The idea is to write it so that people hear it and it slides through the brain and goes straight to the heart.

— MAYA ANGELOU
CHAPTER - VI

CONCLUSION

Black feminism is “a self-conscious process of struggle propelling women and men toward a more harmonic vision of community” (Collins 3). This movement is integral to the “legacy of struggle against racism, sexism and other forms of oppression evident in African American literature” (qtd. in Black Literature Criticism 271) from the early nineteenth century to the present times. A further development of this tradition is the Black feminist criticism. It is with this Black feminist approach, the writers have tried both analytically and pragmatically to understand and dismantle the gender and racial oppressions.

The creation of the female voice in the female protagonist attained its momentum in the early nineteenth to mid-twentieth century fiction. The “female personas becoming “speaking subjects” (du Bois 65) and challenging the objectification and victimization had its beginnings in slave narratives and gradually entered all genres. Feminist authors have stressed the need for the African American literary canon to reflect the complete range of women’s experiences. The assumption put forward by feminist writers is that the feminist consciousness had been repressed in the collective and personal psyche of women for centuries. Women had been denied the power and had continued to submit themselves to male domination. They had been abused, disempowered and dominated by the patriarchal system.
Healing in literature has been portrayed in various genres. The process of healing starts from the writer’s soul and is realized in the actual writing. The art of writing serves as a means of therapy or as a positive compensation for a loss as in the case of Alfred Lord Tennyson, who wrote the famous elegy *In Memoriam* following the death of his dearest friend Arthur Henry Hallam giving vent to his grief over the loss of a dear friend, or as in the case of Dr. Elizabeth Brown – Guillory who wrote a short story *Beacon Hill* after her mother’s death.

Black women writers like Toni Morrison, Alice Walker and particularly Gloria Naylor, through their characters have tried to express both the grief and rage and have established the need for equality and collective recognition of wisdom and intuition through their fiction. The emergence of such feminist fictional writing with a consciousness of its own has intuitively provided new vision with healing matrices for the women to re-emerge into a new millennium.

Gloria Naylor in all her ‘quartet’ novels by a portrayal of such women protagonists has expressed the story of great suffering, pain, sexual grief and abandonment, and loss. Yet each is a story of healing and an initiation into an awakening and empowerment. From *The Women of Brewster Place* to *Bailey’s Cafe*, the healing transformation has been an on-going process. From Mattie Michael to Willa Prescott, Sapphira Wade and finally Eve, all the women have authentically faced and confronted abuse and pain. Naylor has acknowledged the deep wounds in her characters and has brought together the alienated aspects of the suppressed psyche. With varied healing matrices, she has provided an empowering wholeness
either through dreams, messianic self-sacrifices, mythical powers and emotive healing to her characters who seek recovery, renewal and integration.

Gloria Naylor through her quartet novels has shown the woman’s space, woman’s relationships to other women and communities, and healing places. Laurence Coupe in *Myth* (1997) identifies the artist as a new shaman—“a mythical, priestly, and political figure who has become a visionary and a healer” (57). Naylor, by developing new forms of healing matrices in each of her four novels, has proved herself to be a shaman in African American Literature.

Instead of turning a blind eye to the “cult of victimology” (McWhorter 23), if the ills of the victims are treated successfully, such ways would certainly “empower and promote holistic states of well being” (hooks 23) not only for the victims but also for the generations in future, too. The contemporary black women writers have attempted and succeeded in their efforts to satisfy the needs of the black psyche through their narratives. As McWhorter acknowledges, many middle and upper middle class blacks in America have managed to succeed academically, socially and economically and they may one day realize that they are experiencing varied levels of hatred, both for themselves and others and all these might manifest themselves at any moment.

Traditional black women’s fiction has not expressed such themes of realization and experiences. Later attempts by writers like Zora Neale Hurston’s and Ann Petry’s fiction received only a negative feedback. The works of black women authors like Toni Morrison, Alice Walker and Gloria Naylor produced later revealed more
intimate issues of the realities and the female identity crisis more effectively. During the last thirty years of the twentieth century, these writers have succeeded to such an extent that critic like Joanne Braxton labelled the contemporary period as "contemporary Literary Renaissance"(4). It is these contemporary writers who have explored the concept of healing through different matrices.

