CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Women in the United States

Women in the United States entered the public sphere in the eighteenth century. The occupational structure of the industrial society had undergone some changes. At first, women left mining and manufacturing for service occupations such as typists, clerks and saleswomen that still looked "feminine" and inferior. However, with this start, working women learned to support themselves. Marriage was no longer the only thing to live for because they were not wholly in need of male support. These new roles of women looked masculine according to the sex role definition of the Victorian Age; women in the upper class retained their femininity: physical and mental weakness (Phillips 155). So women of the early days had to fight for their new images and to gain more equal treatment, equal opportunity in the public sphere and more human values.

However, women have entered the labor force in larger number even if they are married and have children. Their entrance into the labor force has resulted in some changes in the structure of a woman's life. According to America in Close-up, women remain single longer, and when married they have fewer children than women of former generations.

Further, the percentage of unmarried women is

increasing each year. Besides these empirical trends, attitudes toward marriage also have changed; American women deemphasize the traditional roles of sole homemakers and child rearers. They prefer a "better marriage" where both the husband and wife share all responsibilities together. Mothers and wives now come out "to compete with men for training, employment, leadership positions, and political power" (Fiedler, Jansen, and Norman-Risch 127-8).

Yet, their debut into the outside world has not been very smooth. Women's earnings are smaller than men's. Many studies showed that women in the labor market did not receive pay equal to men (U.S. Department of Labor 6-7. qtd. in Mckee 274-5; Bureau of the Cencus 1987 Series, No. 156. qtd. in Brinkerhoff and White 290). Besides, as women enter the male-dominated world of work they face three situations: being under-representated in their positions, loading the double binds of masculine professions and traditional sex role expectation, and being tokens in their positions (Mckee 267-78).

American Feminism

According to Paula S. Fass's "Symbols of Liberation," before the twenties, women began to affirm themselves as new women by smoking cigarettes. Women in the 1920s smoked to show their equality and freedom. In 1920s and 1960s, there were cultural revolutions especially among young Americans. The purpose of the revolution was to create for

their generation a new culture and to set their own place in the society (Fass 211-24).

Along with the revolution of the new generation, women of the changing perspective were in their early stages to fight for freedom and equality. Women, increasing steadily in number, began participating in the labor force: 27 percent in 1940, 35 percent in 1960, 51 percent in 1979 (Statistical Abstract of the United States 404. qtd. in Mckee 277). In 1970, 43 percent of American women worked outside their home and then more than 51 percent in 1980. By 1987, 72 percent of the women aged 25-54 participated in the labor force (Schaefer 255, 282). In addition, a half of the wives worked outside the home and 40 percent of mothers participated in the outside-of-home work. However, occupational segregation confined women nearly 100 percent to doing "women's jobs" like secretaries, nurses, household working and dressmakers (Waite 4, 22, 27. qtd. in Schaefer 255).

According to Heidi I. Hartmann, though women decreased their housework time to work for wages, their total time of housework increased. Women working outside their home did not spend significantly much less time than those full-time homemakers, 30 to 40 hours per week respectively at a minimum (366-94. qtd. in Schaefer 261). The finding suggests that women cannot leave their domestic tasks for outside-of-home work. Women are still obliged to perform

household affairs.

During the American Revolution, American women began to be more interested in their own position in society. Middle class women and those with better education established the struggle for their own right; Abigail Adams was to be the first woman who tried to make a claim for women's equality. However, it was not a timely movement since women of this period were not fully motivated. After they joined the abolitionist movement; they began to realize their lack of power and rights. Female abolitionists actively and prominently joined black emancipation.

Women's perspective toward their own status and potentiality changed because of their better education together with social changes and technological advancement. More women from various professions and different classes activated American women's awareness of sexual inequality and discrimination in the public sphere and traditional oppression in the private sphere. The movement became interesting, especially among the white middle class and educated women (Powell 2). Angelina and Sarah Grimke from Charleston, South Carolina and some women activists turned to set their own way of fighting to claim their own rights. The protest by women began first in the summer of July 19, 1848. The purposes of the movement were to trace the struggle for women's rights in the legal and political

system or equality in all aspects of life. While some women abolitionists like Lucy Stone agreed to temporarily stop the movement (Rothman 26-7), some radical activists refused to choke the movement until the end of the abolition of slavery. Women abolitionists, like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan Anthony, established the National Women Loyal League with the headquarters in New York. It spread all over the North in 1863. The organization influenced the Congress to issue the slavery emancipation. As Wendy Faye Hamand put it, women abolitionists inspired feminism, in the late nineteenth century (Hamand 2052-A).

In 1868, blacks were enfranchised by the Fourteenth Amendment while women still had to wait for their own turn. The second phase of the women's movement started after the Civil War; the Equal Rights Association was formed to advance the attention of both women and new freedmen. The women suffrage movement went ahead in 1869; Susan B. Anthony and some women's advocates established the National Women's Suffrage Association. The purpose of this formation was to gain the right to vote. In 1890, women were first enfranchised in Wyoming and then in other states throughout the country. In 1920, all American women were completely given the right to vote by the Nineteenth Amendment (Mckee 280). During the 1920's and 1930's, women joined the civic movement by voting and also entered the higher education system. However, sexual inequality had

not been completely erased (Time Staff 180-3).

The traditional socialization was too powerful to change women's sex roles in the distribution of labor. Further, there was no economic equality between the sexes. Though women could join the labor force, as the technology advanced, they often had particularly unskilled jobs in mills and factories. Then, there was a humanity movement trying to obstruct women laborers. The humanitarian's movement was powerfully supported by male laborers and their unions. The result was the division of the women's movement into two directions. The League of Women Voters disagreed with the Equal Rights Amendment yet believed that special legislation for women could protect women. The National Women's Party agreed with the amendment and rejected the legislation that they thought would eliminate women from the labor market. However, more women entered economic and industrial system. The main factor was World War II when men were conscripted to join the military, and women substituted in most of those male-dominated jobs. Women had gone far from the traditional confinement of wife and mother roles. The second World War ended, but women in the outside-home jobs could not completely leave them for their old place--domestic sphere (Mckee 280-1).

Though women came out to join the labor force and protested against sexual inequality, the movement was still "marginal" during the late 1940s and 1950s. And, with the

differences of background, the women's movement was "a diwisionary struggle" for blacks of both sexes. Further, blacks were very ready to struggle. Some white feminists explicitly rejected their racial struggle. The conflict of the two groups made them "define their own goals and identity." In 1964, the Civil Rights Act abolished discrimination based on sex and race in the labor force. The National Organization of Women (NOW) was established in 1966, when the complaints of women were not satisfied solely by eliminating the discrimination of sex. The movement became powerful by 1970. The Women's Equity Action League protested against discrimination in universities, and the National Women's Political Caucus wanted to gain the rights in political parties (Chafe 95-9). The Feminine Mystique (1963) written by Betty Friedan was said to be the first book that motivated the second wave of feminism. The book showed the frustration of women in a sexist society, and that the women's movement focused their goal to get rid of discrimination in the work force (Powell 2). Besides The Feminine Mystique by Friedan, Simone De Beauvoir's The Second Sex was also inspired by women's struggle for their liberation which succeeded in the 1970s (Schaefer 263-4).

Women's participation in the outside-home sphere resulted in some changes in their inner and outer world; since the 1960s women have married later and have had fewer

children than their mothers did.

