

AFRICANA-MELANATED WOMANISM SYLLABUS

Engl. 4420/Black Studies—Contemp. Africana-Melanated Womanist Writers

Class: Tuesdays/Thursdays, 11:00-12:15

Instructor: Dr. Clenora Hudson-Weems, Professor of English

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Websites:

<http://missouri.edu/~engchw/>
www.africanawomanism.com

Course Description, Rationale, Goals and Objectives:

English 4420, Africana-Melanated Womanism, is an undergraduate and graduate course specifically designed to broaden one's scope from a family-centered perspective in the area of issues, recurring themes and/or trends in modern Africana-Melanated women fiction, highlighting its applicability to our everyday lives worldwide. An in depth study of the lives and selected works by five (5) leading Africana-Melanated women writers—Noted Pre-Africana/Melanated Womanist, Zora Neale Hurston (*Their Eyes Were Watching God*); African American/Caribbean Novelist, Paule Marshall (*Praisesong for the Widow*); Nobel Prize Winning author, Toni Morrison (*Beloved*); Popular Cultural Novelist, Terry McMillan (*Disappearing Acts*); and Former Rap Star Artist, Sister Souljah (*No Disrespect*)--will be enhanced by careful readings of two (2) books from the Africana Womanism Trilogy—*Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves* and *Africana Womanist Literary Theory*--as well as readings of scholarly articles by and about the various authors. Methodologically, we will be highlighting the prioritization of Race, Class & Gender, a key feature in this powerful paradigm, committed to the empowerment and equality of all, rather than a gender exclusive agenda (female-centered, female-empowerment) so characteristic of other female based constructs. Students will be introduced to an authentic theoretical concept and methodology, Africana-Melanated Womanism, and will be applying Africana-Melanated Womanist theory to the five (5) Africana-Melanated womanist novels, which clearly reflect our daily lives throughout the world.

Meshed together, the primary and secondary reading materials, as well as other media materials, will aid students in refining their own individual concepts about not only the writings of the individual authors, but about critical current issues, particularly as they relate to Africana-Melanated women and their families and communities. The ultimate objective of the course, then, is to enhance one's knowledge and appreciation of Africana-Melanated women and their interconnection with their families (men and children) in particular and Africana life and culture (historically and currently) in general.

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to yet another theoretical construct, in addition to the widely known female-based theory—Feminism. Africana-Melanated Womanism is an authentic paradigm designed specifically for all women of African descent, and by extension for all men and women in general. It demonstrates that we are all--men, women and children--In It Together!

Textbooks and Course Materials:

Primary Sources (Required)

Hudson-Weems, Clenora--*Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves* (Bedford Publishers, 1993—TRANSLATED INTO GREEK

_____*--Africana Womanist Literary Theory* (Africa World Press, 2004)—TRANSLATED INTO PORTUGUESE

Hurston, Zora Neale--*Their Eyes Were Watching God* (University of Illinois Press)

Marshall, Paule—*Parisesong for the Widow* (Dutton)

McMillan, Terry--*Disappearing Acts* (Knopf)

Morrison, Toni --*Beloved* (Alfred A. Knopf)

Souljah, Sister--*No Disrespect* (Vintage Books)

Secondary Sources (Selections from these Pieces are required)

Bonetti, Kay--*The American Audio Prose Library*--Interview with Toni Morrison (1980s); Interview with Clenora Hudson-Weems (1995)

Hill, Patricia Liggins--General editor, *Call & Response: The Riverside Anthology of the African American literary Tradition* (Houghton Mifflin, 1998)

Samuels, Wilfred D. and Clenora Hudson-Weems--*Toni Morrison* (Prentice-Hall, 1990)

Web Page Materials—Articles on Africana Womanism

***You Tube*, on Africana Womanism (Bowdoin College, 2015) & Voices Unheard: A Conversation within Feminism & Womanism (U of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, 2015)**

Videos—*Africana Womanism* (Southern Utah U, 2007); *Africana Womanism versus Black Feminism* with Barbara Christian (Lincoln U, June 1993); *The Issue Is* (St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, June 1994)

Media Coverage (Newspaper, TV, etc.) on Africana Womanism

Grade Determination

3 or more unexcused absences will result in lowering class grade a minimum of 1 grade level.*

--Class Participation 10 %

--Oral Report 15 %

--Pop Quizzes 15 %

--Mid-Term 25 %

--Final Research Paper/Annotated Bibliography (7-10 pages): 35 %

If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible.