Diana Shulman, a practicing therapist, is asserts that “Problems entered you with pain, while stories allow for possibilities” (7). The stories told by either the patient or the novelist or the story teller, who represents the victimized female black race provides her with the opportunity to analyze the origin and dimensions of that pain and opens up a new path of healing not only her self but also of her generation. These novels of the contemporary black women fiction writers have facilitated the healing of the reader’s psyche, too. Almost all the writers have succeeded in attending to and curing the wounded African American psyche like “all mental health disorders” (hooks 201).

The professional storyteller and therapist, Erica Helm Meade, in her Tell it By Heart: Women and the Healing Power of Story (1995) has listed thirteen functions for a healing story. Of which, the most applicable for Gloria Naylor’s quartet novels are:

- Arouses strong emotions in the reader/listener.
- Presents people, situations, and actions that the reader/listener can identify with a conflict.
- Helps the reader/listener to externalize a conflict.
- Helps the reader/listener activate long-term memory.
• Teaches the reader/listener to trust emotions.

• Provides an opportunity for the reader/listener to draw healing by internalizing wise, helpful, or comforting figures in the story.

• Helps people time to tune with duality, ambivalence, and strife, to move toward a more philosophical perspective on life. (243-247)

With all these properties along with a black feministic perspective, Gloria Naylor's Quartet novels have succeeded in providing a healing balm to the Black woman's psyche, which could be derived by reading, analyzing and internalizing the novels. They have also justified the formation of a new black space with varied healing matrices in each of her four novels.

The present study has focused on the four novels created by Gloria Naylor. The major concern in the previous four chapters has been the different healing matrices adopted by her in each of her quartet novels with a feminist's consciousness.

To establish the need for a healing strategy for an oppressed race, the background of the history of oppression becomes necessary. As such, the introductory chapter analyses the history of the Black feminist consciousness from its origin to its varied types. An attempt has been made to study the historical background of the black feminist thought, its contributors, and the varied phases of the movement with its core themes. The image and varied experiences of the black woman projected by different literary writers – the white men, the white women and the black men writers-- have also been traced out. The researcher has also tried to justify the preoccupations in the writings of the black feminists differing as they are from those
of the other writers. The consciousness with which they have written and their claim for a separate branch of literature—a specific identity, have been sufficiently highlighted. As stated by Mary Helen Washington, "they use specific language, specific symbols, specific images, with which they try to record their lives ... and try to claim their own same and their own space" (16).

The contributions of the black feminist writers have been surveyed briefly. As the community of the African American women has been a heterogeneous one, so are their expressions paralleling their attitudes.

Though the women writers of the Black Literary Renaissance have different attitudes pertaining to the creative process and its artistic function, they have a unique commonness among them. The contemporary women writers write consciously about the varied experiences of their racial oppressions that they had either heard or read about which had shaped them into writers with an identity. Claudia Tate, in her Black Women Writers at Work (1986) universalizes this black consciousness and asserts:

> Whether the subject of a book originates in personal experience, in observation, empathy, or imaginative projection is not nearly so important as the degree of truth and sincerity with which a book is rendered. If a writer honestly depicts what he or she really feels, sees, and believes ... then a work breathes with its own self-sustaining vitality. It then possesses a truth that exceeds the limited experience that is depicted and is, therefore, applicable to life in general. The work ... achieves universality. (70)
The evaluation of the writings of the black women can be attained only when a great deal of the origins of their visions are studied. Gloria Naylor has shared her visions of creation in her interviews and articles, consequently creating sensitivity in the readers.

The woman to women healing matrix in Naylor’s first of the quartet novels The Women of Brewster Place has been investigated and examined in chapter two. This is her first and small start to the ‘creative engagement’ (Martin 104) with healing practices. With an ordinary human sympathy, this finds its expression only in those who have similarly suffered; Naylor places her characters in Brewster Place, a community marginalized by the patriarchal society. All the women characters involve in a struggle for survival in an atmosphere of “poverty and prejudiced violence and violation and an almost crushing adversity” (12). As Naylor herself says, “Each woman has her dream and each story is the tale of dream deferred just a bit, which is the problem of the black female experience in America” (3). All the women are victimized for being both black and female. The novel with seven episodes, each depicting an individual’s life, is bound tighter as a novel, by a network of nurturing and healing by one woman to the other woman or women.

Mattie Michael is the first character the novel focuses on. Deserted by brutal cowardly behaviour of her one-time lover, Butch Fuller and the sex-biased father, she resorts to her childhood days’ friend Etta Mae and later to Miss Eva Turner in whom she finds herself “accepting the kindness of the woman with a hunger of which she had been unaware” (WBC 27). This woman who is nurtured by the other woman takes the charge of healing Lucielia Turner, the granddaughter of her saviour Eva Turner.
Kiswana soothing Cora Lee by bringing a kind of cultural awakening; Mattie consoling Etta Mae when deserted by Rev. woods; the Mother Mrs. Browne comforting her daughter Kiswana and the two lesbians nurturing each other – all the seven characters have experienced and possessed, as Amin asserts, “a sense of alienation” (qtd. in Anand 245) and have been victims of sexual abuse and exploitation.