As the feminist movement has progressed, academics in different fields of study have discussed various concepts of feminism. In the "Encyclopedia of Sociology," Gaye Tuchman (696) classifies feminists into three classes: liberal feminists, socialist Marxist feminists, and radical feminists. Liberal feminists believe that women and men are equal and, therefore, their treatment should be equal. Liberal feminists do not want to revolutionize the social structure. Socialist feminists think gender inequality was born of capitalism. This conceptual framework relies on Marxism more seriously than liberal feminism, depicting those differences of sexual status. Men's greater strength controls initial advantage of men and inferior position of women. And these conventional norms and values have been institutionalized. Socialist feminists seem to concentrate on social institutions which preserve power differentials between men and women (Brinkerhoff and White 297). Newton and Rosenfelt (qtd. in Eagleton 228) proposed the term "materialist" for this concept in American feminism discourse which is more fully encompassing than "Marxist" and "Socialist." These feminists want to establish the political alliance of classes, sexes, and races. What feminists of this frame raise into dispute are, for example, issues about economics, ideology and aesthetic values (Eagleton 228).

Radical feminism is the strongest version of feminism. Radical feminists blame men for the cause of all the problems, not social institutions as socialists do. These feminists believe that to change the institutions in a society is not the appropriate thing to do; what they want is to re-arrange sexual relationships and create a new culture separately for women (Brinkerhoff and White 297). They believe that this new culture would be "characterized by specifically female virtues of nurturance, sharing, and intuition" (Sapiro. qtd. in Brinkerhoff and White 297). These feminists base their concepts on the belief that "women were inextricably different from men and at least equal, and possibly superior, to them" (Tuchman 696). They believe it is impossible to change things within this social system. So, they want to set "a new social order based on woman-centered values and methods of organization." To Mary Eagleton, radical feminism seems to be separatism (Eagleton 228-9).

Despite the active movement of feminists, sexual inequality in American society has never been abrogated. Further, it is not the only trouble that women have to confront. Besides biological differences, some women in the United States have suffered inequalities because of their skin complexion. In the United States, black skin color signifies their painful history of slave ancestors from African atavism. From many studies, women and blacks

are the groups of discriminated victims, for both were ascribed by inherent traits--skin color and gender. The two groups were disenfranchised in the national Constitution established in 1787. Blacks were legally treated as property in slavery, and so were white women when they got married. And both were underrepresented in the political system. Both were subjugated to "negative and prejudicial stereotypes." They were relegated to work in menial jobs with low pay and little opportunity for advancement. Even in American history, blacks and women were "traditionally ignored" (Hacker; Myrdal; Rich; Stimpson. qtd. in Schaefer 254).

Though some people try to compare women's inferiority to blacks' subjugation, the difficulties the two minorities sufferred are not of the same origin and motivation. The two groups can never share their fate of suppression. One reason is that some women are white and some blacks are male. Since blacks and women suffer inequality, black women are doubly burdened by their skin color and sex. Yet sisterhood and natural characteristics of sex between black and white women have not been firmly and deeply shared. Therefore, blacks refuse to share their motivation to struggle for human rights with white women.

Black People and Their Slavery Background

In the seventeenth century, African people were sent across the Atlantic Ocean to the southern plantation area

of America. Dutch settlers arrived in colonial America with black indentured servants from the English colonies. By English law, baptized people could not be sold into slavery. When these servants came to America, a new restriction was extended to their working time. In 1662, Virginia admitted the word "slave" which referred to the person whose children would be "held in life long bondage." Slave codes limited slaves from possessing land, marrying in church, and protecting their own wives from rape. And baptism could not legally change their status by the declaration of Virginia law in 1667.

African people were taken to America from many different tribes with different languages, skills, crafts, and cultures. Some were sold by the leaders of the tribes as punishment. Some were tricked or stolen. Some were prisoners of war (Donnan 441. qtd. in Frazier 166). They were chained together and placed in a small area like a coffin in the ships, some died during the passage. The mortality rate for men was higher. Women were sometimes allowed to come out of the storage to cook, wash, and sexually entertain sailors. Of course, there was some resistance. However, all attempts failed. Besides failure, there was cruel punishment--death. Slaves who were sick or tried to escape were treated the same as those who rebelled against their owners; they were thrown into the sea where schools of sharks were waiting. However, the

surviors made up two-thirds of the population in South Carolina and a half in Virginia by the time of the American Revolution (Wertheimer 26-9).

Slavery was nearly abolished in both the South and the North between the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries; tobacco was not a profitable crop anymore, so slave labor was no longer in need. But the cotton textile industry became profitable and the success of Eli Whitney's invention of cotton gin required more slave labor to pick cotton in the fields. This technology effectively expanded slavery for six decades which "became one of the great tragic incidents of modern history" (Carter 71).

After the eithteenth century, the ships with slaves were no longer allowed to land in southern states. There were nearly a million slaves in the South before the victory of the northern states in the Civil War during 1861-1865 (Bromhead 34). When the Union Army approached the South in the Emancipation movement, most ex-slaves settled down in the South, but some hurriedly left for the West and the North. One reason for their leaving the South was the formation and the harrassment of the Ku Klux Klan. The K K K groups were first organized in Tennessee in 1865 and later extended to many southern states. They used intimidation, violence, terror and murder to emasculate the Reconstruction government's power to help black people.

They also raped black women (whereas white women associated to those male Republicans who agreed with the government's politics were not touched) (Lerner, "Black Women" 180-1). Besides the Ku Klux Klan, other organizations like Pale Faces, Men of Justice, Knights of the White Camelia were set up by poor whites who were inspired by "the well-to-do planter-merchant combine" (Jones 53).

According to Martin Luther King Junior, emancipation physically unchained Negroes but they were abandoned "in the shadow of political, psychological, social, economic and intellectual bondage" (11). These freedmen were still viewed as subhuman (van de Berghe. qtd. in Brinkerhoff and White 249). Further, they were illiterate, poor, and rustic and this condition did not change much until World War II because they were not allowed to have an education during slavery. Even when they became free, they were ignored by the educational system. This treatment destructively affected their living (Eblen. qtd. in Brinkerhoff and White 261). They suffered hardship and entered the labor force with only their muscular power. Soon, semiskilled and unskilled black workers were affected by the introduction of technology into production (Karrer 32).

The establishment of post-bellum government in the South helped homeless freedmen to settle down. The government set up the Bureau of Refugee, Freemen, and

Abandoned Land to build schools and hospitals. Yet, that could not protect blacks from economic and social difficulties because the government's plans were obstructed by both northern white industrialists and southern white planters who wanted to disenfranchise blacks. (Hornsby 382). However, one thing the "token" Reconstruction gave to the ex-slaves was "a certain feeling of autonomy and self-reliance" (Jones 52). In 1865 and 1866, "black codes" laws were launched to strip blacks of some legal rights as citizens of the country. During this time, thousands of blacks were killed either by murders or in race riots. Some died in schools or churches which were burnt down (Hornsby 392-3).

In 1876, 13 years after the Civil War, there was a repressive segregation that made Negroes the scapegoat of all kinds of legal subterfuges, the diversion of funds for Negro schools by whites and the legal system of segregation in all phases of public life. Aided by other segregated groups, in 1877 southern whites succeeded in preventing blacks from full citizenship. When soldiers moved from the South, blacks stopped voting, and soon black government officials lost their power. After 1890, Jim Crow laws were promulgated by white southerners, aimed chiefly at racial segregation in all areas of contact: public facilities like hospitals, schools, buses, restaurants or even cemeteries. Blacks gained less support in education than whites did.

And finally, blacks lost voting rights (Schreider 270-6). One legal segregation of blacks from political power was literacy tests and the payment of a vote tax (Hornsby 394).

By the early 1900s, there was a rise of Negro leaders. Booker T. Washington, an educator, believed that peace between the two races could emerge from better education and economic progress of blacks. At the same time, blacks would withdraw their attention from political power and racial equalities. This belief seemed to reinforce the inferiority of blacks to whites; therefore it was opposed by W. E. B. Dubois, a sociologist, and some other blacks. However, the two groups joined the movement to stop racial segregation known as the Niagara Movement (Hornsby 395). After that, in the twentieth century, many organizations were established to struggle for blacks; some were supported by whites. In the 1950s, the NAACP, with a strong support of white liberals, caused major changes in American segregation. In 1954, Martin Luther King, a clergyman, became an informal leader of the non-violent protest movement against all kinds of racial segregation (Bromhead 35).

