Abstract

African-American literature explores the issues of freedom and equality, long denied to Blacks in the United States, along with further themes such as African-American culture, racism, religion, slavery, and migration. Gloria Naylor born in 1950 is a famous novelist, essayist, screenplay writer, columnist, and educator. Naylor emphasizes the strengths of African-American women and realistically portrays the varied lives of African-Americans, particularly examines the dual pressures of being a minority and a woman in a male-oriented society. Naylor is skillful at using classics of European literature and transforming them to fit the African-American experiences. She has used Dante's *Inferno* in *Linden Hills* (1985), Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in *Mama Day* (1988) and Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* in *Bailey's Cafe* (1992). Naylor also draws on African-American literary and creative traditions in her novels. Since receiving the 1983 American Book Award for *The Women of Brewster Place* (1982), Gloria Naylor has been hailed as one of the most insightful and significant writers in contemporary African-American literature. Like Zora Neale Hurston and Toni Morrison, Naylor is recognized as a brilliant cultural scribe and poetic historian of Black life in America.

This dissertation entitled “Self-Recuperation in the Select Novels of Gloria Naylor” attempts at studying Gloria Naylor’s works. In each of her four novels, Naylor invites the reader to join her characters in their journeys to move beyond established boundaries and embrace an increasingly varied society. With clear examination of each work, Naylor successfully links the trials of her African American characters to the struggles of human beings at variance with seemingly impossible obstacles. Naylor's place within the larger framework of the African American narrative customs is considered as well. All her works are carefully related to their