

*Beyond the Myth of Confrontation:
A Comparative Study of African and
African-American Female Protagonists*

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TIMES HAVE CHANGED since the sixties, and a new breed of black women writers in Africa and America are giving creative birth to a new breed of female protagonists. One of their deep concerns, a point which Hoyt Fuller has stressed,¹ is to help destroy degrading images and myths and recreate for black women images that liberate and build up self-identity. The myth of black mother-daughter confrontation, to which a whole volume of a scholarly journal has been devoted,² is one such.

I intend to focus on the creative process of myth destruction and recreation in two works each from Africa and America. By comparing and contrasting the confrontation of daughters and their mothers and "totems" of that tradition — the reactions, the revelation of deep-seated mother-daughter resemblances, and the challenge the daughters become to those around them — I hope to prove a number of things. First that, far from being selfish, spoiled, and pugnacious, these daughters are budding activists, products of the times (all four works are published between 1959 and 1983). Second that their mothers too experienced similar frustrations in their youth but lacked a voice and silently conformed. Third that their conscious choice achieves a double goal: raising the level of their awareness, and challenging others to greater black consciousness. Fourth, these daughters are their writers' mouthpieces, used to address pressing problems in African and African-American communities. In a sentence, I will try to show the crucial importance of female determination to stand for equity and choice.

The characters I discuss — Anowa in Ama Ata Aidoo's play, *Anowa*; Kiswana Browne in Gloria Naylor's novel, *Women of*

Brewster Place; Margaret Cadmore in Bessie Head's novel, *Maru*; and Selina Boyce in Paule Marshall's novel, *Brown Girl Brownstones* — reveal many bonds and parallels, despite obvious separations of time, space, and even genre. "You got to take yuh mouth and make a gun," says Silla Boyce, Selina's mother,³ a statement which finds ironic fulfilment in each of these four daughters under study. There are astonishing resemblances in their defiant utterances, their self-assertion, their committed and courageous opposition to the oppressive status quo. Each struggles to break free, to be herself, to be different from her mother's expectations. Nevertheless, each discovers in herself a mere extension of her mother's personality. They are similarly unified in their expressing and dramatizing what I may call "creative rebellion" against oppressive institutions and traditions. Their capacity for personal sacrifice and the challenges they pose to others demand that they be looked at seriously as catalysts for social, economic, and political changes.

An exciting starting point is the deceptive lull before the dramatic moment of confrontation over cultural and ideological values. A critic has summarized the situation thus:

The conflict is basically between the idealists (the daughters) and the pragmatists (the mothers). . . . [T]hey are grieved to see their children making choices that they do not understand, turning their backs on the things the mothers have struggled to attain.⁴

In *Anowa*, Anowa's mother Badua, a village woman of Ghana, wants her daughter to become a full woman in the village, "happy to see her peppers and onions grow."⁵ In *Women of Brewster Place*, Kiswana's middle-class mother swears to whatever gods will listen to "use everything at her disposal to assure a secure future for her children."⁶ In *Maru*, Margaret's foster mother, the missionary Margaret Cadmore senior, who rescues and nurtures the orphan child of a dying Marsawa woman, raises her with great care to prove her pet theory that "heredity is nothing, environment is everything."⁷ Selina's mother, Silla Boyce, an ambitious Badjan immigrant to New York, labours and saves so that she can buy a brownstone house to pass on to her daughters. All of them are well-meaning mothers, who like

Janie's grandmother in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, long for them "to pick from higher bush and a sweeter berry."⁸ They wish for their daughters what they missed, because in the words of the poet Tagore, "when you feel sorrow, grief and joy for someone you enlarge yourself, you enrich yourself."⁹

Ironically, the daughters refuse to conform. They rebel against their mothers, not *as* mothers but as representatives of societal authority and expectation. Bell Hooks explains this universal psychological phenomenon in terms of her personal experience with her mother:

She is also always trying to make me what she thinks it is best for me to be. She tells me how to do my hair, what clothes I should wear. She wants to love and control at the same time. . . . I want so much to please her and yet keep part of me that is my self my own.¹⁰