Despite their prominant leader, King, and the sympathy of some whites, most blacks were still sufferring difficulties. Economically and socially isolated by white control they also suffered from some stereotypes which obstructed their better chances of life. In a book

entitled The Thing They Say Behind You, blacks were negatively stereotyped as dirty and slovenly, stupid, violent, inert, lazy and sexually prowessed (Helmrich. qtd. in Kornblum 304).

After the Civil Rights legislation of the 1960s, there was normal participation of blacks in American integrated society. Upper and middle class blacks moved out of the ghettoes; the only group that remained were those underclasses who were poor. Since the 1930s, the number of blacks in big cities was not proportionate with the requirement of the labor market. Some were underpaid and some unemployed (Mckee 241).

The issue and development of automation in the work place marginalized most blacks who were discriminated by prejudice, unskilled and semiskilled because the lack of sufficient education (King 12). Their economic difficulties were evidently reflected in the highest level of unemployment and poverty rates in 1964. Since then the gap in wages between blacks and whites has widened (Rustin 32).

During World War I, blacks numerously moved to the North and Midwest. Though racial segregation was less serious than in the South, blacks still suffered coercive practices by whites. Between 1917 and 1921, there were fifty-eight firebombs of black people's houses on the south side of Chicago. In the 1920s, there were more middle

class blacks who could afford good places outside the ghettoes. Whites attacked their black neighbors; the famous case was in Detroit (Farley and Frey 25). Though the legislation had been launched to legally equalize all American citizens, "de facto residential segregation still survives" (Bromhead 36). The largest black communities remained segregated in 1980 (Messay and Denton. qtd. Farley and Frey 30). Farley and Frey assumed that integration depended upon a liberalization of white attitudes. However, changes in attitudes did not guarantee changes in behaviors. Whites would try to move if their black neighbors increased in number especially in Detroit--the most segregated metropolis until 1990s (28).

Morris, Bernhardt and Hancock (205) stated that inequality began to rise after the 1980s, as a result of stagnant economic conditions. The gap between black and white earnings "stop converging." Poverty rates increased while the average of the real wages remained the same. Some researchers noted that the increased inequality in the labor market resulted from the baby boom, business cycles, and the greater participation of women workers in the labor force (Kosters and Ross; Rosenthal; Welch. qtd. in Morris, Bernhardt, and Handcock 205). Conversely, as the economic advance stagnated, the political power of blacks was in its glory.

By the 1970s, blacks in the South could legally

participate in political issues. There was almost an equal number of black and white voters. Therefore, many blacks were elected to many important positions. Big cities such as Atlanta, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Cleveland and Washington D.C. had black mayors (Bromhead 35). After the events in the late 1950s, there were some changes of cultural views among blacks. The wave of the civil rights movement brought out nationalism and blacks called for cultural pluralism. Assimilated society was rejected by minority groups including blacks. Reverend Jessie Jackson, though he did not succeed in the presidential election in 1984, at least could unify and mobilize black voters (Kornblum 307).

Black Women

Though working women of this century are competent and their femininity has gradually been accepted, especially in the United States, there is a group of women who are still fighting for their own existence and full human treatment, this group is black women.

Black slaves in America before the emancipation were not treated differently according to sex. Female slaves worked as hard as their male counterparts did in the field. Some attended housework at their master's living quarters. Even when they were pregnant, their working routines were still unchanged up until the last minute before delivery. As a result, some children were born in the field. Some

slaves had miscarriages during their pregnancy. Some of the newly born children died and if they survived they were left behind when their mothers went to work. As a nursemaid, a slave mother had to leave her own child to take care of her master's children. The lullaby they sang for white children sadly reflected the "yearning and resentment." In addition, they were exploited as wet nurses (Wertheimer 31-3).

Sexual exploitation also emerged. Some slave women were sex objects of the plantation owners and the overseers which resulted in mulattoes. Black women could not count on their black male counterparts to protect them. Any resistence, either by a woman or by her husband, would be severely punished. One way to punish slaves was to sell them away, especially male slaves. Thus, the family life of blacks during slavery was disoriented or destroyed. A slave man had no legal rights to fully father and husband his own family (Lerner, "American History" 64). So being a mistress could help a black woman to occupy lighter jobs. With domestic skills, slave women could also hold a better situation. The price of female slaves depended on their reproductive ability, age, and physical condition. Female slaves could produce laborers into the plantation that a master then could sell away if his labor in stock was more than he needed (Lerner, "American History" 62).

Moreover, the punishment and physical requirements

did not distinguish female from male slaves but the former could suffer other extra pain--rape. A slave family could be broken easily by being sold away. When fathers were sold, mothers took care of the children alone. Slaves were given some clothes two times a year. The clothes given had only two fixed sizes. Blankets were given out once in every three years. Shoes, that never fit, were changed every year. A housewife had a few minutes to cook in the cabin that was crowded with shoes and aprons on a line. In bigger plantations, there were informal nurseries at which "aunties" looked after disabled and aged slaves. As Wertheimer said, "life in the slave quarters centered around the women (30).

Many slaves tried to run away, especiallly males. But female slaves who had children rarely tried to escape. Yet in the revolts of slaves, slave women joined the armed fighting, helped in planning, and carried out some plans such as poisoning the owners, setting fires, or committing other sabotage. The punishment was death. When caught, men were hanged and women were burnt to death (Wertheimer 34).

Some black women were outstanding as those who led the protest against slavery and contributed to the rising of the black people. For example, Margaret Garner, an escaped slave mother, killed one of her four children, and after recapture, tried to kill the remaining children

(Lerner, "American History" 66). The story inspired Toni Morrison, an eminent black woman writer, who addressed it again (Rothstein 195) in the novel Beloved, which was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1993. Harriet Tubman was notable for her "tremendous courage, tenacity, and practical wisdom" helping more than three hundred slaves in nineteen trips to run away up North. She was also a nurse in the Civil War. When blacks were freed, she ran a home for old blacks. Isabella Buamfree well known as Sojourner Truth, was a wandering preacher. During her newly-freed days, Sojourner Truth brought a suit to the state court for her son's freedom, and finally she succeeded in helping the boy. She spoke powerfully at the Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio. After the Civil War ended with the victory of the Union, the Freedmen's Bureau assigned her to train black women before they entered the labor market. Old Truth also protested against Jin Crow law practices, and she became "the voice of tens of thousands of anonymous suffering black women" (Lerner, "American History: 65-8).

After slavery, many black women rose to prominence as they voiced their protest against racial and other kinds of human degradation and inequality. One of these was Rosa Parks, a black seamstress who refused to give the seat she had occupied to a white man who got on the bus after her. Parkers' case influentially inspired the powerful bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama. It was a 382-day protest

which succeeded in the state cancelling legal segregation of busing (Hornsby 397).

Besides individual contributions, some of the black women worked in groups to help improve the situation of the black race. Since the end of the Civil War, both black and white women have established many organizations to help develop women's competence such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Young Women's Christian Association, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, and the National Association of Negro Women's Clubs (Fox-Genovese 37). During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, black women established racial clubs both at the local and national levels. The black women's club movement first aimed to uplift people of their own race. The movement was useful for many black communities, especially in northern urban areas. After the Civil War, the club devoted itself to educating blacks about health, home and childcare. Clubs at the national level were established in the late nineteenth century, uniting black middle class women and those "reform-minded" whites and black elites. These women also tried to change the moral image of black women and involve them in such political issues as suffrage, antilynching, and Jim Crow legislation. However, they still took good care of the welfare of their own people: there were orphanages, health care institutions, day-care nurseries and educational and recreational facilities

(Grossfeld 454).