Butch Fuller seduces Mattie; Etta Mae has the same experience with many men including the preacher; Ciel receives the brutal treatment from her husband Eugene; Cora Lee burdened by half a dozen kids through ‘shadows’; Ben, the janitor’s daughter, offered by her mother to one Mr. Cryde’s lust and Lorraine, becoming a victim to the savage sexual violation by C.C. Baker and his gang-- have all been portrayed to prove how women are vulnerable and treated as sexual objects.

For all these ‘Afric’ children, the wall that makes up the dead end street in Brewster also whips at the effects of racism. For the pains they have experienced, this place serves as a healer, better than the starving southern climates they had fled from. Mattie’s dream of the block party and all the women gathering to tear down the racial barrier -- the wall-- clearly depicts Naylor’s analysis of the pain and the suffering. After being healed by one woman they turn on to the other women to identify themselves through their pain and finally unite in attaining a ‘female solidarity.’

As a religious ritual the women of Brewster Place, by uniting themselves through suffering and pain, celebrate their survival only after being healed. The matrix of woman turning to another woman or women for their economic survival.
psychological comfort and social shelter has been significant, which the novelist succeeds to narrate with a feminist consciousness.

With a basic individual to individual healing matrix in The Women of Brewster Place, Naylor gradually creates a black, middle class suburb in her second novel Linden Hills. It is a modern revision of Dante's Inferno, where souls are damned because they have offended themselves. Though economically and socially successful, the treatment of women, despite their progress, “symbolizes the way that men have regarded women throughout history -- as means of generation that have no value in themselves” (Ward 121). It is to this historical pilgrimage to Linden Hills, Naylor takes the readers.

The mutual support with which the women characters communicate and heal themselves does not find a place among the minor characters. The material success prevents the people to give a hearing to the warning and advice rendered by the women of older generation. The residents ignore Grandma Tilson, the guardian of traditional values who fought against Luther Nедeed and the sole patriarch of Linden Hills, in spite of her warning against “that silver mirror God propped up in your soul” (LH 7). Another woman Roberta Johnson fails in preventing her granddaughter Laural Dumont’s suicide. All the young women – Roxanne Tilson, Marie Hollis and Cassandra-- remain isolated. It is the same material desire, which drives the protagonist Willa Prescott Nедeed to marry the then Luther Nедeed. A victim of her husband locked up in his basement morgue for providing a light skinned son and suspected of the ‘supposed infidelity’, she is the only character through whom Naylor illustrates the second matrix of documental healing.
The gradual awakening of Willa Prescott who is nearing death from grief and starvation discovers the inspirational “stored documents” (Awkward 293) as genuine healers. The scribbling of the first Luwana Packerville Nedeed in the 1837 Bible; the second encounter with the cooking recipes of Evelyn Creton Nedeed; the photo album of Priscilla McGuire serving as the third encounter – all these serve as healers for Willa’s self-discovery.

Luwana Packerville’s total isolation from her husband and son and her growing insanity in creating a fictitious sister for communicating her suffering stir Willa to recognize the parallel suffering and enslavement in the hands of her husband. Evelyn’s sexual frustrations and self-hatred expressed in her cooking huge amounts of the doses of aphrodisiacs designed to attract her husband and the final solution of rat poison to kill herself on Christmas Eve awaken Willa Prescott. The gradual decline of the spirited Priscilla McGuire Nedeed’s picture in her photo album awakens her consciousness.

The gradual regeneration and self-discovery through these inspirational documents in which she identifies her ‘self’ and her gender consciousness results in an act of revenge she desires to enact by bringing an end to the Nedeed dynasty. Willa’s decision and reawakening is explained in her realization. Upstairs she had left an identity that was rightfully hers that she had worked hard to achieve. Many women would not have chosen it. Whenever she was good and ready, she could walk back upstairs.
The suffering and the pain of the earlier Nedeed women heal the present sufferer Willa Prescott and help her ultimately derive a selfhood and strength. By recognizing her own identity in their suffering, she journeys back upstairs and clasps Luther Nedeed in a death grip which burns the three, the couple and their child, in the Christmas tree fire.