The daughters want to be themselves. Anowa wants to choose her own husband in a conservative society where one's parents do the choosing. Her stubborn independence is nothing short of radical. In a language shockingly disrespectful in context, she declares her stand: "I don't care mother. Have I not told you that this is to be my marriage and not yours" (p. 17). Adding shock to shock, she proceeds to do what she pleases, leaving home with a promise not to return. Anowa's rebellion is a challenge to her entire community and evokes prompt reaction, not only from her parents but also from the elders of the village. Her mother's warning carries the potency of a collective curse:

It's up to you, my mistress who knows everything. But remember, my lady — when I am too old to move, I shall still be sitting by these walls waiting for you to come back with your rags and nakedness. (p. 17)

Her father, Osam, wants her apprenticed to a priestess to curb her spirit. The village old woman laments that the age of obedience has run out, while the old man blames it all on fate, remarking that Anowa has the "hot eyes and nimble feet of one born to dance for the gods" (p. 20). Regardless of threats and curses, Anowa leaves with her head held high, promising to make somebody out of the husband they had ridiculed as a cassava man or a worthless fellow.

Just as Anowa's haughtiness shocks the entire village community, Kiswana in Gloria Naylor's *Women of Brewster Place* shocks her middle-class parents with her inflammatory denunciation of their status symbols and values: "I'd rather be dead than be like you . . . a white man's nigger who's ashamed of being black!" (p. 85). Matching action to words in the vogue of black activists in the sixties, Kiswana chooses an African name (instead of Melanie), blows her hair into an afro, quits college, moves out of her bourgeois neighbourhood to a low-income project, decorates it with African artifacts, and gets a boyfriend in dashiki. The reaction she gets is as sharp as it is forceful. Her mother's lone voice carries with it the moral superiority and confidence of the self-made black middle class, whose hard-earned security has come under fire. She taunts Kiswana about her misguided zeal and mocks her foolishness:

Where is your revolution now Melanie? Where are those black revolutionaries who were shouting and demonstrating and kicking up a lot of dust with you on that campus, Huh? They're sitting in wood-panelled offices with their degrees in mahogany frames. (p. 84)

She adds, "There was no revolution, Melanie, and there will be no revolution" (p. 84). The battle rages back and forth, each pointing to concrete actions to defend her stance. Denouncing her parents as "terminal cases of middle class amnesia," Kiswana declares that she is now physically near her people (the poor blacks) and their problems. Mrs. Browne counters by pointing to the solid achievements of NAACP, which she supports, as opposed to the futile dreams of those she calls "hot heads."

In the remote Botswana village of Dilepe, Margaret Cadmore in Bessie Head's *Maru*, like Kiswana, has to face a crisis of choice. She is alone, a new teacher in a strange village; her white foster mother has retired and gone back to England. She has been brought up like an English girl, with Western manners and impeccable English. Everyone who meets her assumes she is a coloured, a status not without prejudice in Botswana but certainly much better than that of the Masarwa, who are considered the lowest of the low, condemned to perpetual servitude to Botswana people. Against that background, Margaret Cadmore's firm and

cool declaration in answer to her colleague's simple question, and later to the headmaster's inquiry, "I am a Masarwa" (p. 24), sends waves of shock the length and breadth of Dilepe village. With her one-sentence identification, Margaret confronts herself, her past, her upbringing, her future, and her society. She defies all assumptions, bursts out from the walls of her white foster mother's protection, and stands proud, aloof, and vulnerable.

Compared to Anowa and Kiswana, Margaret is like a lamb thrown to ravenous wolves. Pete, the school principal, Morafi, a cattle chief, and Seth, another totem in the community, all band together against the woman whose identification with Masarwa slaves has sent "thrills of fear down their spines" because they all own slaves. Margaret is seen as "a problem"; her statement is "a slap in the face" (p. 44), and their response is therefore a vicious counter-offensive. Pete organizes Margaret's pupils to taunt her into resigning. "You are a Bushman" (p. 46), they chant to their teacher's face. Quiet but resolute, Margaret, with the aid of her friend Dikeledi and Maru, the brother, thwarts all of Pete's attempts to have her disgraced and dismissed.

