

Subject of Desire: the Portrait of White Female in Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy*

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Abstract

The role of female figures in Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy* has called a lot of attention and much ink has been spilled upon it. Mariah, the hostess of the family Lucy works for in North America, occupies a significant place in Lucy's constitution of gender identity. As a white female, Mariah is both the Mistress for Lucy, a girl from the third world, and a victim under the male gaze beneath the social condition of her own society. The gender relationships, Mariah confronts and the strategies she takes, reflect the cultural specificity of Western society. This paper aims to demonstrate the gender relationships confronted by Mariah and how she is influenced by cultural factors and how women in the West can be oppressed without even themselves noticing it.

Keywords: Gender asymmetry, Caribbean, gender identification, cultural specificity

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