The loss of the strong communal ties which existed amidst the poor and its absence in the black citizens of Linden Hills owing to their rise in material gain and social esteem is contrasted, thereby warning the readers of the neglected racial identity and the continuing gender oppressions. It is the female voices of the women of the past through their diaries, cooking recipes and photo album that inspire the protagonist to emerge successfully as a martyr for the future generations.

Naylor has presented "a male controlled American dystopia" and has "identified a loss of communal memory and a geographical centre" as a crucial factor in Linden Hills (qtd in Gates 240). It is, as Levy states, a "Competitive Consumerist Hell" (270) where the Satanic Luther reigns. To redeem the dead souls, Naylor has utilized the past inscriptions as healers and succeeds in ending the material dynasty yet only with self-sacrifice.

The picturization of the ideal female pastoral in Mama Day serves as a contrast to the second novel Linden Hills. The matriarchal mythical healing power in Miranda, the title character, serves as the main theme in Naylor's third novel, Mama Day. The female power and wisdom in Miranda, inherited from the legendary Ur-mother of the Willow Springs community is intuitive and unconscious. It is the conscious bond
which Miranda creates with her mother who turns mad and prematurely commits suicide which develops a nurturing role from her childhood, and eventually elevates Miranda as a mother not only to her grandniece Ophelia, but also as a “Mama” to the whole island community of Willow Springs. She is the community’s midwife, guardian of tradition and a powerful conjure woman with special gifts derived: “Mama Day say no, everybody say no” (MD 27).

The community regards her as being a direct descendant of Sapphira Wade, piled on the fact of springing from the seventh son of a seventh son. She uses her intuitive powers and the knowledge of nature to heal and cure physically, psychologically and spiritually not only her dear ones but also the needy in Willow Springs. Miranda saves Bernice from her infertility. She calls down lightning to punish the murderous spell magician Ruby; she saves Ophelia alias Cocoa by trying to bridge the gap between George and Bascombe Wade through the ledger; and John-Paul through his cane. “Her way would redeem the male element … George goes his way, in rationalistic unbelief on his own strength alone, and he succumbs to a heart attack” (MD 300).

The Candle Walk celebration and the visit to the “other place” -- all serve as healing matrices. It is a kind of complex vision of healing with which Naylor has moved steadily on in her quartet novels. From a mere natural woman to women healing in The Women of Brewster Place to the symbolic inspirational documents serving as healers in Linden Hills, Naylor has progressed to the matriarchal mythical healing in Mama Day. Paralleling the African American ancestral past of oppression to a celebration empowered by folk tradition and spiritual forces, Naylor has moved
from the severely limited and tentative possibility to a richer and more positive glimpse of its reality in her third novel *Mama Day*. As prophesied by Larry R. Andrews, “If such a community of women is real to her imagination, perhaps she will grace us with it in her next splendid effort” (7). Naylor fulfills it in her final of the quartet novels, *Bailey’s Cafe*.

*Bailey’s Cafe* is the fourth in a sequence that Gloria Naylor conceived as a quartet. Naylor, who has created geographical African American places in her former three novels, by creating a cafe and a bordello in Eve’s boarding house in her final and fourth of the quartet series, universalizes her theme and technique to her readers irrespective of any race.

By projecting a “way station” for the pilgrims and a “phantasmagoric” boarding house, actually a whorehouse. Naylor has provided healing places through emotive healing to her deviant characters particularly women. One of the seekers asserts that “you can find Bailey’s cafe in any town” (BC 112) and Bailey himself claims, “Even though this planet is round, they are just too many spots where you can find yourself hanging on to the edge... and unless there’s some space, some place, to take a breather for a while, the edge of the world – frightening as it is – could be the end of the world” (BC 28). For the battered and exploited all over the world, Naylor has created a female haven. Women like Sadie, Mary/Peaches, Esther, Jessie Bell and Mariam walk their way, as they are discarded, to Bailey’s Cafe and ultimately to Eve’s bordello where they are healed. Eve’s bordello “can provide a reason to go on living, a sanctuary and a place for physical and psychological healing” (BC 5). If Bailey’s Cafe is a place for orientation, Eve’s haven is a destination.
Naylor has created Eve "the mother of all healers" as a well-dressed woman with "delta dust" (82), the dirt of a thousand years. This "survior extraordinaire" (Puhr 5) has her typical ways of healing aesthetically. She assures the father of Peaches: "Leave your daughter here ... and I'll return her to you whole" (BC 113). While the narrator and the male character Bailey, along with his wife Nadine, provides a healing place, it is Eve the healer who, by performing healing deeds, restores all the deviants.