Unlike Anowa, Kiswana, and Margaret, whom the reader meets at about the same age and comparable maturity, Selina's stubborn spirit grows slowly throughout Paule Marshall's *Brown-girl Brownstones*. Even as a little girl, her mother sees her as "her crosses," mischievously in league with her day-dreaming father, a disobedient and difficult child. Selina's total indifference to her mother's ambition of acquiring a brownstone house in New York culminates one day in her screaming rejection: "I'm not interested in houses." But her mother's dreams are only part of a larger community dream. Selina simultaneously deflates and demeans these aspirations by the hammer-blow criticisms she levels against the entire Badjan Association when given a chance to make a few remarks:

"It [the Association] stinks . . . because it's a result of living by the most shameful codes possible — dog eat dog . . . it's a band of small frightened people. Clanish. Narrow-minded. Selfish. . . ." (p. 23)

Her dramatic storming out after her speech, like Anowa's precipitous departure from the village and Kiswana's move to a

lower-class neighbourhood, leaves her mother shaken. Her announcement of her imminent departure for Barbados, the land her mother and the Badjan community had fled for New York, is a final slap in their faces. Unlike Badua and Mrs. Browne, Silla is drained by the confrontation. She pouts about her two daughters:

“G’long, so! They ain got no more uses for me and they gone. Oh God, is this what you does get for the nine months and the pain and the long years putting bread in their mouth . . . ?” (p. 306)

Unlike Badua, who sends Anowa away with a curse, or Mrs. Browne, who fights back, Silla resigns herself to the inevitable with some dignity and impatience:

“G’long,” she said finally with a brusque motion.

“G’long! You was always too much woman for me anyway, soul. And my own mother did say two head-bulls can’t reign in a flock. G’long!” Her hand sketched a sign that was both a dismissal and a benediction. “If I din dead yet, you and your foolishness can’t kill muh now!” (p. 307)

And yet, despite what appears on the surface as the open rebellion of daughters against their mothers, each mother, like Silla Boyce, somehow glimpses in her daughter “the girl she had once been.” The daughters in turn discover that they are not “way out” after all, but extensions of their mothers, the “bridges over which they have crossed.” Mary Washington has suggested that all blacks must find a way to their true identity through the community, and she believes that “for Black women, the mother is often the key to that unity.”¹¹ Anowa’s boldness is clearly inherited from her mother Badua, who argues with her husband and gets her way most of the time. In obvious reference to her mother’s strong powers, Anowa asks Badua to remove her “witches” mouth from her marriage. Ironically, her husband and the village old woman later accuse her of “witchcraft” to explain her extraordinary strength of character. The tragedy of Anowa is her husband’s weakness. Where Anowa’s father argues with and respects his wife, Kofi Ako feels threatened by Anowa’s boldness and sound advice. His moral weakness is their undoing, bringing about the double suicide that more than fulfils Badua’s curse.

Kiswana no doubt believes herself the epitome of radicalism until she listens to her mother's theatrical recounting of her proud heritage and commitment to the black cause. Suddenly, she comes to understand and appreciate the source of her own dynamism, idealism, and dedication: her mother. The generation gap is finally bridged when Kiswana notices her mother's red painted toenails and realizes that they share similar tastes. It dawns on her that she is indeed a part of her mother:

She looked at the blushing woman on the couch and realized that her mother had trod through the same universe that she herself was now travelling. Kiswana was breaking no new trails and would eventually end up just two feet away on the couch. She stared at the woman she had been and was to become. (p. 87)

To an even greater extent, Margaret Cadmore can be seen as her foster mother's programmed alter ego. The missionary gives the orphan her own name and proceeds systematically to fill her mind with "a little bit of everything." Much of her personality — her common sense, logic, resourcefulness, and resilience — filters into Margaret, enabling her to survive in the closed and prejudiced environment of Dilepe, much like the one the missionary had worked in. Her charm, her education, and her talent are all a heritage from her mother. Even their artistic abilities are similar:

The styles of both artists were almost identical, almost near that of a comic-strip artist in their simplicity, except that the younger disciple appeared greater than the master. (p. 87)

Despite the success of Margaret's environmental upbringing, she does not lose her identity as a Masarwa. It is this that gives originality to her art and upholds her commitment to common people. In a startling and ironic way, Margaret, whose mother has prepared her to help her people, fulfils that destiny not only through her symbolic paintings but also by her marriage to Maru, heir to the Dilepe chiefdom.

