition. Roynon 2013 is the first monograph devoted exclusively to Morrison's classicism, and (like Tally 2009) suggests ways in which classical and African traditions are syncretized rather than juxtaposed in the oeuvre. See also Benston 1991 on this subject.

Miner, Madonne. "Lady No Longer Sings the Blues: Rape, Madness and Silence in *The Bluest Eye*." In *Modern Critical Views: Toni Morrison*. Edited by Harold Bloom, 85-99. New York: Chelsea House, 1990.

Originally published in 1985. Pioneer in reading classical allusions in Morrison's work, illuminates the echoes of Philomela in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and the Persephone myth in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, in the depictions of Pecola's rape and silence.

Roynon, Tessa. *Toni Morrison and the Classical Tradition: Transforming American Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Thematic reading of Morrison's ambivalent engagement with the classical tradition in all her novels up to and including *Home* (2012). Argues that Morrison's conflicted, often African-inflected classicism is fundamental to her radical revisions of American history.

Walters, Tracey L. *African American Literature and the Classicist Tradition: Black Women Writers from Wheatley to Morrison*. New York: PalgraveMacmillan, 2007.

The fourth chapter discusses Morrison's deconstruction and reconstruction of classical and cultural myth in *Song of Solomon*, *Beloved* and *The Bluest Eye*.

Disability

Morrison's work is of growing interest within Disability studies. Thomson 1997 is an unusual reading that examines how Morrison (considered alongside Lorde and Petry) renders oppression without reinscribing it, and how her representations of disability transcend the limitations of the black history that the narrative of self authenticates. Quayson 2007 is similarly striking for its originality. Quayson's chapter on Morrison, in his interdisciplinary and cross-cultural monograph on a range of authors, argues that within her novels (he discusses *The Bluest Eye*, *Sula*, *Song of Solomon*, *Beloved* and *Paradise*) disability is a "polyvalent fulcrum" that both radiates multiple meanings but also encourages multiple shifts in perspective by both characters and readers (87).

Quayson, Ato. "Toni Morrison: Disability, Ambiguity, and Perspectival Modulations." In *Aesthetic Nervousness: Disability and the Crisis of Representation*. By Ato Quayson, 86-114. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007.

Close readings focus on four characters: Consolata, Eva Peace, and Sethe. Useful for its illumination of differences as well as similarities between representations of disability (and the effects of these) in the three chosen texts.

Thomson, Rosemary Garland. "Disabled Women as Powerful Women in Petry, Morrison, and Lorde: Revising Black Female Subjectivity." In *The Body and Physical Difference: Discourses of Disability*. Edited by David T. Mitchell and Sharon S. Snyder, 240-66. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997.

Traces a genealogy of the disabled figure in Morrison's first five novels, in the context of a shift from a modernist to postmodernist mode.

Motherhood

The 3 studies listed here stand out among the many on this theme in Morrison. Fultz 1996 is a relatively early essay from a leading scholar in Morrison studies, and is notable for its unusual choice of texts in relation to mothers and daughters. Hirsch 1994 is primarily a sociological reading. It builds on the psychoanalytical discussion of *Beloved* begun in her earlier work, *The Mother/Daughter Plot*

(1989). O' Reilly 2004, developed from a doctoral dissertation and the first monograph in this field, is like Hirsch informed by sociology as much as literary criticism. Contextualizing the novels within theories of black motherhood, O' Reilly argues that "Morrison portrays motherhood ... as a political enterprise" (x).

Fultz, Lucille. "To Make Herself: Mother-Daughter Conflicts in Toni Morrison's *Sula* and *Tar Baby*." In *Women of Color: Mother-Daughter Relationships in 20th-century Literature*. Edited by Elizabeth Brown-Guillory, 228-44. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996.

Includes detailed analysis of the relationships between Eva, Hannah and Sula, and reads the Jadine/Ondine relationship in terms of Patricia Hill Collins' s concept of the "othermother" (237). Clearly and accessibly written, not as theorized as many approaches to this topic. Ideal for first year undergraduates.

Hirsch, Marianne. "Maternity and Rememory: Toni Morrison' s *Beloved*." In *Representations of Motherhood*. Edited by Donna Bassin et al, 92-110. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.