Schedule

Weeks 1-15:

1. **Course Overview Course Requirements—Class Participation; Oral Reports; Quizzes and Exams; the Research Paper/Annotated Bibliography--Documentation, etc.**

Google Africana Womanism; peruse Web Page Materials on Africana Womanism; consult the following Africana Womanism Mizzou Database:

<http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/resultsadvanced?sid=3d2cd82a-7cc8-4400-9882-150359ef699f%40sessionmgr101&vid=6&hid=121&bquery=africana+womanism&bdata=JmNsaTA9RIQxJmNsdjA9WSZ0eXBIPTEmc2lOZT1lZHMtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl>

2. *Africana Womanist Literary Theory*—Preliminaries; Chapter I, pp. 1-21; Chapter II, pp. 22-32

Chapter III, pp. 33-50; Chapter IV, pp. 51-63

3. *Africana Womanism on You Tube*, Bowdoin College, 2015

Chapter V, pp. 65-77; Chapter VI, pp. 79-97; Conclusion; Afterword

4. **Bonetti, Kay--*American Audio Prose Library*—Interview--Hudson-Weems**
Africana Womanim: Reclaiming Ourselves-- Preliminaries; Chapter I, pp. 17-32; Chapter III, pp. 43-53

Library Class on Internet Source Documentation—Dr. Paula Roper

5. ***Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves*--Chapter IV, pp. 55-74; Conclusion, pp. 145-144; Afterthought, pp. 145-6
Video--Southern Utah U. Convocation Address on Africana Womanism**
6. ***Call & Response (C & R)*--Women's Voices of Self-Definitions, pp. 1376-1381**

Oral Reports:

--Alice Walker—"In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens," *C & R*, p. 1802

--Clenora Hudson-Weems—"Africana Womanism: An Historical, Global Perspective for Women of African Descent," *C & R*, p. 1812

--Linda Ann Johnson—"Claiming/Reclaiming Africana Womanist Literary Texts throughout the African Diaspora," Doctoral Dissertation (MU 2006)

--Video-Television Interview with Dr. Barbara Christian and Dr. Clenora Hudson-Weems on Black Feminism versus Africana Womanism (1995)

7. Oral Reports Cont:

--Barbara Smith—"Toward a Black Feminist Criticism," *C & R*, p. 1816

--bell hooks—"Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory," *C & R* p. 1844

--Clenora Hudson-Weems—"From Black Womanism to Africana Womanism to Africana-Melanated Womanism: A Paradigm for Human Survival"

This paper, based on a 2016 Guest Lecture at Bowdoin College (now assessable via YouTube), was refined for the Closing Plenary for the

March 2017 Oxford U Roundtable Symposium, although I was unable to attend. This focus will be the highlight for the 2nd International Africana-Melanated Womanism Conference (1st one held at the U of Zimbabwe in 2010—see website), to be hosted again by the U of Zimbabwe, October 2018.

Video--*The Issue Is*--Video on Africana Womanism

8. Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

"Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*: Seeking Wholeness" in *Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves*, pp. 81-91

Oral Reports

9. Cont.—Hurston's *Eyes*

Paule Marshall's *Praisesong for the Widow*

Marshall's *Praisesong for the Widow*: Authentic Existence in *Africana Womanism*, pp. 105-117

Oral Reports

10. Cont.—Marshall's *Praisesong*

Toni Morrison (*Call and Response*, pp. 1694-1699)

Quiz on *Beloved*

From Samuels & Hudson-Weems in *Toni Morrison*, pp. 1-30; pp. 94-138

11. Morrison's *Beloved*: All Parts Equal in *Africana Womanist Literary Theory*, pp. 115-126

Africana Womanist Literary Theory. Movie Review, Chapter IX, 127-130

Oral Reports

12. Morrison Cont.

Mid-Term Exam on Theory (Africana Womanism)

13. Terry McMillan (*Call and Response*, pp. 1852-1855)

Quiz on *Disappearing Acts*

"McMillan's *Disappearing Acts*: In it Together," *Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves*, pp. 133-142

13. McMillan Cont.

Oral Reports

Quiz on Sister Souljah's *No Disrespect*

"Sister Souljah's *No Disrespect*: The Africana Womanist Dilemma" in *Africana Womanist Literary Theory*, pp. 99-113

14. Oral Reports:

All Sister Souljah Oral Reports

Other Africana Womanist Scholars/Writers (Suggestions--from MU Database, Google, Information from Dr. Paula Roper's Library

Research Instruction for the class, etc.)

15. Revisit “Evolution: From Africana Womanism to Africana-Melanated Africana Womanism”

War Room, the movie—On Spirituality, one (1) of eighteen (18) characteristics of Africana Womanism (In Part)

Wrap Up

--Research Paper or Annotated Bibliography Due; Course Evaluation



Africana Womanism: “I Got Your Back, Boo”

**Don’t you know by now, girl, we’re all In It Together?
Family-Centrality--that’s it; we’re going nowhere without
the other.**

**That means the men, the women, and children, too,
Truly collectively working—“I got your back, Boo.”**

***Racism* means the violation of our constitutional rights,
Which creates on-going legal and even physical fights;
This 1st priority for humankind is doing what it must do,
Echoing our 1st lady, Michelle—“I got your back, Boo.”**

***Classism* is the hoarding of financial privileges,
Privileges we must all have now in pursuit of happiness.
Without a piece of the financial pie, we're doomed to have
a coup,
Remember--protect the other—"I got your back, Boo."**

***Sexism*, the final abominable sin of female subjugation,
A battle we must wage to restore our family relations.
All forms of sin inevitably fall under 1 of the 3 offenses.
Africana Womanism—"I got your back, Boo"—corrects
our common senses.**

***Clenora Hudson-Weems, PhD*
*Africana/Melanated Womanism***