Though black women contributed to racial movements, in both bondage and free settings, they were notable for their inherent motherhood regardless of a romantic image of black mammies who preferred and pampered white children and ignored their own during the slavery period (Frazier 165). As mothers, black women were seen as superior to white women in their eagerness for motherhood and in bringing up children; they also roused the "creative spark" in their children and transfered their own cultural heritage to them. So black mothers are depicted as a "strong black bridge that we all crossed over on a figure of courage, strength and endurance, unmatched in the annals of world history" (Dance 131. qtd. in Sultana 35). Alladi thus contended that the maternal bonds of black women were socially and historically strong and stronger than slavish and sexual bonds (101. qtd. in Sultana 36).

However, while black women were notable for their roles in the family, their relationships with black men which were weakened by slavery have not been secure and smooth. According to Daniel P. Moynihan, while white people's familial bonds were highly stable, black familial structure, especially of the lower class in urban areas were broken down (Moynihan 363). Unemployed men left home because they could not financially support their families. Black women sought work out of their economic needs, not

for political purposes. As Margaret Wright retorted to white men about the myth of the liberated black women who "ran the community" that they had to go out to work because "(white people) wouldn't give our men jobs." She further commented that work did not liberate them because black women had been working "so damned long" (Wright 607).

Beside the myth of liberated women, there was a negative myth of bad black women, too. They were perceived as sluttish, "loose" women who were "eager for sexual exploits" and so "deserved none of the consideration and respect granted to white women." There was a legal prohibition of interracial marriage and addressing them with a title as "Miss" or "Mrs." They were not allowed to try on clothing before buying. Further, they had to share "colored only" toilets with men. There were different legal practices for the victims of rape between women of black and white races. Rapes were one of the strategies that white men used to terrorize the black community. Raping women of an inferior group assaulted the dignity of men who felt obliged to be their protectors. However, black women steadily struggled against these repressive treatments through both individuals and organizations (Lerner, "Black Women" 163-4, 172-3, 180-1).

In summary, as Calvin C. Hernston has said, black women have been socially, physically and psychologically repressed, denied, abused, killed, and mistreated as lowest

class laborers for more than three centuries. Now they are struggling to regain their humanity and integrity. With equal human and legal rights and duties, they have come out to the new era of the world (Hernston 166. qtd. in Plakkoottam 19). That means they can fully fight against any treatment that would deny and obstruct them from their pride, right and dignity as human beings and as women.

Black Feminism

While sisterhood between white and black women failed in the women's movement after the slavery protest, friendship among black women still survives. Black feminism has diverged from white discourse to its own connotation of feminism struggling against both sexism and racism. Toni Morrison contended that black women took the sisterhood relationship seriously and strongly (Russell 45). Though the slavery movement resulted in black freedom, women's public orientation and the creation of "sisterhood" in black and white women's relationship, it could not completely free black women from their former condition of inferiority. The feminist movement in the United States was first begun by middle class women who were well educated and white, but these women failed to perceive the difficulties in the realm of class and racial inferiority. White feminists were concerned with issues of inequality because of sexism. Since white women of the middle class had never suffered racial and class

discrimination, they seemed to grab the vantage of being white: being a superior racial group and greater class than blacks with better accessibility to the standards of living in the mainstream.

Joined with the individualism cult, white feminists issued the model of the "new women" which was a competitive image of affirmative, competent, and strong women. Since black women were economically and socially marginalized, the new image was unquestionably out of reach. Consequently, the ideology of individualism mistakenly re-enforces the Amazonic image of black women who were strong, nurturing, uncomplaining and all-accepting. This image misled both black and white men to believe in the theory of black matriarchy which perceived black women as "next to the male, the most liberated member of society" (Powell 3). Black men were brainwashed to conceive of black women matriarchy as virile emasculation. Here again, Margaret Wright explained to black men that black women had never weakened them at all. They just helped. She said, "emasculated men don't revolt. And if they were so emasculated, these blonds wouldn't be running after them" (Wright 608). As the mortality rate of male infants was significantly high, the Negro male population in 1964 was 93.3 per 100 Negro females. Black women were widowed at an early age, and bore a heavy economic load (Murray 597).

For their Amazonic strength and ability to survive

both during and after slavery, black women were believed to be strong and durable for all types of difficulties. Some leading figures like Harriet Tubman, and Sojourner Truth inspired white women to take for granted that these prominent black women represented all black women. "Black mammy," an image of black women raised by racism (Palmer. qtd. in Powell 3), was veiled from the reality of economic marginalization and the victimization of all kinds of violence (Smith, "Color." qtd. in Powell 3).

Many black feminists, including Frances Beal, criticized white feminists in the women's movement for their narrowedly fixed concentration (Beal. qtd. in Powell 2). Though white women invited black women to join their protest, black women felt the importance of women of the working class and minority group were being ignored or rejected, so they hesitated to join opposition against black men organized by white women. Class differences are stronger than gender differences in the same class (Powell 3). After the political power of black men seemed to increase more than of those white women, the women's struggle finally split into two directions: black and white ways. She also noted that women in every race and culture have their own visibility of classism. Having been excluded from the male sphere, black women are isolated again by racism from white women who called themselves "feminists" in which their protest discourse basically

excluded black women (Hooks 4. qtd. in Powell 2).

While black women could not politically join white women in the sexual inequality protest; their relationship with black men also needed some reparation. In his controversial report about black families, Moynihan contended that the number of black women entering the higher education system increased more than black men (Time Staff 183). During the 1960s, one-fourth of the black women were living apart from their husbands. Black men in 1963 were jobless at some time during the year. As the unemployment rate of black men increased, especially in 1964, the percentage of female single parent families was higher, and highest in the urban Northeast. Illigitimate children among blacks were about eight times more than whites (Moynihan 362-81). Female-headed families and death rates of black infants mainly resulted from poverty and lack of opportunity which affected increasing economic disadvantages of blacks (McLanahan 873-901. qtd. in Brinkerhoff and White 263).

By the reversal of roles in Negroes families, black men as husbands were "unusually" powerless. And women's roles in Negroes families were largely dominant (Blood and Wolfe 34-5. qtd. in Moynihan 391). This matriarchal pattern of black families was repeatedly strenghtened "over the generations." The process started with education. Since then, black women are better educated than men

(Moynihan 391). From the study of Nathan and Julia Hare, even though black women rejected their black matriarch label, they had a sharp sense of being the "backbone and major source of strength" in the family. However, the more they affirmed themselves, the more the conflict with black men. Black women thought white women harmed their marital mate supply and were not willing to join the women's liberation movement. They joined the freedom movement with white women because they wanted to free themselves from oppression. Racial oppression, in black women's point of view, was stronger than sexual oppression as they perceived white women held racism as white men did (Hare and Hare 65-8).

To Karrer, the matriarchal structure of the Negro family fit the context of feminism and also became "a major theme" of Afro-American literature. The theme appears in novels by Paule Marshall, Alice Walker, Albert Murray and Toni Morrison (Karrer 42). And the presentation of black mothers in the works of black men writers and those of black women writers is different (Sultana 35).

Black Writers

Like familial relationships, their African mores and traditions broke down or disappeared in the New World. LeRoi Jones, a black poet and writer, stated that some African traditions, which used to belong to men, were "developed equally by women, and sometimes could be brought

to their perfection by women both in slave and freed settings" (Jones 56). Illiterate blacks during the slavery period released their repression, inferiority, and suffering through the blues with its deep and sorrowful melody to console them in oppressive and hard times. In the Blues--the songs with deep rhythm, these people shared the mournful feeling of sorrow and suffering (Davis and Fred 189-206. qtd. in Santatiwongchai 2). Blues later became popular. With the Blues, and then the Jazz, the stories with its specific cultural heritage are presented in literary forms (Morrison 340). qtd. in McKay 1).