Illuminates the ways in which *Beloved* tests matriarchal power through an African-American mother herself examining maternal subjectivity. Discusses the slave family as implicitly critiquing and rejecting the Oedipal model of the family.

O' Reilly, Andrea. *Toni Morrison and Motherhood: A Politics of the Heart*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2004.

Reading Morrison as a "maternal theorist" (xi), this rigorous but substantial monograph (around 180 pages of text but in a very small font) is organized thematically, across differing combinations of the first six novels.

Music

The selection here is at once representative and unrepresentative of the field, in which it is jazz music in *Jazz* that provokes most critical discussion, followed by allusiveness to various African American musical traditions in *Beloved*. Each study here brings a highly specific focus to bear on the subject. In Boutry 2000 the section on Morrison is small – only 5 pages, on *Jazz* – but the context in terms of the history and cultural genealogy of the Blues is fresh and illuminating. Kitts 2006 is an in-depth analysis of musical forms in *Beloved* by a musicologist who wrote her doctoral dissertation on the subject. The "Works Cited" for this article is a goldmine for those researching Morrison and the context of African American music, especially jazz. Rice 2000 surveys the crucial role of jazz music in *The Bluest Eye*, *Sula*, *Beloved* and *Jazz*, with a particular and perhaps surprising but persuasive focus on the central two, *Sula* and *Beloved*. He argues that Shango (the Yoruba god of thunder) not Orpheus is the most useful paradigm for understanding the processes of music in the oeuvre (167).

Boutry, Katherine. "Black and Blue: The Female Body of Blues Writing in Jean Toomer, Toni Morrison, and Gayl Jones." In *Black Orpheus: Music in African American Fiction From the Harlem Renaissance to Toni Morrison*. Edited by Saadi A. Simawe, 91-118. New York: Garland, 2000. 91-118.

Jazz (usually discussed in terms of jazz, not the Blues) is here compared with *Cane* and *Corregidora*, and the essay is a focused contribution on the relationship between African American literature and the Blues across the twentieth century.

Kitts, Lenore. "Toni Morrison and 'Sis Joe' : The Musical Heritage of Paul D." *Modern Fiction Studies* 52.2 (2006): 495-523.

Illuminates breadth and depth of Morrison' s sometimes-hidden engagement with slave music in the novel, focusing unusually on the role of the work song in the articulations of Paul D.

Rice, Alan J. "It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing: Jazz's Many Uses for Toni Morrison." In *Black Orpheus: Music in African American Fiction From the Harlem Renaissance to Toni Morrison*. Edited by Saadi A. Simawe, 153-180. New York: Garland, 2000. 153-80.

Distinguished by building on and combining critical theory, existing scholarship on Morrison and key texts on the subject of jazz and historical jazz musicians in its analysis of 4 novels. Invaluable overview for, for example, undergraduates writing an extended essay on this subject.

Native American Culture

A neglected aspect of Morrison's writing until well into the first decade of the twenty-first century. Both publications listed here predate *A Mercy* and its central Native American character, Lina, which suggests more work in this area may be forthcoming. Kennedy 2006 surveys of the relationship between Native Americans and African Americans in Morrison's work as a critique of European dominance. She discusses 3 novels in the historical order and Native historical contexts of their time settings: first *Beloved*, then *Song of Solomon*, then *Paradise*. Smith 2008 focuses on the same 3 novels but makes closer comparisons between them, holding them all in play. It is also more ecocritical in approach.

Kennedy, Virginia. "Native Americans, African Americans, and the Space that is America: Indian Presence in the Fiction of Toni Morrison." In *Crossing Waters, Crossing Worlds: The African Diaspora in Indian Country*. Edited by Tiya Miles and Sharon P. Holland, 196-217. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006.

Builds on the work of William Loren Katz on the relationship between African and Native Americans. Clearly written, with detailed close readings.

Smith, Claire Lindsey. "Indigenous 'Rememory' : Cultural Hybridity and the Nature of Resistance in the Novels of Toni Morrison." In *Indians, Environment, and Identity on the Borders of American Literature: From Faulkner and Morrison to Walker and Silko*. By Lindsey Claire Smith, 75-107. New York: PalgraveMacmillan, 2008.