Even Selina, whose alienation from her mother starts early in *Browngirl Brownstones* and is underlined through her addressing Silla as "the mother" and associating her with winter colours, comes to acknowledge a union with Silla. She confesses that de-

spite her love for her father, “there was a part of her that always wanted the mother to win, that loved her strength and the tenacious life of her body” (p. 133). Slowly but certainly, through exposure and some bitter experiences, the young rebel comes to understand, in Gloria Gayle’s words, that “in the world of racism the mother is a fellow victim rather than a natural enemy.”¹² It is not till the end of the novel, however, that Selina identifies with her mother instead of her father as her source of inspiration, strength, and idealism:

“Everybody used to call me Deighton’s Selina, but they were wrong. Because you see I’m truly your child. Remember how you used to talk about how you left home and came here alone as a girl of eighteen and was your own woman? I used to love hearing that. And that’s what I want. I want it!” (p. 307)

The mother’s anger fizzles out because for her too it is a moment of truth. She has come to glimpse in Selina the girl that she once was.

Beyond the confrontations with and resemblances to their mothers, these daughters are seen by others as abnormal. They are ahead of their time, and they act as catalysts for changes that affect not only those around them, but the larger society. They are, in Kofi Ako’s words of complaint against Anowa, “looking for the common pain and the general good,” issues he believes should not concern any normal woman. But these are not ordinary women. Anowa’s uniqueness is underlined throughout. Her father declares categorically: “Anowa is not every woman.” Kofi Ako repeatedly echoes him: “You are a strange woman, Anowa. Too strange” (p. 36). In despair he asks if she cannot be like other women. Like a stone in a pond, Anowa sends ripples around her. She is a stumbling stone to many. Her parents often quarrel over her, taking sides with her in turns. The magic that seems to permeate everything she touches and, above all, her adamant moral and ideological stance against any form of slavery, shows her as a revolutionary, championing the cause of the common man, pleading for freedom and justice for the oppressed everywhere. She continues in the independent tradition that makes her reject an arranged marriage and with it other restrictions and oppressive traditions and taboos. She must be free to be herself.

In a sense, Anowa is a political activist. She upsets her family, shakes the community out of its sleepy complacency, and the women especially out of their stupor of resignation. Her courageous, lonely stance reveals the spiritual dimension of her character. The village old man's comments (after her open accusation of impotence precipitates Kofi Ako to shoot himself and Anowa to drown herself) sum up her true significance and the importance of the self-criticism her life provokes in others: "She was true to herself. She refused to come back here to Yebi, to our gossiping and our judgements" (p. 64). From indignation to self-justification to self-criticism, Anowa's village community is forced to initiate significant adjustments to its whole system of thought.

That cycle repeats itself in case after case. Mrs. Browne would never have narrated the highlights of her life to Kiswana had she not been frightened by the degree of determination and commitment she senses in her. She knows that despite her taunts, the Black Arts Movement of the sixties did give birth to a new breed of black men and women, "strange," zealous and, like Kiswana, concerned with the "common pain and the general good." Because of her choices and theirs, things can never be the same again in Kiswana's family, nor among middle-class blacks. The movement represented here by Kiswana has forced her parents and others like them to re-evaluate their lives, to see what they have lost and gained, to come to grips with crucial issues of unity and co-operation in the black community. Her actions are a direct challenge to her parents, telling them that there is much more than just making it in a white world. She challenges them to bridge the schisms along class lines. She calls for what W. E. B. Dubois and other Pan Africanists have called for, a moral responsibility that blacks prevent their leadership from becoming as oppressive as that of whites. The cultural symbols of Kiswana's African name, hairdo, dress, and artifacts are her way of warning the upward-moving blacks not to forget their roots nor the bridge over which they have passed, that human bond and link to mother Africa that makes them a people. Nothing could be more political.

For African Totems of Botswana, who know their roots but cling selfishly to oppressive traditions and prejudices, Margaret

Cadmore's embarrassing defiance causes an even greater political upheaval and challenge. Her quiet and placid surface hides a resilient and creative woman who is able to withdraw within herself from the fierce storm of love that she unleashes. Her strong influence on all the characters in the novel is decisive. The scheming Totems, Pete, Seth, and Morafi, who oppose her vehemently, are hounded out of town because of her. Maru, the heir, and Moleka, his powerful and sensuous friend, both fall in love with her at first sight, despite near-suicidal implications for their status in society. Margaret turns two best friends into fierce rivals, vying for her sake to outdo each other in their generosity towards their Masarwa slaves, forced for the first time to come to grips with issues like Masarwa humanity, social responsibility, and the future of their community.