In the early days of literature by blacks themselves, the contents frequently reflected slavery, the great migration of freedmen to the North and the hazard of black ghettoes in northern industrialized areas. As blacks have been in the United States for more than two hundred years, the depiction of their existence is differently presented. The well-known work that depicted the life of blacks is Harriet Beacher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin. The novel portrays the tragic life of an old male slave. The depiction shook white people's point of view about slavery which sparked the Civil War (United States Information Service 82). Mark Twain also related the experience of slavery: Jim was an escaping slave who failed to reach his dream of freedom in Huckleburry Finn (Meltzer 102-3. qtd. in Santatiwongchai 1). Faulkner was another predominant

white writer who was concerned with black people (Wager 263. qtd. in Santatiwongchai 2).

However, blacks' stories told by others are different from their own retelling. As Chinua Achebe, a Nigerian novelist, pointed out the story of the new nation was misrepresented by those sympathetic historians if it could result in the loss of dignity and self-respect. Black writers had to endow these people with dignity and self-respect (Achebe. qtd. in Doughty 32). George Lamming, quoated in Gareth Griffiths's essay on African and West Indian literary culture, noted that novels could give "a way of investigating and projecting the inner experience." Like West Indian writers whose tasks were to distinguish their own culture, African writers were also to revive and vitalize their own culture (Griffiths 91. qtd. in Doughty 72). However, Afro-Americans are somewhat different from those Africans and West Indians regarding the places in which they are living. In his essay, "The Strivings of the Negro People," W. E. B. DuBois stated that American Negroes have two souls, two thoughts and two "unreconciled" struggles. They are in between African blood and American culture. This twoness cannot be destroyed so it stops Negroes from Africanizing America or whitening their African blood (Kornblum 194-5). LeRoi Jones conceives that the roles of black artists in America is to "aid in destruction of America and they (know) it" (High 218). So,

as a black writer, as C. W. E. Bigsby believed, each black writer consciously realized his dual roles as a writer and a spokesperson (6).

According to C. W. E. Bigsby, the early impulse for black literary work came from white writers. Negro writing came of age in about 1940, yet it was not actually a good debut because white philosophies dominated the creativity of black writers. "The Harlem Renaissance" movement was set in 1920s using European and (white) American literary forms (High 121). The influence of white literary works on Negro's early literature was called "the African stereotype" of the twenties, "the communist idylls" of the thirties, or "the post Native Son protest tradition" of the forties (Bigsby 6).

Since the period of self discovery of blacks in the 1920s black artists refused white trends (Bone 62). In the South, black arts were in the Jazz Age and in the North the Harlem Renaissance. Jazz music born of southern blacks later became famous among whites too. Northern black literature, though influenced by European and white styles, with its strong intention, presented the struggle of race in a literary form. The Soul of Black Folk, was the first protest by W. E. B. DuBois who was more a sociologist than a writer. With the theme of "black cultural nationalism," the novel dealt with the mental effects of white prejudice on black people and, for the time, revealed "the special

culture" of black Americans (High 211).

The best work, according to Robert Bone, was Jean Toomer's Cane. It portrayed the lives of blacks in different settings. William Stanlie Braithwaite, a critic, lauded Toomer's Cane as "a book of gold and bronze, of dust and flame, of ecstasy and pain." And "Jean Toomer is the bright morning star of a new day of the race of literature" (Long 112).

Langston Hughes was another important poet whose protest of social injustice was soft and became more raging later. He also introduced literary works by black writers into publication. Countee Cullen was the third important Harlem Renaissance poet whose poetry, with pain, seemed to hide "the heart that bleeds." After that, black literature began to bring the bleeding heart out of hiding. To Ihab Hassan, Richard Wright's works helped shape the characteristics of black fiction. There were "memories of slavery, protest and fury, the contradictory search for dignity" (73-4). His Uncle Tom's Children (1938) described the violence of southern whites against blacks, Black Boy (1945) was a naturalistic novel. In Native Son (1940) he frightened white readers with black violence; whites were murdered by a black hero, Bigger Thomas, the most memorable character (Bone 142). After Wright's refusal of black victimization, in Native Son his word "invisible" in The Man Who Lived Underground (1945) was raised in the

metaphoric sense of blackness and repeated by Ralph Ellison's most famous and long living novel, Invisible Man. The book succeeded in its aim to "move from invisibility to vision." Deeply and brightly wrought, the book is concerned with history, soul and art in human consciousness. Hassan considered it the example of black fiction. Besides, it was "an early landmark in all of postwar literature" (Hassan 75). There were some notable writers after that such as James Baldwin who let his anger burst out, yet later believed in the doctrine a non-violence in racial America. LeRoi Jones, or Imamu Amiri Baraka, whose feeling toward racial injustice was hatred rather than anger, presented his work in black dialect and this became remarkable in modern American literature. Jones overtly showed his thought, in his plays and poetry in 1965, that whites were evil and blacks were better than they were. Many of his plays were performed in black-only theatres. However, after he became a Communist leader, his plays stopped having "old anger" toward whites (High 218).

As James Baldwin was said to be in Ellison's line, John O. Killins was influenced by Wright. The novels written by Killins, Young Blood (1957) and And Then We Heard the Thunder (1963), were based on realism. Many black writers were both writers as well as socialists; some presented their works in the form of autobiography. The prominent writers of this literary style were James Weldon

Johnson, Along This Way (1933), and DuBois, Dust of Dawn (1940). And a female writer and poet Maya Angelou forefathered the autonomous biography form in her work, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings (Long 114).

Yet, the early literary sphere seemed to pass over the black women writers'existence. As Gillespie noted, from the perspective of a dominant American culture, the historical context of African-American women's writing was oppressive (Gillespie 4328-A). For example, to Robert A. Bone, Jessie Faucet, Nella Larson, the Rear Guard novelists group in Negro Renaissance of the 20s were said doing literary work with their own middle class background and narrow experienced, and as a result the work looked shallow. During the 1930s, many Negro novelists tried to interpret the rural South. Zora Neale Hurston succeeded in this direction. However, in black male perspective, her second novel, Their Eyes Were Watching God, was "possibly" the best novel of the period except for Native Son. Bone added that though Hurston's was vividly and metaphorically stylish, and verbally rich, it had a lack of structure, dramatic form and genuine characterization (Bone 123-32).

The alienation of black women provoked early black women writers to produce their works to "meet genteel social and literary standards." The first novel written by a black woman writer was Our Nig by Harriet Wilson. The novel was written with its "highly crafted narrative" of

slavery. But the depiction was veiled by "the principal exception" the same as Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl by Harriet Jacobs (Fox-Genovese 210-1). Zora Neale Hurston was the first black woman writer who did not follow (white) literary standards and turned to "the recovery of African-American folk culture." After Hurstson, there are Toni Morrison, and Alice Walker (McCaskill. qtd. in Fox-Genovese 211). One factor that influenced black writers is criticism. Since literary criticism, to quote Barbara Smith, could make "body of literary recognizable and real ("Black Feminist" 169)," writers would try to be accepted by literary critics. The black critic who played an important role throughout his life time until 1954 was Alain Locke (Long 116). In her essay on black feminist criticism, Barbara Smith observed that there was no commentation of black women writers in critical works of white men, black men, white women, and even black women themselves until the resurrection of Black culture. The renaissance of black culture during the 1960s and 1970s and the growth of feminist literary scholarship explicitly proved "the necessity of nonhostile and perceptive analysis" of those works by writers outside the mainstream rule. But, since the feminist movement helped to give a place for feminist literature, criticism and women's studies, the black feminist movement could not parallel the development of white feminism. Therefore, black women

writers and artists had been overlooked. Furthermore, Smith said that Negro Novel in America by Robert Bone showed the male author's prejudice against black women's works. For Ann Petry's The Street, Bone thought the work was superficial in analyzing the victimization of blacks in slums. Consistent with Alain Locke's opinion, Bone stated that The Street was inferior to Knock on Any Door. The Street was focused on race and environment while Knock on Any Door was on class and environment. Smith viewed The Street as one of the best portrayals of black women's mutual oppression by sex, race and class. White critics such as Darwin Turner saw Hurston's works as "artful, coy, irrational, superficial and shallow," but Smith attacked Turner as a sexist who was "insensitive" to the sexual politics of Hurston herself and her works. He was "a frightening example of the near assassination of a great Black woman writer" (Smith, "Black Feminist" 168-73).