Naylor with the musical Blues as an underlying element presents the harsh and strange yet familiar plot thereby universalizing the excessive pain prevalent in the world through her characters. All of them have become preys to every type of exploitation and victimization for being female, poor and black and it is Bailey's Cafe and Eve's brownstone surrounded by a garden of wild flowers for the visitors to choose as an offering to the woman preferred by him, the aesthetic emotive healing is attained and endured.

The quartet novels have provided wholeness and completeness in the painful cluster of emotions in the process of intimate relationships with lovers, parents and then losing both through abandonment and betrayal in the ongoing process of the lives of her characters. Kimberly Costino claims that George's birth at the end of Bailey's Cafe "locks the novels onto a cycle" (3). In spite of the difference in the publication details and event chronology, the last novel occurs first in the narrative time. With this interchange of time, Naylor asserts the possibility that repetition cycles do matter in black culture. In many ways all the quartet novels complement each other. Brewster Place is a dead end street and Linden Hills is a community in itself and an
entry to it is strictly regulated in economic terms. *Mama Day* enlarges the textual world by introducing two locales-- Willow Springs and New York, whereas *Bailey's Cafe* extends the universe.

All the four novels initiate a logic of repetition and reversal creating a set of signifying texts which Gates describes as "a theory of formal revision; it is topological...." (285). Naylor has established the feminine power and dignity for the new millennium amidst an institutionalized patriarchy with a "legacy of millions of abusive imprints" (Edward 5). The abused women to be redeemed have embodied and embraced a sacred and wise feminine part as in *Mama Day*.

Most of the women characters have engaged themselves with a consciousness despite the patriarchal system, which has suppressed them. The protagonists have become uniting symbols by bridging the consciousness and the unconsciousness and have attempted and succeeded in bringing out a healing matrix and wholeness.

The end product of each novel is a shift from being a novel of victimization to one of empowerment. The wisdom and the power in one woman have assisted the other in the healing process. For the liberation of women, a collective process of empowerment is essential. To achieve this, the abuse and the trauma have to be acknowledged and brought to a collective consciousness. If the integration of the womanpower with a consciousness emerges, a new millennium with wholeness may be achieved.

Human suffering and pain is "an illness or disease" (Martin 27) that needs to be "cured/healed" (27). Every aspect of human existence involves in itself not only
physical suffering, but also a psychological and existential struggle. All the writers do not engage themselves in understanding the concepts of these illnesses and thus fail to provide a healing alternative. The "suffering and exploitation are facts of our existence which demand a response" (Martin 105). It is this response that gains momentum in Naylor’s series of quartet novels. After having written the four in the series, she asserts: “I feel stronger than some of my white female counterparts because of the nurturing that needed to be done, the steel that had to be put into my backbone first for me to exist at all in any kind of healthy way” (Carroll 163).

Minh-hat-Trinh remarks: “Story, history, and literature are the tools of the Native woman for articulating the silenced truth” (119). As the woman of color remains to be defined, they ought to be retrieved. The role of the woman writers entails a greater responsibility to instil the innate qualities of these women of color so that they become unique with strong mythical qualities. The texts these writers provide ought to be threefold: communicative, transformative and above all healing since the ethnic myth and national history converge with their oppressive past. Naylor has successfully provided all the threefold responsibilities in her quartets. The different healing matrices in each novel not only represent a backlash to imperialism but also serve as a drawing force to salvation and empowerment.

Drawing her characters from single-unwed mothers to enslaved wives and matriarchal sufferer, Naylor has moved to the most horrifying adolescent sexual abuse in her last of the series. Naylor tells the stories of almost all the women who have been victims of the patriarchal order. Naylor has not only probed into the once prohibited regions of experience but has also provided a solution and a salvation.
Gloria Naylor in her lecture *The Myth of the Strong Black Woman* statistically proves it:

...They say that when my grandmother was born at the turn of the century as few as females headed 10 percent of black households; when I was born at mid century, it had crept to 17 percent; and now it is almost 60 percent. No longer a widow or a divorcee as in times past, the single woman with children today probably has never married and increasingly she is getting younger. By the time she is eighteen, one out of every four black unmarried woman has become a mother.