Discussion in this chapter focuses on interactions between African Americans and Native Americans in Morrison's work, alongside the same in the other authors mentioned in the book's title. Ecocritical in its overall impulse.

Miscellaneous topics

The 4 disparate subjects covered here are the theme of photography in Morrison's work, Morrison's reading of Willa Cather; the forewords to her novels that she published in the Vintage editions, and the effects of the canonization of Morrison. Todd 1992 is a provocative essay that asks uncomfortable questions about whether or not the canonization of Morrison in the wake of *Beloved* is primarily an act of appropriation informed by political correctness. Mobley 2000 is a rare, brief but incisive discussion of Morrison's interpretation of *Sapphira and the Slave Girl* in *Playing in the Dark*. Hall 2011 is an unconventional interdisciplinary analysis that analyses Morrison's career-long writing about photography. Roynon 2014 questions the value of the didactic forewords that accompany 8 of Morrison's novels in Vintage editions published from 2005 onwards.

Hall, Alice. "Foreign Bodies: Portraiture and Photography in the Works of Toni Morrison." *Interdisciplinary Humanities* 28.2 (2011): 56-66.

Focuses on the racial, cultural, and generic differences in relation to visual representation in Morrison's work.

Mobley, Marilyn Mobley. "The Dangerous Journey" : Toni Morrison's Reading of *Sapphira and the Slave Girl*. In *Willa Cather's Southern Connections: New Essays on Cather and the South*. Edited by Ann Romines, 83-89. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000.

Elucidates the wider cultural and political implications of Morrison's approach, yielding new insights about both Morrison and Cather in the process. Janis Stout's essay in the same collection also discusses Morrison's critical perspective on Cather.

Royonon, Tessa. "Lobbying the Reader: Toni Morrison's recent forewords to her novels." *European Journal of American Culture* 33.2 (2014): 85-96.

Takes issue with Morrison's attempts, in her forewords to the Vintage editions of 8 of the novels published from 2005 onwards, to control her own reception and the interpretation of her texts.

Todd, Richard. "Toni Morrison and Canonicity: Acceptance or Appropriation?" In *Rewriting the Dream: Reflections on the Changing American Literary Canon*. Edited by W.M. Verhoeven, 43-59. Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 1992.

Invaluable for those interested in the pre- and post-*Beloved* reception of Morrison as well as canon studies. Suggests that readings that canonize it tend to censor or distort it, for example through comparisons to "Western" texts. Invaluable for those interested in the reception of Morrison as well as canon studies.

On Adaptations of Morrison's Work for Screen and Stage

Wardi 2005 and Conner 2007 discuss the 1998 film of *Beloved* directed by Jonathan Demme. Conner's account, which includes detailed and nuanced analysis of many scenes, is more favourable than Wardi's. Wardi's analysis takes account of the many reviews of the film, both positive and negative. It argues that Morrison's language is untranslatable to the screen. Young and Prince 2012 analyze Lydia Diamond's adaptation of *The Bluest Eye* into a stage play that premiered with the Steppenwolf Theatre Company in 2005.

Conner, Marc C. "The Specter of History: filming memory in *Beloved*." *Twentieth-Century American Fiction on Screen*. Edited by R. Barton Palmer, 2002-17. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Balanced and well-informed discussion of the film, attentive to its attempts to replicate or respond to features of the novel, such as its preoccupation with colour or its emphasis on the central theme of matrilineal heritage.

Wardi, Anissa Janine. "Freak Shows, Spectacles, and Carnivals: Reading Jonathan Demme's *Beloved*." *African American Review* 39.4 (2005): 513-26.

Sophisticated analysis of the film that attributes its failure to the untranslatable nature of Morrison's language to the screen and by Demme's overemphasis on the carnival, on freakery and horror.

Young, Harvey and Jocelyn Prince. "Adapting *The Bluest Eye* for the Stage." *African American Review* 45.1-2 (2012): 143-155.

Focuses on the effects of Lydia Diamond's changes to the novel in creating the play (premiered in 2005) – for example the comparatively diminished effects of racism in the stage version of the text.