Since the 1960s, many outstanding black women writers have come into the literary circle; they are Toni Cade Bambara, Alice Walker, Paule Marshall, and Toni Morrison (Long 116). Though black women's writing has been oppressed and ignored by both black men writers and white writers of both sexes, in the discourse of black feminism, black women writers have their own view of writing. They write for their own group without the ideas of attacking men and women of the other groups. According to Toni

Morrison, "Black women writers look at things in an unforgiving and loving way. They are writing to repossess, re-name, re-own. They need to get together, form networks and meet one another" (Russell 46). And Morrison contends that white men are not powerful at all, in contrast, marginalized in the world of black women writers (Dreifus 74).

Kimberly Rae Connor stated that an identity formation pattern recurs in Afro-American women's tradition of writing. The conversion of the modified concept of social expectation and a confrontation with spiritual orientation was their attempt for self definition. In nineteenth century, black women's motives for conversion were contributed to by cultural conditions. In the formation process of their identity, religious experience appeared to help convince the external force. But, religious influence does not exist in the twentieth century. Toni Morrison's Sula, Paule Marshall's Praisesong for the Widow and Alice Walker's The Color Purple do represent their female characters by reciting the cultural and religious qualities of the past to form the identities of their protagonists. Zora Neale Hurston also promoted Afro-American culture and characterized its components in her works (Connor 497-8-A).

Further, black women as portrayed by black women writers like Zora Neale Hurston, Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, Ntozake Shange, Toni Cade Bambara, and Gloria

Naylor, had their own self-definition of goddess. Their central female characters were self-affirming. The African-American goddess definition was used to help these characters "to transcend the confines of oppression" (Gillespie 4328-A).

Black Women's Images

The images of blacks are subjected to various forms of inferiorization process (Lyman 70). According to Rose Weitz and Leonard Gordon, the images of black females are different from those of women in general. They are often characterized as loud, talkative, aggressive, argumentative yet, intelligent and straight forward (19-34).

In Hollywood portrayal, black women, while considered more educated, are still shown as mammies, silly slaves, exotic sirens. Black complexion is irremediably bound to its barbarous background combined with the short-sighted vision and a mass psychology of racism and cultural prejudices and so it implied black exclusion (Lyman 49-77).

According to Emma J. Waters Dawson, images of black women in Jean Toomer's Cane, Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God, and Alice Walker's The Color Purple were defined in terms of their relationship to men. In Cane, black women were not recognized as individuals; they were stereotyped and not really substantiated. In short, they were invisible. Hurston's women seemed more realized and more intricate. In Their Eye Were Watching God, a

woman was characterized more complexly and concerned with her feeling of her relationship with people and her mind. And so the female protagonist in Hurston's was more visible--more realized and more intricate. Her own identity as an individual was necessary for self-fulfilment. Walker's women refused to define themselves in terms of only their relationship to men, like those in the works of earlier writers. Though sexual, racial and class oppression was covered in the story, the main issues were the freedom and survival of individual female protagonists. These issues were adopted and improved from those in Toomer's and Hurston's works. The woman in The Color Purple recreated herself "through an art form" to survive and support herself after she was self-defined and fulfilled. Dawson concluded that women protagonists in Toomer's, Hurston's, and Walker's fiction were depicted by evolving their images from the traditional stereotypes to the "more complex conceptions" (Dawson 2627-A).

The four traditional images of black women were refered to in the well-known characters, Topsy, Peaches, Caldonia and Aunt Chole were changing due to fictional writing. Rejecting old images depended upon individual black women's methods of changing perceptions and experiences (Foster 433). Jessie Redmond Faucet's, Nella Larsen's and Zora Neale Hurston's female protagonists were stereotypically characterized. Apart from those three

Renaissance writers, Alice Walker and Toni Morrison, the contemporary novelists, with different perspectives, portray their heroines in the images of "survival, liberation, and achievement" (Witherspoon-Walthall 1772-A). Female central characters in Morrison's first two novels--The Bluest Eye and Sula were portrayed as double-faced women. They "(looked) outward and (searched) inward." They were in search of the continuity between themselves and nature and its changes, other people, and the cycles of life (Christian, "Stereotype" 708).

Black images in Toni Morrison were not as stereotyped and general as in other writers'works. In the perspective of a feminist critic, Barbara Smith, The Bluest Eye and Sula focused on black female relationship. "The image of a woman as "hem," existing to compete a man to the exclusion of her own needs is chilling, but accurate in terms of many women's lives" (Smith, "Mysterious" 23) and black women in her works dominate the whole theme of each of her stories. This made them interesting.

Toni Morrison

Toni Morrison is a black female writer who focuses her writing on black culture. Her works have usually been considered substantial materials in Women Studies, American literature and especially, Afro-American Studies. Her black female characters like Pecola, Eva, or Sula, as noted by Jerry H. Bryant, did not come out of the stereotypes

that the audience "have been conditioned to expect" in American literature (23. qtd. in McKay 5).

According to Jackie Thomas'study, Morrison, coupled with Alice Walker, tended to abuse and degrade black male characters in the eyes of the contemporary critics like Darryl Pinckney, Marc Christophe, and Robert Towers. To Deborah McDowell, Barbara Christian, Paula Giddings and Lindsey Tucker, black male characters abused and blamed black female characters for their calamities. Thomas agreed with those critics and scholars that Toni Morrison and Alice Walker examined the faults of their male characters, but they explored the image of black male characters with a more complete view than those of the scholars. Thomas also argued that Walker and Morrison represented black male characters equally. Black male characters in Walker's and Morrison's works were categorized into four types: symbolic mythical, positive, dynamic and negative. Thomas also explored the relationship between black men and women and children, the language they used, and that used to refer to them, their behaviors and actions. Thomas contended that both Walker and Morrison were trying to understand black male characters (Thomas 2021-A).

In her study of black male images in Gayl Jones's, Alice Walker's and Toni Morrison's novels, Lillie Jones Broome found that the strategies of black female novelists

were instructive and revising. Jones's and Walker's male characters were created and redefined as either catalysts or marginal characters--Jones' were catalyst while Walker's were marginal. As catalysts, the characters were "genderless" so they could survive in a female community. Jones' and Walker's characters were based on stereotypes such as brutal, sexually aggressive and violence. Morrison's characters were both catalyst and marginal. However, the male characters in Morrison's novels were not traditionally male. They undermined their roles and were "more integrated into the community they shared with others (Broome 913-A).

In Morrison's fictional world, she examines the dimensions of love in many angles. The expressions of love in Morrison's novels appeared in the terrifying forms of rape, infanticide, and murder. Her characters possess both virtues and flaws. Their intentions and actions could be useful or devastating; they could be both condemned and admired. There is duality and moral uncertainty in her characterization and narrative structure. In The Bluest Eye, Cholly raped Pecola because he loved her enough to touch her and it was the only thing he could do. In Sula, Eva burnt her son as she "perform(ed) a ritual killing inspired by love--a ritual sacrifice by fire" (Christian, "Tradition" 159. qtd. in Otten 655). Margaret Street in Tar Baby abused her son in spite of loving him. Terry

Otten noted that the infanticide in Beloved was not only a reconstructed memory story, "but also deconstructed history." In Jazz, Joe's shooting of Dorcas was another act of love: a gun was not a gun but a hand which he wanted to touch her with (Otten 651-65).

