ABSTRACT

This study deals with Afro-American women novelists namely Toni Morrison and Gloria Naylor. It explores issues related to racism and sexism which are clearly manifested in their lives and works.

The novels examined by this study are Morrison’s *Sula, The Bluest Eye*, and *Beloved* as well as Naylor’s *The Women of Brewster Place, Bailey’s Café*, and *Mama Day*. These texts recreate an ideology of African-American womanhood which privileges self-definition. The study focuses on recurring themes, motifs, and issues such as myth, western standards of beauty, supernatural, mothering, poverty, double consciousness, and stigmatization and marginalization of blacks.

The two novelists create remarkable black women characters in their novels. These characters attempt to establish their own identity amidst the multilayered and interconnected oppressions of racism, sexism and class conflict. Thereafter, these women managed to retain their identities throughout the novels.

The thesis adopts the comparative approach to analyze the novels under the study. My analysis reflects the varied complexities that black womanhood yields within dominant culture and how each character either internalizes or resists the politics of race, gender and sexuality. This comprehensive research on race and gender provides readers with new insights to understand Morrison’s and Naylor’s novels.