Analysis of and Materials for Teaching Toni Morrison

Earle and McKay 1997 is unusual but fruitful approach to the author. The brief (18 page) Part I is a now somewhat outdated overview of resources available to teachers of Morrison's novels. The much longer Part II consists of reflections on teaching different novels, and overviews of different contextual approaches. Ferrier 2010 comprises fascinating and unusual reflections on (and advice about) teaching *The Bluest Eye* at the University of Queensland, in a region of Australia characterized at different times as both the "Deep North" (implicitly "redneck") and the "Red North" (socialist).

Carole Ferrier, 'Teaching African American Women' s Writing in Australia: Reading Toni Morrison in the Deep North.' In *Teaching African American Women' s Writing*. Edited by Gina Wisker, 137-57. Basingstoke: PalgraveMacmillan, 2010.

Discussion is set in wider context of teaching African American literature alongside Aboriginal writing in Australia. Invaluable to those interested in the global politics and reception of Morrison' s oeuvre, besides teaching.

Earle, Kathryn and Nellie McKay. *Approaches to Teaching the Novels of Toni Morrison*. New York: Modern Languages Association, 1997.

Many of these essays on suggested teaching approaches themselves constitute significant theoretical readings of the oeuvre (up to *Jazz*). Highlights include Wilentz on African traditions in *Sula*, and Earle on the difficulty of teaching *The Bluest Eye*.

Festschrifts/ Tributes / Retrospective

Gillespie 2012 is a collection devised to mark the fortieth anniversary of the publication of *The Bluest Eye* (in 2010). An important and eclectic anthology, it combines personal tributes (for example by Nikki Giovanni or Farah Jasmine Griffin) with innovative approaches such as an analysis of photographs of Morrison by Timothy-Greenfield Sanders. Seward and Tally 2014 is developed from the Festschrift that was presented to Morrison at the Library of Congress on her 80th birthday (February 18th, 2011). This collection combines critical essays by major Morrison scholars with creative work by Rita Dove and Sonia Sanchez.

Gillespie, Carmen, ed. *Toni Morrison: Forty Years in the Clearing*. Bucknell, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2012.

Highlights include Peterson' s essay on Morrison, Géricault and "incendiary art," and Gillespie' s interview with Lydia Diamond, the playwright who adapted *The Bluest Eye* for the stage.

Seward, Adrienne Lanier, and Justine Tally, eds. *Toni Morrison: Memory and Meaning*. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2014.

While some work reprises previously published material, highlights include Marc Conner on "Modernity and the Homeless," Claudia Brodsky on "Aesthetic Activity," Kitts 2014 and the foreword by Carolyn Denard.

Reference Works and Bibliographies

Middleton 1987 is a meticulous bibliography, comprising detailed annotations of Morrison' s first 4 novels, nonfiction and of the critical reception up to the publication of *Beloved* in 1987. The website of the official Toni Morrison Society, www.tonimorrisonociety.org, hosts an online bibliography. Beaulieu 2003 is an alphabetical reference guide to Morrison' s work (including nonfiction) and its characters, themes, and aspects of narrative technique, up to and including *Paradise*. Around 50 contributors have written the articles, creating a high level of expertise and specialism. Relevant historical entries are also included, for example "Margaret Garner." Gillespie 2008 is also a reference work, with alphabetical contents and similar to Beaulieu, but due to its later date it encompasses more biographical material and the novel *Love* as well.

Beaulieu, Elizabeth Ann, ed. *Toni Morrison Encyclopedia*. Wesport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2003.

Useful to undergraduates to consult on a specific topic, although there is perhaps some difficulty in knowing what will be included and excluded, and therefore what to look up. "Oprah' s Book Club" is included, for example, but "Howard University" is not.

Gillespie, Carmen, ed. *Critical Companion to Toni Morrison: A Literary Reference to Her Life and Work*. New York: Facts on File, 2008.

Clearly organized into Part I (Works) and Part II (Related People, Places, and Topics). The unusual inclusion of a “chronology of individual novels” is a useful study aid to newcomers to Morrison who may be confused by the disrupted chronological structures of her novels.

Middleton, David. *Toni Morrison: an annotated bibliography*. New York: Garland, 1987.

Inevitably “out of date” due to its year of publication, but an invaluable guide to the fascinating first fifteen years of scholarship on Morrison.

www.tonimorrison.society.org

The website of the Toni Morrison Society hosts a bibliography of Morrison scholarship, currently up to and including 2011.