Veena S. Deo studied the entire process of creativity in black women's lives in Toni Morrison's works. To Deo, to understand Morrison's concept of black female artists is to inspect her depiction of many woman protagonists with special characteristics. Deo contended that race and sex discrimination forced Morrison's female characters to invent and express their sisterhood. These women accepted their gender conditions such as sexuality, generative powers, and maternity. Their acceptance allowed them "to clear insights, powerful articulation and effective ways to control their own situation," and, at the same time, let other women understand and follow them. Maternity did not seem to obstruct them from creativity. Through special power and based on self-invention and self-expression, black history and cultural resources were restored. As a writer, with a careful subject analysis, Morrison could clarify her position in the Afro-American tradition of writing (Deo 946-A).

Through the use of exquisite language, Barbara Smith noted, Morrison recognized and recreated black lives "so extremely well." In her depiction of death and faith, she

could reveal the black experience that Hurston and Toomer had achieved ("Mysterious" 23). Morrison views language as "a device for grappling with meaning, providing guidance, or expressing love" ("Nobel" 6. qtd. in Peterson 475), and she wants to revise language that words should be expressed with "their original meaning" ("Toni Morrison" 165. qtd. in Peterson 475).

However, Morrison did not gain much attention and was not widely accepted at first. For example, Sara Blackburn noted on Morrison's materials in Sula, that, the "black side of provincial American life," could not lead the writer to "take her place among the most serious, important, and talented American novelist" (3). McKay attacked Blackburn that she had a narrow vision (5). Further, in "Toward a Black Feminism Criticism," Barbara Smith gave the same comment and called Blackburn a "putative feminist." Smith further commented that women writers have been mishandled and unhandled in feminist criticism ("Black Feminist" 171-2).

Nancy Peterson observed that the readers of 1973 might agree with Blackburn and it was not easy to change this belief from Sara Blackburn to Wendy Steiner who praised Morrison as "both a great novelist and the closest thing the country has to a national writer (Steiner 1. qtd. in Peterson 462). After the publication of Song of Solomon and Tar Baby Morrison began to receive wider attention,

both publicly and academically. Because of her popularity, Morrison was featured on the cover of Newsweek in 1981, the second black woman after Hurston (463).

To Morrison, black literature has been taken seriously. And Morrison herself is transcending the limitation of class and racial criticism on black women novelists of those who, in the past, used to misunderstand because of the limited standard of the readers. Morrison declared the discovery of Afro-American artistic presence in her prominent essay "Unspeakable Things Unspoken" that Afro-American literature is not the "other" any more, yet narrated, witnessed, and participated in by its own people about their own experience. Morrison also suggested to outsiders that they had to examine the center of the self and compare it with their own idea of self to understand Afro-American literature (Morrison, "Unspoken." qtd. in McBride 755).

Viewed from the narrative structure: immersion and ascent, her protagonists realized an independent self. For example, The Bluest Eye was portrayed using both narrative expression: ascent narrative with the experience of black people who migrated from the South and hoped to have a better living in Lorain, Ohio, and immersion narrative with the structure of the text. Individual characters' conditions varied in different narrative expressions. In Sula, Nel was a character of an ironic immersion narrative

which took her to New Orleans but brought her back to think of her selfhood while an ironic ascent narrative was used with the title character "taking her around the United States and finally (turn) back to live and die in Medallion, having chosen her solitude." Milkman Dead in Song of Solomon journeyed to the South to discover his identity and genealogy by the immersion narrative. In Tar Baby, Morrison used the two forms of narration to stress both the characters' personal imperatives and a deeply pessimistic view of the fatal erosion of black American culture: the ascent narration of Son and Jadine's sojourn in New York and the immersion by their journey to Eloe, Florida. After this failure, the protagonists leave the U.S.A. And then Beloved is the full version of ascent narrative; the insistence on individual would be the fully exploring supernatural element of black consciousness (Doughty 33-48).

Morrison's Writing

In 1993 Morrison received the Nobel Prize in Literature; she is the first black woman to have been given this honor for her masterpiece, Beloved, which is about black women with their slave past and an unforgiven murder.

As a black American writer, Morrison has published many pieces of writing both fictional and nonfictional. Most of her novels were notable for their life-like characters. And as a black woman, Morrison can portray

black experience through the life of black people, especially black women. With the invaluable spell of Faulkner's cadence, Morrison has a good use of language (Gray 86). And with her own creativity, the depictions were powerful and persuasive. Though Morrison did not enter the fictional circle in her early working days, the sequence of her progress from teaching and improving manuscripts of others, seems to have benefited her literary competence. Her 18 years in Random House as an editor was a "mission to get African-American voices into American literature" (Dreifus 73).

Morrison's rhetorical strategy constantly refers to Jazz; her effort is "like something that has probably only been fully expressed in (black) music." She uses a rhetorical strategy to set her work apart from those of Joyce, Faulkner, and Hardy. Morrison re-invents the strategy in each novel. Consistently, within the novels she embodies both the traditional expectations of the audience and the contradiction and shortfalls of those hopes. In Beloved, her presentation of slavery is impossible for both the slave narrator and the history writers because it tells an untold story. For every novel she wrote, the purpose was "to show the limitations of the culture within which she writes, to suggest to her readers that what is generally called mainstream culture is only a partial picture of the world" (Rice 930-A).

The Bluest Eye

Her first novel, The Bluest Eye, was published in 1970 by Holt, Rinehart and Winston and again in 1972 by Pocket Books. Phyllis Klotman (123-5) noted that The Bluest Eye is concerned with a female experience of growing up in the distorted world of racism. The misshaped process of growth finally destroyed the person in the process. Pecola's experiences of joy and love did not balance with her pain and ugliness. The effect was her self-hatred and her withdrawal from reality into madness in which she got the blue eyes she yearned for. Like Trueblood in Ellison's Invisible man, Pecola was a scapegoat in the black community. But Pecola was doubly rejected by both black and white people. The lives of the characters unfold back-and-forth as the seasons changed. Of the natural and unnatural tensions, there was both human and natural aberration. The marigold imagery was raised for the result of the violence against a child--Pecola. In the dichotomy of white culture and black experience, the Bildungsroman framework of growth and development was set for human experience of commonlity. Klotman concluded that The Bluest Eye was gentle and passionate with its precise and lyrical language (125).

Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi said that The Bluest Eye was portraying black tragedy through racism, sexism, love and a scapegoat mechanism of those who were young and weak

and inferior in natural structure like a young girl, a cat and a dog. The characters were typically made, differentiated by economic and social living standard: perfect life of whites in the upper class, warm relationship in a black family and the crisis situation of poor black family. Ogunyemi thought that Morrison's The Bluest Eye and James Baldwin's Go Tell It on the Mountain were alike in their structure. The two writers dealt not only with their main characters but also with others. Furthermore, Morrison inherited the tradition of black writers in terms of content and its arrangement. Ogunyemi said that The Bluest Eye reminded him of Hemingway's theme of blindness, invisibility, incest and racism (Ogunyemi 354).

To Rube Dee, The Bluest Eye was a series of painfully accurate impressions. Morrison provided people's social elements and allowed innocence and beauty to be eroded. The need for remedies was referred to as the "thrashing heart that still beats" (Dee 19-20). Ann Z. Mickelson viewed The Bluest Eye as a novel dealing with children and black belief; a young girl prayed for blue eyes which symbolized pride and dignity. Through praying and finally madness, Pecola got blue eyes and became "the town pariah" (112-77).

Sula

Sula was published in 1974 by Knopt and later by

Redbook in the same year. The book won the National Book Award and the Ohioan Book Award in 1975. The novel received much attention. Sula was considered a novel about pain and alienation, and Sula, the main character, represented a new image of black women which Morrison's originality and power created. This character was not familiar to us (Bryant 23-4). Sula, the main protagonist, was frightening in Barbara Smith's opinion since her race and sex did not provide any place for her to express "her brilliant inner fire" that was not in the realm of black women's cult of wife, mothering, labor, and pain (Smith, "Mysterious" 23). Morrison's presentation of Sula was "striking and inventive," full of feeling and mood with pleasant and real-life humor. The characterization of two pictures of a woman who faced the world by her own decision both pleasantly and painfully was fascinating (Yardley 3).