The sudden change in Moleka, that untamed human energy associated with solar images, may better illustrate the significance of Margaret's influence. At their very first meeting, the reader is told that :

Something in the tone, those soft fluctuations of sound . . . had abruptly arrested his life. . . . He had communicated directly with her heart. It was that which was a new experience and which had so unbalanced him. (p. 32)

He thinks, "I have come to the end of one road and I am taking another" (p. 33). For Moleka, as for Margaret, the result of their meeting is psychologically crucial. Margaret secretly falls in love with Moleka, and this love, which tames Moleka, unleashes and feeds her creative embers, giving life to her artistic vision in a vital and lasting manner. Through her canvas, Margaret reaches out to common people and things, touching them with her art. Women engaged in their daily common chores, a white goat and her black kid, the makorba tree, the village huts and scenery: these are the subjects of Margaret's paintings. The desire to please the one she loves is the driving force that puts an authentic stamp on her art.

Ironically, it is her influence on Maru, the man with a vision of a new world order, that proves socially and politically far-reaching. Maru, who, like Moleka, had blatantly exploited the young women of Dilepe, quickly comes to a new beginning upon

meeting Margaret. For the sake of her love, he readily renounces his chiefdom, abandoning "the highway of life" for the dusty and lonely footpath that leads to a horizon of possibilities. Just as Margaret infuses life and vitality into the women she paints, symbolically freeing them from all bondage and exploitation, even so Maru dreams of a possible world with freedom and equity. Just as art recreates for Margaret her fragmented sense of self, even so Maru sees in Margaret's love a potent force for recreating his dissipated energy and the fragmented vision of his life. The beauty and possibility of these dreams are symbolized by the sunny daisies Maru envisions lining the footpath of the home he has prepared for his Masarwa bride. The disturbing fact that Maru's dream kingdom is physically far from Dilepe may be explained as part of the dream-like quality of his vision, a quality that their dramatic departure and wedding share. As the heart-broken Margaret lies dying emotionally from the shock of her friend Dikeledi's marriage to Moleka, Maru appears and carries his bride away to his "magic kingdom," transforming her melancholy into love and joy. Fortunately, her occasional tears convince both the reader and Maru that her love for Moleka has not simply evaporated.

Nonetheless, Margaret's marriage to Maru, like a climax to a musical performance, ushers in a quiet revolution of its own, the political awakening of the Masarwa:

When people of Masarwa tribe heard about Maru's marriage to one of their own, a door silently opened on the small, dark airless room in which their souls had been shut for a long time. . . . As they breathed in the fresh, clear air their humanity awakened. . . . They started to run out into the sunlight, then they turned and looked at the dark, small room. They said: "We are not going back there." (pp. 126-27)

Margaret Cadmore's resourcefulness and personal achievements help to destroy the myth of Masarwa inferiority. Her cultural pride gives identity to her people, and challenges the myth of racial superiority. Her calm defiance forces those around her into self-examination. Above all, her symbolic marriage suggests the unlimited potential of love even in the most racist and oppressive of societies. It offers her people a choice.

Even Selina, a loner through much of *Browngirl Brownstones*, comes to understand, through her experiences, the bane of racism, and to identify with the pains of her mother, her community, and all oppressed peoples. The racist and condescending comments of her white friend's mother about her and her people revolt and radicalize her, finally sealing a bond between her and "Miss Thompson, the whores, the flashy young men and the blues, the Association, her mother, the Badjan women, all of them. She feels their pain and their rage at this illusion" (p. 291). This sudden growth in awareness is a double-edged challenge, for herself and for those around her. On her part, she repents of her dishonest plans to exploit the Association and refuses the scholarship she has won. She makes an attempt to evaluate the past honestly. She purges herself of her contempt for her mother over her father's deportation and suicide, lays his memory to rest, and frees herself at last from the bondage of memory in readiness for her departure to Barbados in search of what she calls the "centre of life." Her choice of values and her search for her roots and identity are like challenges thrown to her community, symbolized by the bangle she throws to them before her departure. In her Afterword to *Browngirl Brownstones*, Mary Washington captures her significance to her community in the following words:

In making her choice to return to Barbados, to begin with, Selina symbolizes the community's need to reorder itself, to recognize the destruction of human values in the community devoted to money, ownership and power. . . . It assigns even to an oppressed people the power of conscious political choice. They are not victims. (p. 322)

Selina's spiritual and intellectual values challenge the narrowness, exclusiveness, and selfishness of a Badjan community consumed by its passion for possession, despising all other blacks who are not of their stock. Young Selina becomes larger than life, acting as a historical, cultural, and political bridge between Badjans and other blacks of African descent. With one bracelet thrown to her people and one on her arm, the link remains unbroken as she starts on a quest that will take her through other books and in the guise of other protagonists to England, the Caribbean, South America, and finally back to Africa, connecting all blacks in the

Diaspora, linking them all, with myriads of thin strong threads, to the navel of Mother Africa.