It is for the creation of this kind of independent Amazonian woman, Naylor has contributed her novels. It is to ensure the reality of the professional black woman leading a household that the myth of the matriarch must be kept alive and vibrant. Naylor continues: “I’ve talked to so many who believe that they are supposed to be superhuman and bear up under all things when they don’t, they all too readily look for the fault within themselves” (Wood 15).

It is for these mothers and girl-child-sufferers that Naylor serves as a torchbearer and her stories by raising a consciousness amidst the readers have served as a powerful healing force. Griffin refers to this task of narrative as “textual healing” and observes it “as a location of transformative possibility and pedagogical potential in black women’s literature” (48). It is for her valuable contribution that Naylor has been levelled among the top hundred most admired African-American Women in Literature (Daily Literary Dish News n. pag).
With a black female leadership, competence and self-determination, which form the bases of woman’s relationship to feminism, Naylor has shared many of the general concerns in all the four novels. Naylor has adhered to all the three recurring themes prevalent in the black feminist thought in her quartet novels.

Naylor asserts her black feminist thought and succeeds in establishing the first theme of affirmation, of self-definition and self-evaluation in her novels on a grandiose scale. She achieves the importance of the positive individual and collective images in *The Women of Brewster Place*; the discovery of her own perspective in *Linden Hills*; and the standards of beauty, thought and action in *Mama Day* and *Bailey’s Cafe*.

The second persistent theme of the recognition of the multiple jeopardizes of race, class and gender and sexuality is felt in all the women characters from Mattie Michael to Willa Prescott, Sapphire Wade, Cocoa and Eve. By acknowledging the oppressions, Naylor encompasses a humanistic vision through her feminist ideology. As bell hooks states “feminism... is a commitment to eradicating the ideology of domination that permeates western culture on various levels – sex, race, and class ... self-development of people can take precedence over imperialism, economic expansion, and material desires” (77). Naylor has depicted a community to be recognized throughout her quartet novels.

The recognition of black feminism’s historical origins in their culture, the third recurrent theme, is experienced in *Mama Day*. The Black female skills, values and attitudes for maintaining and empowering a community with positive self-concepts
are prevalent in all the woman protagonists. Naylor's last of the quartet Bailey's Cafe rather than being an end in itself heralds a auspicious new beginning.

As a feminist Naylor has engaged herself with important issues affecting women of colour in all places and has rescued the women from silence and oblivion through her fiction. A soaring musical adaptation of The Women of Brewster Place by the world premiere musical directed by Tim Acito, (Arena Stage News n.pag) anticipated to be staged in October 2007 proves Naylor's works to have entered all genres. Cowart asserts, "At a time when women across the globe are experiencing unprecedented oppression, Naylor's voice is a clarion that demands to be heard" (5). It is true that Naylor’s voice is a clarion which will be heard all over leading to global emancipation of the oppressed gender.

If these three feminist themes explicated by Naylor with a collective consciousness, literary scholarship and a humanistic vision are preserved, studied and shared, the healing of not only the oppressed gender but also of communities all over the world will not remain a distant dream.

In the modern era, where humanity lies fractured and fragmented with many complexities, the works of writers like Gloria Naylor serve to be a beacon light for the whole human race. As poet Arana claims:

The social milieu of his times is inescapable to any writer. Society creates, shapes the writer, and conversely the writer also can create the society- that is, if his writing is a genuinely felt product. He presents the decay which stares the readers in his face. discomforting and embarrassing.... (1)
True to the view stated above, Naylor’s novels are products of her times, influencing as well as influenced by the society around her. One may hope fervently that these works will continue to influence the thinking of the American society so as to ultimately bring about racial and gender equality to the black women not only of the United States of America but to the oppressed women everywhere on this planet.

As the scope of this study could encompass and confine itself only to certain aspects of the healing matrices, the present researcher is of the view that there still remains in her works a vast treasure for further research. Almost all her novels offer a veritable hunting ground for a study of the elements of magic realism and hence a study focusing on this aspect will also be highly rewarding.

In the quartet novels of Naylor, the healers as well as the healed direct their energies more towards psychological well being than towards a realization of materialistic ambitions; whereas, a topsy-turvy outlook seems to permeate the world of the white feminists. Hence, a contrastive study of the materialistic white American feminists and the spiritualistic black American feminists like Gloria Naylor can be attempted. Such a study will immensely benefit the contemporary humanity, as it seems to be losing its charm for a materialistic world bereft of spiritual dimensions.

It is sincerely hoped that the present study will help bring about an interest in and awareness about the need for each human, to find and offer solace to the other which alone could be a panacea for all the ills that dog humanity in these times of conflicts in every sphere of life.