To Peter S. Prescott, Sula was fabulous and symbolical. Morrison beautifully wrote about death and sex, friendship and poverty, and despair and weakness (Prescott 63). The story was really colorful for its multi-taste of feeling. With her talent, Morrison portrayed Sula so alive that the readers cannot "scrape off" the images (McClain 51-2, 85). It was a demonstration of truth with its powerful elegance, intensity and emotion. To focus on another female character, Eva, some critics were angered by the early part of the tale and attest to

the limitless strength of the Black women. But these people were lost because they felt uneasy in accepting Eva's "strong black matriarchy" and burning of her addicted son. Further, Eva hinted a certain path for the readers to free their unfreed mentality from the past that formatted "a new vision of ourselves and others interested in a more realistic human existence." (Bell 24-7).

Song of Solomon

The only novel with a male protagonist is the Song of Solomon published by Knopf in 1977. It was the Book-of-the Month Club selection, and in the same year the book received the National Book Critics Circle Award and also the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters Award. To Jane S. Bakerman, The Bluest Eye, Sula and Song of Solomon clearly shared the same theme--love. Women characters were in search of love, "valid sexual encounter," and a sense of worthiness. However, in the quest for love, these characters failed. They all lived by the "profound isolation" of the society that denied them (Bakerman 542-5-A). To Melvin Dixon, Song of Solomon characterized greed, pain, sexual desertion, and "terror in the lives of people you wouldn't dare know nor even care about until now." Morrison depicted southern black people's "unspoken demands of love and hate" along with their "uncertain struggle for land, family, posterity, and progress." Though the central protagonist in Song of

Solomon was male, Milkman, there was Pilate--an influential woman of "smooth stomach" who (became) everything Macon (was) not." Morrison "recreated the self and altered the Classical and Biblical legends." This novel was applauded more than her earlier novels in that it defied all aspects of passion (27-30).

Morrison's third novel as a defining of the growth of black males "unusually" succeeded in portraying Michigan as "a timeless mythological world" in which there was a search for meaning and identity. Though the central protagonist was male, the "ultimate concern" of Morrison was still on Black women. Further, it was a novel excellent for "its imaginative use of myth and folklore" and "the fusion of fantasy and fact, of ancient myth and the Virginia coon hunt." But the names of the characters failed to match their original meaning in different degrees. Morrison also reversed the direction of Ellison's central protagonist's journey in Invisible Man by having Milkman head down "the rural South of fable and legend" (Allen 30-2).

Ann E. Imbrie observed that Song of Solomon was wrought with the traditional movement of the setting from the civilized city to the natural world in which the central character learned moral education. In Shalimar, the "contemporary Eden," people had nothing to do with Milkman's superiority and distinction, so he began to learn

"the lesson of pastoral--his connection to the natural world." There was a traditional paradox in Song of Solomon about the natural truth; escapism--flight and, in fact, death was portrayed as an escape from artificial restrictions into a more demanding recognition of one's human capacity for trust and self-acceptance (Imbrie 477-81).

Tar Baby

When Knopf published Tar Baby in 1981, it was applauded as "Literature of Lasting Value" that would be addressed in a university lesson and in a scholarly realm O'Meally 33). The novel was on the bestseller list of the New York Times for four months (Peterson 463). It was a classic confrontation of Jadine and Son whose backgrounds were different. Jadine was a well-educated Negro model of high fashion, movie star, and painter with green eyes and fair complexion. Jadine, who had forgotten her ancient roots, refused to blacken up herself to be like a black woman. To Son, Jadine was a degenerate, tar baby, whore trap. Yet, Son himself was also a tar baby. He was a big old country boy who wanted to trap Jadine--the world traveller, and took her home to blackness. The folktale of Tar Baby was a vibrant expression of black life and culture, but it failed to bring these folk-characterlike figures to life. And in spite of its market success, it is not as good as Sula and The Bluest Eye (O'Meally 33-7).

Yet, to Valerie A. Smith, Tar Baby was a story of the need for reconciliation with the past. Morrison stressed the fact of self exploration and self acceptance that led us to know our "self." Jadine lost her ancient roots and failed to understand black folk in Son's place. She was also huanted by the feeling of inferriority to black women reflected in her repeated dreams about them. The characters were presented in a wider sphere and the mythic fabric was woven richer than the writer's former novels. Finally, Smith contended that Tar Baby was provocative, complex and exciting (37-9).

Beloved

Beloved, her most famous novel published in 1987 by Knopf, received many awards: the New York State governor's Art Awards; the National Book Award nomination and National Book Critics Circle Award nomination; the pulitzer Prize for fiction, Robert F. Kennedy Award and the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Award from the National Organization of Women (Ryan 2116). Beloved uses stream-of-consciousness technique to portray the recollection of a character and, through the image of mother, the formative relation of present to past. In a truly symbiotic bond, Sethe was the present, a haunted mother and Beloved; Sethe's dead and resurrected child was the past. It was the triumph of mother's love over time in Sethe's point of view that did not provide the innocence of joy. But Beloved recalled the bleeding death; she was the

ghost child after the killing. As Sethe recognized her long lost child, the past seemed to repeat itself. Sethe tried to change the past, but she could not. Sethe attacked the schoolteacher in the disguise of Mr. Bodwin instead of cutting the neck of her baby girl. Beloved's resurrection could be the charge of forgetfulness. Through the depiction of Sethe, mother's love and terror could culminate in terrifying protection (Guth 584-7).

Like Sula, Sethe, the central protagonist, was both a victim and a victimizer. The marks on Sula's face and the tree on Sethe's back signified the alienation and latent beauty and wholeness. And Sethe's name sounded like Set--the Egyptian god whose blood helped the resurrection of the world and Seth- Adam and Eve's descendant who was said to be the father of human race and Christ's forebearer. The tree mark symbolized Sethe's power for beastly performance of infanticide; it was also a sign of community, identity and wholeness. And it signalled the personal challenge of oppressive slavery and the beginnings of claiming and defining the self, of breaking the physical and psychological bounderies of oppression (Jones 625). As Caroline M. Woidet noted, black women writers like Harriet Jacobs and Harriet E. Wilson were careful not to harm the abolitionist movement by portraying slavery too horrible. They clung to standards of decency. Beloved tried to fill the missing section of a slave narrative. Because Morrison

thought blacks and their experiences had been marginalized even when they were the topic of the discourse (Morrison, "Memory" 110-1. qtd. in Woidet 532), she turned away from decency and fully depicted the picture of slavery deep down into the feeling of the people under it. Beloved was written to respond to a white literary tradition and to reverse the standards of beauty and womanhood (Woidet 529-33).

Jazz

Jazz was published in 1992 by Knopf. This novel is different from Beloved. Whereas Beloved was to be in the style of the blues music (Rodrigues 736), Jazz was written in the style of jazz. Morrison created the warm, human, reassuring and quietly authorized voice with a tonal stretch and an intrinsic musicality (736-7). It was an attempt to "remove the print-quality of language to put back the oral quality, where intonation, volume, and gesture are all there" (Morrison "Toni Morrison" 126. in Rodrigues 737) and the story could be "oral, meandering, effortless, (and) spoken" (Morrison,"Rootedness" 341. qtd. in Rodrigues 737). With many rhythmic paragraphs and sections and subsections, there was a glimmering "networks of characters and of strands of action." The central protagonists, Joe and Violet, were a couple of absent-mothered experience and Joe's unending search for mother. There was a fake discovering of Joe's mother in the

disguise of Dorcas, a "cream-at-the-top-of-the-milkpail" faced young girl. In Jazz, Morrison portrayed the migration to the cities in the west and the north of black people from the needy and violent situation in the South which made the highest rate in 1870s (Rodrigues 744).