I have come to the conclusion that there have been Anowas and Kiswanas in every generation. However, like their mothers, whom they resemble (at least before society moulded them into acceptable patterns), they have generally been treated very lightly in literature, denied an authentic or serious voice until the emergence and rediscovery, in the 1970's, of black women writers. What is superficially interpreted as daughter/mother confrontation only camouflages deep-seated frustrations that occasionally explode against those who are closest — the mothers.

Despite differences in milieu and circumstance, the four protagonists I discuss are fearlessly dynamic in articulating their concerns. Together they lift the veil on female experience, denouncing and rejecting those unquestioned ideas and assumptions that bind and oppress the weaker elements in society. They use their "mouths as guns" to confront forces and face issues regarded as taboo for them. Their courage is an example for others trapped in similar situations. Their decisions to speak, act, move, work, or paint — aspects of their creativity and resourcefulness — transform them. In helping others, these women find their lives enlarged and enriched.

This study reveals greatest affinity between the two African protagonists, Anowa and Margaret Cadmore. Both face strong traditional prejudices and taboos. Since necessity is the mother of invention, one is not surprised to see in them comparatively more resourcefulness and resilience than in their American counterparts. The fact that Anowa dies does not diminish her dynamism or moral strength. If anything, she seems the strongest of all the characters. On the other hand, Selina and Kiswana are faced with the subtle racism of the United States and the devastating effects of eroded cultural values and lack of identity for blacks. Naturally, these two characters emphasize more the need for awareness, selfhood, and cultural roots. These women demonstrate a high degree of sensitivity, a deep awareness of the critical need for psychological wholeness as a prerequisite for successful survival in a dominating Western culture.

Finally, each protagonist scores her marks on the political chart in direct proportion to her commitment, resilience, and creativity. In this regard, Margaret Cadmore, the least loud and articulate of the four, probably achieves the most, thanks to the enduring quality of her artistic talent. Of greater significance, however, is the new collective voice of dynamic young women who are not circumscribed in their vision nor limited in their commitment and who have used their mouths as well as their guts effectively. Their sacrificial engagement to a vision of a better world order is, in the final analysis, the only valid measuring rod of their effectiveness as social, cultural, and political missiles within fiction.

NOTES

- 1 "The New Black Literature: Protest or Affirmation," *The Black Aesthetic*, ed. Addison Gayle, Jr. (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1972), p. 348.
- 2 *SAGE: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women*, 1, No. 2 (Fall 1984).
- 3 Paule Marshall, *Brown Girl Brownstones* (New York: Random House, 1959); subsequent references are to this edition.
- 4 Mary Helen Washington, *Black Eyed Susan: Classic Stories By and About Black Women* (New York: Anchor Books, 1975), p. 24.
- 5 Ama Ata Aidoo, *Anowa* (London: Longman Group, 1970), p. 20; subsequent references are to this edition.
- 6 Gloria Naylor, *Women of Brewster Place* (New York: Penguin, 1983), p. 86; subsequent references are to this edition.
- 7 Bessie Head, *Maru* (London: Heinemann, 1972); subsequent references are to this edition.
- 8 Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937; rpt. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978), p. 28.
- 9 Quoted in Chabani Manganyi, *Looking Through the Keyhole* (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1981), p. 9.
- 10 "Reflections of a 'Good' Daughter from *Black Is a Woman's Color*," *SAGE*, 1, No. 2 (Fall 1984), 28-29.
- 11 Mary H. Washington, "I Sign My Mother's Name," in *Mothering the Mind*, ed. Ruth Perry and Martin Watson (New York: Holmes and Meir, 1984), p. 157.
- 12 "The Truth of Our Mothers' Lives: Mother-Daughter Relationships in Black Women's Fiction," *SAGE*, 1, No. 2 (Fall 1984), 10.